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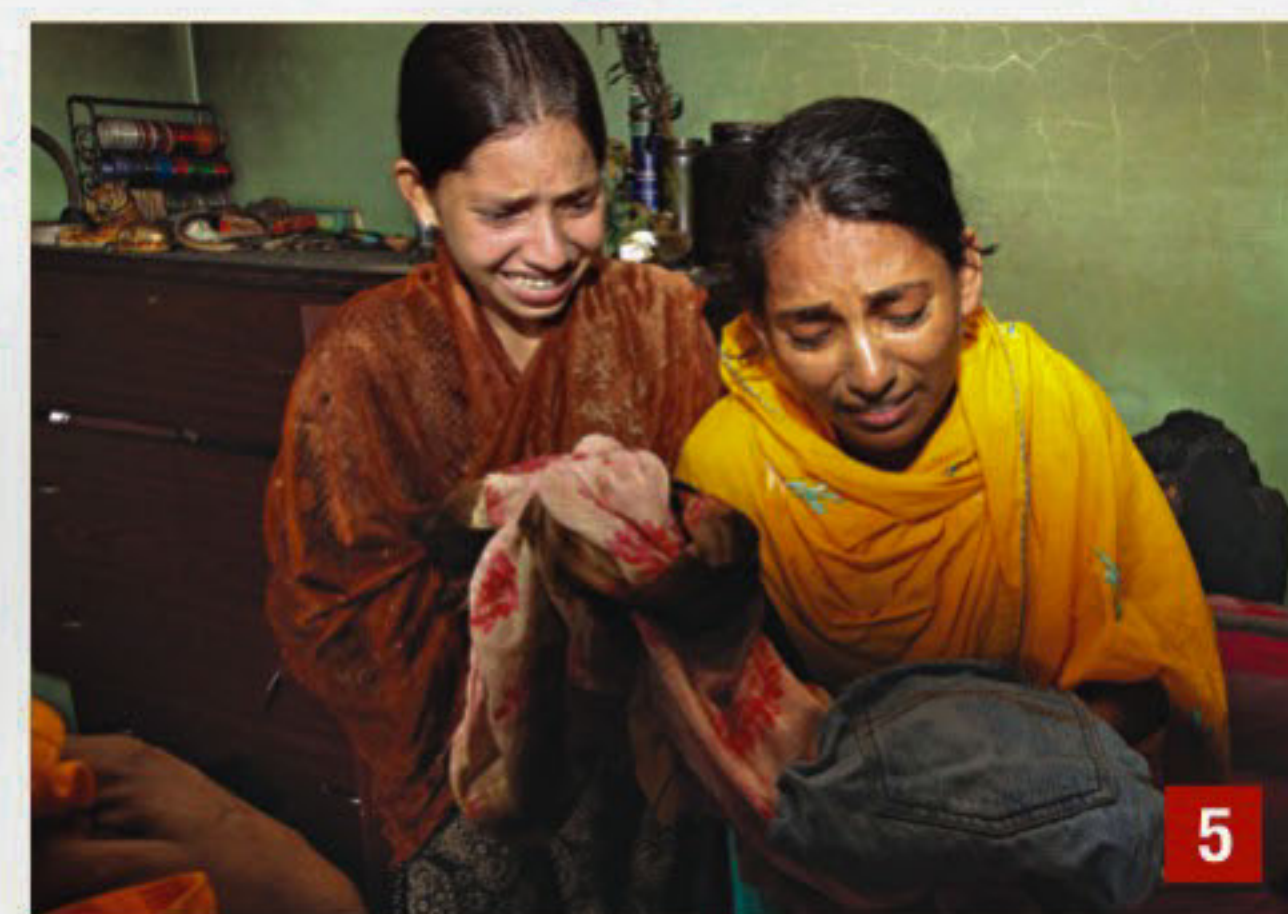
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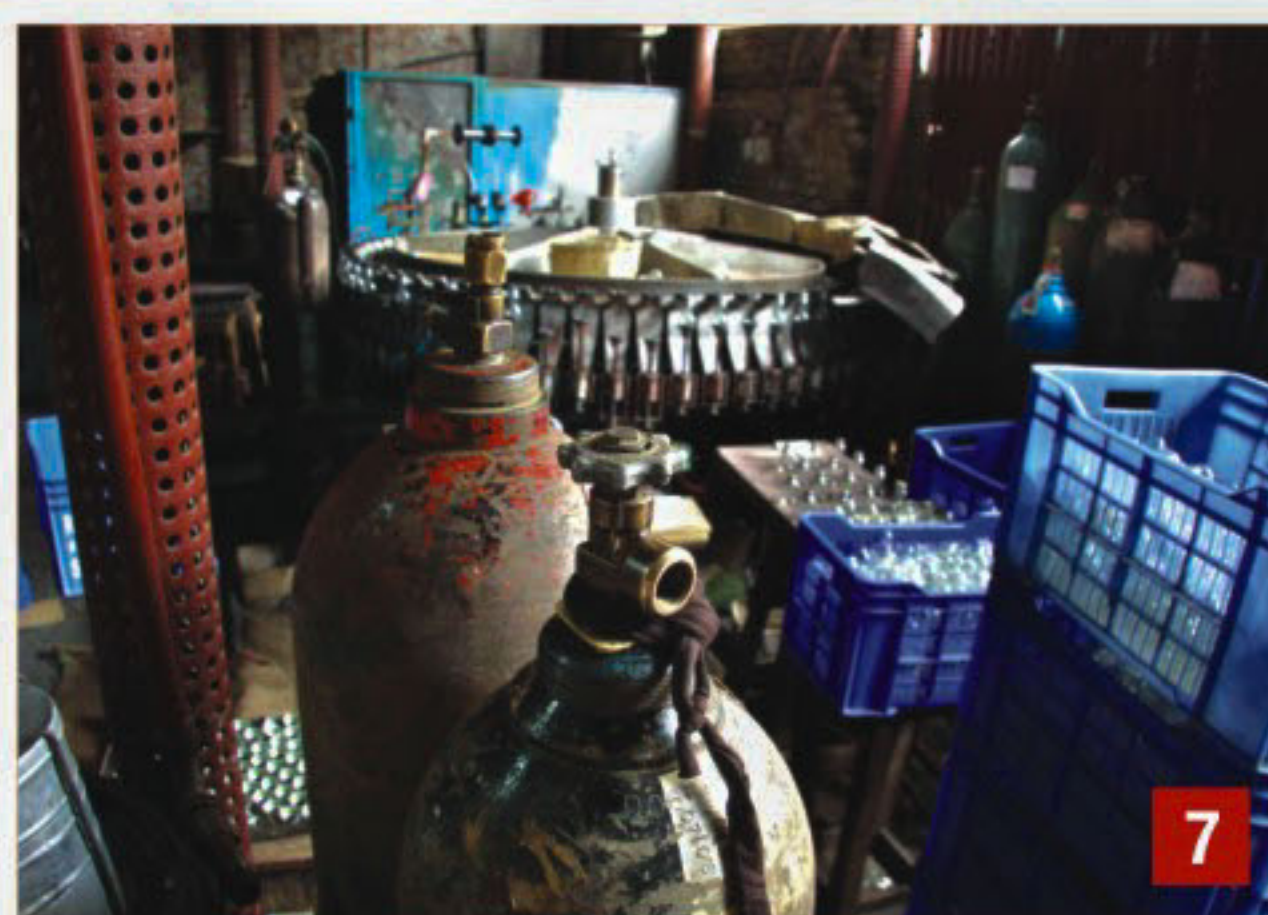
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TALE OF WOE

1. Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina consoles Runa and Ratna, the two sisters who lost their mother and close relatives in the Nimtoli fire, when they called on her at Gonobhaban in the city yesterday.
2. Local people put up a list of fire victims on a wall at Nimtoli.
3. A man sits on the debris of his tin-roofed house.
4. Afsana and her sister Parul have lost six of their family members in the fire.
5. Two sisters mourn the death of their family members in the fire at their home.
6. A new electrical transformer has been set up on the road at Nimtoli on a temporary basis to ensure supply of electricity to the area following the June 3 devastating fire.
7. A factory of light bulbs at Ali Nekir Deuri, a residential area in old Dhaka. A mobile court sealed off the factory yesterday as it did not have adequate firefighting equipment.
8. A woman mourns the death of her family members in the fire.

Photo: ANISUR RAHMAN

Dhaka needs long-term environmental plan

Speakers tell seminar

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a seminar yesterday said Dhaka city requires a long-term environmental master plan and political will for its implementation.

They said it is urgent to introduce the plan in order to save the city from total system collapse and possible abandonment.

They urged all to consider the amount of economic loss caused by environmental pollution and its health implication, which is eventually high in terms of money value than the total profit earned by industrial revolution.

They were speaking at a seminar on 'Environmental degradation of Dhaka city: Our responsibilities' organised by Campaign for Popular Education

(CAMPE) at IDB Bhaban in the city to mark the World Environment Day 2010.

Only 20 percent reduction in pollution in the city can save about 353 million dollars spent annually to deal with health effects of pollution, said Dr Touhida Rashid of Geography and Environment Department of DU in her keynote paper.

She suggested imposing high tax on industries based on their level of pollution and its effect on nature to encourage them to become more environment-friendly.

Prof Nazrul Islam, chairman of University Grants Commission, said there has to be a long-term vision for the city. He criticised all the political parties for their reluctance to approve or implement master plans on Dhaka city.

Prof Nazrul, also an urban expert, said

many lawmakers are responsible for the current status of Dhaka as they are involved with businesses that cause environmental hazards. Thus the political parties show lack of commitment, he added.

Syeda Rizwana Hasan, director of Bangladesh Environment Lawyers' Association (BELA) said about Tk 12,000 crore is being used to save the river Buriganga while Tk 500 crore is needed to relocate the tanneries.

She urged all to do the math and find out how the cost of environmental degradation is too high compared to profits earned by the industries.

Kazi Rafiqul Alam, president of Dhaka Ahsania Mission and chairperson of Ganashakharata Abhijan Council, and Tapan Kumar Das also spoke.

FFS' ELECTION

SC stays HC verdict for 8 more weeks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday stayed for another eight weeks a High Court (HC) verdict that restricted holding elections to district and upazila units of Muktiyoddha Sangsad Command Council (MSCC) on June 26.

Chamber judge of the Appellate Division Justice Md Muzammel Hossain yesterday passed the order of stay following a government petition seeking extension of its June 2 order that stayed the HC verdict for only seven days.

Deputy Attorney General Motahar Hossain Sazu told The Daily Star that there is no bar to hold elections to central, district and upazila units of MSCC on June 26, following the SC order.

Following a writ petition filed by Yusuf Ali and M Shahabuddin, two freedom fighters, the HC on May 26 delivered a verdict cancelling the schedule for holding elections to district and upazila units on June 26.

Attorney General Mahbubey Alam appeared for the government, while Advocate Abdul Matin Khasru argued for MSCC and Barrister Masood R Sobhan stood for the writ petitioners.

1,699 more held, 7 bombs recovered

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,699 people on various charges in separate drives across the country in 24 hours till 6:00am yesterday.

One firearm, seven home-made bombs and six bullets were also recovered during the countrywide drive, said a release of police headquarters.

Besides, 43 motorcycles were seized for not having valid documents during the drive and 436 cases filed in this connection.

WATER TRANSPORT STRIKE

100 workers' jobs uncertain

PANKAJ KARMAKAR

Water vessels owners did not allow nearly 100 workers, who were on the front line during last month's river transport strike, to return to their work despite government directions.

The main reason of not allowing the workers to rejoin the work for playing critical role during the strike, said Saha Alam, vice-president of the Bangladesh Nourjan Sramik Federation, an organisation of water transport workers.

However, major portion of around 2,000 workers have already returned to their work on condition of not joining any transport strike or movement in the future.

During and after the strike, the shipping minister, top government officials and launch owners repeatedly called upon all the workers to join work without any fear and condition.

But after more than 20 days of withdrawal of the strike, the workers could not join work, as the vessel owners remain rigid on their decision of not allowing the workers to return to work.

Talking to this correspondent, most of the jobless workers alleged that the owners were continuously threatening them to harass by police or to make them jobless permanently or to cancel their certificates of competency for joining the strike.

Jainal Abedin, first-class driver of MV Patarhat-5, said, "The owner of the launch has strictly forbidden him not to ride on the vessel and threatened to arrest him by police, if he

tries to get into the launch."

In response to the allegations, Shabuddin Milon, owner of the MV Patarhat-5 said, "This is an internal matter of my business. During the strike the workers abandoned my vessel keeping in danger. This might occur a major accident. So, those workers must be punished."

Ilias, driver of the MV New Sun, said his boss Abdus Salam had said the Launch Owner Association had directed him not to allow the workers, who were involved in enforcing the strike on May 8.

Salam said, "The workers did not join by the deadline set by the shipping ministry during the strike. Moreover the BIWTA directed us not to reappoint the workers responsible for enforcing the strike."

But the BIWTA Chairman Abdul Malek Miah binned the allegations saying it is completely false and fabricated. "Rather we have requested the owners of all the launches to reappoint the workers immediately."

Mahbub Uddin Bir Bikram, chairman of the Bangladesh Inland Waterways (passenger carrier's) Association, said he does not know anything about it. The association has directed all the owners to reappoint the workers.

But Ibrahim, a second-class driver of MV Sonartari owned by Mahbub Uddin, alleged that he along with some other workers of that launch could not join the work in absence of a green signal from the owner.

Shipping Secretary Abdul Mannan Hawlader said, "We have directed all the vessel owners to reappoint the workers. But it may take sometime."

Mizanur made envoy to Egypt

UNB, Dhaka

The government appointed Mizanur Rahman, currently Bangladesh Ambassador to the Netherlands, as ambassador to the Arab Republic of Egypt.

A career diplomat, Mizanur joined Bangladesh Foreign Service in 1988. During his diplomatic career, he served in Bangladesh missions in Manchester, Moscow and Colombo before being appointed ambassador to the Netherlands, says a press release.

He has represented Bangladesh in various international and regional forums, including Saarc summits, D-8 summits, Commonwealth summits and WIPO meetings.

2nd Death Anniversary



Today is the 2nd death anniversary of our Maa, Rezia Begum. She was a freedom fighter, a writer & above all a loving mother.

The family members of late Rezia Begum have requested all her relatives, friends & well wishers to pray for the salvation of the departed soul.

-Family Members

Standard Chartered

The Daily Star

এসো মেতে উঠি জীবনের জয়গানে

দেশের গানের কনসার্ট

সামিনা চৌধুরীর গান ও কিছু কথা নিয়ে আমরা থাকবো আপনাদের সাথে

স্থান: শাহজালাল বিজ্ঞান ও প্রযুক্তি বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়, সেন্ট্রাল অডিটোরিয়াম

তারিখ: বুধবার ৯ই জুন

সময়: সন্ধ্যা ৬ টা