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Tongi erupts in violence

2 killed, over 100 injured as RMG workers clash with cops after protests against factory closure, non-payment of wages

WASIM BIN HABIB and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

At least two persons were killed and 100 others injured including 15 police personnel in Tongi yesterday in a string of clashes between the law enforcers and several hundred garment workers who were protesting sudden closure of their factory without payment of arrears.

Confirming the deaths, Second Officer of Tongi Police Station Zahidul Islam said one of the dead was identified as Bablu Sheikh, a rickshaw van puller, whose wife Roksana works at the factory.

He said Bablu received bullets when, hearing the news of the clash, he went

near the factory to look for his wife.

Roksana had also told reporters in the afternoon that her husband died when he came to the factory during the clashes to save her.

The other deceased aged around 48 could not be identified.

A number of workers and locals claimed that police killed several workers inside the factory of Nippon Garments Industries Ltd at Ershadnagar of Tongi although they could not specify the names of those killed.

Locals showed reporters and police bits of brains they claimed to be of humans in pools blood near the entrance of the factory.

The law enforcers fired rubber bullets, shotgun and teargas canisters during the four-hour-long clashes to disperse the agitating workers. The police claimed that the workers and locals hurled brickbats and homemade bombs at them.

The protesters also torched a staff bus of another garment factory and vandalised four vehicles.

Communication on Dhaka-Mymensingh Highway remained suspended for about five hours from 8:00am, causing severe traffic congestion. Vehicular movement normalised around 1:00pm.

Twelve persons with bullet injuries

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PM orders effective action

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday directed the home ministry to take effective action against the owner of the garment factory in Tongi of Gazipur district responsible for workers' unrest erupted for non-payment of their monthly salary, Prime Minister's Press Secretary Abul Kalam Azad told The Daily Star.

Protesting non-payment of wages, hundreds of workers of Nippon Garments at Ershadnagar put blockade on Dhaka-Mymensingh Highway and clashed with police for several hours that left at least two people killed and 100 injured.

Agencies gave hints a week ago

HASAN JAHD TUSHER

Different trade unions and labour bodies were provoking a possible unrest at the readymade garments hub cashing in on demonstrations by sacked workers of different factories, an intelligence agency alerted the government a week ago.

The Special Branch of police in its report submitted to the home ministry put forward a four-point recommendation to avert the unrest.

The recommendations were facilitating reopening of the factories and reinstating the sacked workers. Moreover, ensuring payment of salaries

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BNP blasts Star report on Aug 21

Rejoinder rhetorical, does not refute report: The Daily Star

BNP has sent a three-page rejoinder under the signature of its secretary general Khandaker Delwar Hossain, regarding our report headlined "Aug 21 attack on Hasina, AL Rally: It was Hawa Bhaban Plot" published on October 27, 2009. We publish full text of the rejoinder below:

1. Our attention has been drawn to the above report which has blatantly attempted to disgrace and defame Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and its leaders. We strongly condemn this maliciously concocted libellous report.

2. It is clear to us that the purpose of this propaganda is to (a) hurt deeply the reputation,

status and popularity of BNP and its leaders, (b) put BNP's political rivals into an advantageous position and (c) create a situation where by involving BNP leaders in false accusations they can be made victims of state torture machine.

3. It was beyond our imagination that a national daily newspaper could publish such a serious allegation against a well established political party and its leaders on the basis of investigations by one or two persons which were not carefully considered and without mention of any reliable sources. Daily Star has dumped all convention of proper journalism. It

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PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

A man attempts to throw a burning mattress while others pelt policemen with stones and brickbats during a clash between agitating garment workers and law enforcers in Tongi yesterday.

Arrears main reason behind unrest

BGMEA sees 'sabotage'
REFAYET ULLAH MIRDHA,
back from Tongi

Non-payment of arrears over the last three months was one of the major reasons behind yesterday's unrest among garment workers, said agitating labourers.

Meanwhile, BGMEA leaders termed the unrest at Nippon Garments an act of sabotage by outsiders.

The workers alleged that the authorities of Nippon Garments Ltd, an exporter of woven garment, announced the shutdown suddenly to deprive them of Eid bonuses.

The workers said they could not sense such a move even the day before.

Nippon Garments Ltd, owned by Abedin Group, started its operation at Auchpara in Tongi in 1982.

"As usual, I came to the factory to join work yesterday. When we wanted to enter the

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Tigers go 2-1 up

SPORTS REPORTER

Opener Tamim Iqbal came to the party with a big knock as Bangladesh recorded another comfortable four-wicket victory over an erratic Zimbabwe at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday to take a 2-1 lead in the five-match Grameenphone Cup.

Tamim blasted 80 off 72 balls and Mohammad Ashraful, for a welcome change, hit a watchful 63 as Bangladesh reached 198 for five in 40.4 overs.

Tamim hammered 10 fours and two sixes in a polished knock while Ashraful, who has been going through a lean patch, struck seven fours and a six in his 91-ball vigil.

The win completed a fine turnaround for the Tigers going into the series deciding last two matches in Chittagong on November 3 and 5. Bangladesh lost the first game badly, but forced their way back with much-improved performance against their southern African rivals, who last night squandered a good opportunity to build on a flying start after home captain Shakib Al Hasan won the toss for the first time in the series and decided to field.

Opener Hamilton Masakadza struck a superb 84. He also dominated a second-wicket stand of 71 as the tourists raced to 90 in 15.1 overs. But then they suffered a stunning collapse due to some reckless batting that saw them being bowled out for 196 with 8.5 overs including a five-over batting power-play remaining unused.

Bangladesh paceman Nazmul Hossain took three wickets for 14 runs in 4.1 overs while left-arm spinner Enamul Haque, playing for the first time in the series, also took three wickets. Bangladesh's ace spinner Abdur Razzak chipped in with a brace,

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BOAT CAPSIZE Five drown, 10 missing

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Patuakhali

At least five persons drowned and 10 others missing as a boat capsized on Gulishakhali river at Morichbunia village under Patuakhali Sadar upazila yesterday.

The victims were identified as Rezia Begum, 70, wife of Denaly Boyatee of Padma village, Rabbi, 4, son of Golam Mostafa, Rakib, 2, son of Motaleb of Baliatali village under Barguna district. Other two bodies remain unidentified.

Among the dead, Rakib died at Patuakhali General Hospital after he was admitted there.

Of the injured Amena, Rahat, Motaleb, Sahana, Rakhi were also admitted there.

Sources said the boat was capsized with over 70 passengers while it was returning to Padma from Morichbunia.

Dr Abdul Manna, Additional Deputy Commissioner and Khorshed Alam, UNO for Patuakhali Sadar upazila visited the spot.

Bangabandhu case hearing resumes today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The hearing on the appeals in Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman assassination case will resume today.

On Thursday, a five-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Justice Md Tafazzul Islam adjourned the hearing till 9:30am today.

Barrister Abdullah al-Mamun, counsel for convicts Bazul Huda and AKM Mohiuddin, is due to place arguments for AKM Mohiuddin before the apex court today.

Five convicts -- dismissed army personnel Syed Farooq Rahman, Sultan Shahriar Rashid Khan, Muhiuddin Ahmed, AKM Mohiuddin, and Bazul Huda -- lodged the appeals with the SC in October 2007 against their death

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Govt to build 1,202 flats in 3 years

Plans to sell those to public servants, middle-class people

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The government is going to construct 1,202 flats and sell those to government officials and low and middle-income group people in Dhaka on hire-purchase basis in next three years.

A proposal for constructing 258 of these flats at a cost of Tk 73 crore would be placed at the Cabinet Committee on Government Purchase (CCGP) meeting to be chaired by Finance Minister AMA Muhiht today.

According to the project proposal, the government would construct total 1,020 flats (each 1,000 by 800 sq feet) in Mohammadpur A Block for sale to small and middle income-group people on hire-purchases basis.

Seventeen buildings, each having 16 storeys, would be constructed on a piece of about 5.51 acres of land. Initially, a proposal for building

three such buildings is being placed at today's meeting.

The three 16-storey buildings each having 60 flats would be constructed in Mohammadpur. Reza Construction limited, the lowest bidder, would construct two buildings at a cost of about Tk 32 crore, while National Development Engineers Ltd will build another at a cost of Tk 16.72 crore.

Two proposals involving about Tk 550 crore including housing projects for lower and middle income-groups in Dhaka will be placed at today's CCGP meeting.

Besides, another proposal for constructing 182 flats at Lalmatia Housing Estate (1,250 by 1,060 sq feet each) for sale to government officials on hire-purchase basis would be placed at today's meeting.

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DBBL's Debit and Credit Cards are 100% secure

We have noticed the news captioned "এটিএম বুথকে ঘিরে সক্রিয় জালিয়াত চক্র" published in the "Manabzamin" on 22nd October, 2009. A 100% secure Debit and Credit card system is really an

expensive proposition which only Dutch-Bangla Bank has completed at an investment of **Tk.200 crore**. A regular upgradation process is required for such a technology. Dutch-Bangla Bank is keeping the technology up-to-date by making appropriate investments. At present the Bank has undertaken an expansion project at a cost of **Tk.100 crore**.

To provide 100% security to the ATM/POS transactions made by our valued customers, Dutch-Bangla Bank along with Visa and MasterCard worked for 3 years with a large investment to successfully introduce computer processor embedded **EMV** Debit and Credit cards. These cards are collectively known as the DBBL **NexusPro** Card. DBBL **NexusPro** Debit and Credit Cards are absolutely secure. These cards are also secure throughout the world and known as "Next Generation" Card. All **Next Generation** computer processor embedded **EMV** Debit and Credit Cards of Visa/MasterCard of any country can also be used at our ATM/POS terminals with 100% security.

The DBBL **Nexus** Debit Cards given free-of-charge to all DBBL clients are also secured by PIN. However, if the clients desire, they can collect a DBBL **NexusPro** Microchip based **EMV** debit card, which is a **Next Generation** card of Visa/MasterCard.



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