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US finds rights not well

Grim human, labour rights situation presented at congressional hearing; buyers wrote PM 2 letters in 4 months about hiking RMG workers' wage, probing death of labour leader Aminul

Days after two dozen top global apparel buyers gathered in Dhaka to share concerns over persistent labour unrest, top US officials painted a grim picture of Bangladesh's human and labour rights situation in a Congress hearing Thursday.

This could ultimately affect the country's exports and trade relations with the US if immediate measures were not taken to improve the conditions.

The garment sector, which accounts for more than 80 percent of the exports, could bear the brunt as major buyers from the US and European countries had been continuing to express their unhappiness over the labour rights situation at factories in Bangladesh.

The buyers seemed very serious about the issue and they had even written two letters to the prime minister in the last three months urging her to intervene and improve the labour rights situation and try the killers of a labour leader.

Eric R Biel, acting assistant deputy undersecretary to the Department of Labour's Bureau of International

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5



The authorities concerned have dumped rubble into potholes on Circular Road near the capital's Joykali Mandir as a stopgap solution instead of going for proper maintenance. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Rab arrests 17 Tahrir activists

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion members in separate drives arrested 17 members of banned militant outfit Hizb-ut-Tahrir from different parts of the capital on Thursday night and yesterday.

A team of Rab-1, following a tip-off, conducted a drive in Nikunja Boro Masjid of Khilkhet around 1:30pm yesterday and arrested nine members of the outfit.

The arrestees were found to be holding anti-government rally and distributing leaflets containing anti-state statement among people of the area during the drive.

In another raid at Gandaria, Rab-10 personnel arrested four operatives of the outlawed party around 1:55pm while they

SEE PAGE 19 COL 7

Cops beat up service seeker

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rupnagar police yesterday assaulted a service seeker inside the police station and put him into the lock-up as he protested misbehaviour of the second officer.

However, hours after the detention, victim Israfil Islam Mollah was released as he revealed his identity that he was the younger brother of a high official of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP).

Israfil told The Daily Star, "I went to the police station around 5:00pm to help my illiterate cousin file a general diary. As we approached Second Officer Izazur, he addressed me as tumi [an

SEE PAGE 19 COL 4

JU Senate elects 3-man VC panel

Ex-VC Prof Shariff bags highest votes

WASIM BIN HABIB and SM NAJMUS SAKIB

In the first-ever vice-chancellor panel polls at Jahangirnagar University during the rule of the Awami League-led government, its senate members yesterday elected a three-member panel amid agitation from a section of teachers.

Prof Shariff Enamul Kabir, the immediate-past VC who was forced to resign in May following protests by students and teachers, bagged the highest 50 votes. Incumbent VC Prof Anwar Hossain got 38 votes while Prof Nurul Alam, a physics teacher, 37 votes.

President Zillur Rahman, also the chancellor of JU, will appoint anyone of the three. A highly-placed source said the government was considering Prof Shariff or Prof Anwar as the next JUV.

Contacted, Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid said, "After getting the list,



Prof Shariff Prof Anwar Prof Nurul

following rules we'll send it to the chancellor as soon as possible."

Two other contenders -- Prof Afsar Ahmed of drama and dramatics department, and Prof Shamsul Kabir Khan, a former director of the University Grants Commission (UGC) -- bagged 18 and 3 votes.

The agitating teachers, who had been staging demonstration for the last seven days under the banner of Sammilito Shikkhak Parishad, called off their protest programme yesterday and said they

SEE PAGE 6 COL 1

Stop sale of chemical mixed food

Greens ask govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa) yesterday demanded the government take a firm stand to stop chemical contamination of food and drinks to save people from health hazards.

The demand was made at a rally in front of Bangladesh National Museum in the capital.

Addressing the rally, leaders of several green movements noted that the government should strengthen its drive against food adulteration as this trend accelerates during Ramadan.

Adulteration has been affecting crores of people in the country and many

SEE PAGE 19 COL 8

Syria starts all-out Damascus assault

Rebels clash with troops; wounded security chief dies

AFP, Damascus

Syrian forces launched an all-out assault on opposition strongholds in Damascus yesterday, a day after rebels seized crossings on the Iraq and Turkey borders on the 16-month conflict's deadliest day so far.

Rebel fighters also clashed with troops in several neighbourhoods of Aleppo in what a human rights watchdog said was the fiercest fighting so far in Syria's second city.

Yesterday's violence came after Russia

and China used their powers as UN Security Council permanent members to block resolutions on Syria for the third time in nine months.

In New York, The UN Security Council unanimously voted to give the UN observer mission in Syria a "final" 30-day mandate.

Russia had threatened to veto a British-drafted resolution, but Russia's ambassador Vitaly Churkin finally backed the resolution.

SEE PAGE 19 COL 5

PRAYER TIMING July 21

Azan Jamaat	
Fajr	3-55 4-05
Zohr	12-45 1-15
Asr	5-00 5-15
Maghrib	6-50 7-00
Esha	8-15 8-45

Source: Islamic Foundation

MR-NOODLES

SEHRI, IFTAR TIMINGS

RAMADAN	DATE	SEHRI	IFTAR
01	21 July		6.50 pm
02	22 July	3.54 am	6.50 pm

Buet teachers firm on demand

Vow to continue agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ongoing crisis at Buet seems to be far from over as the agitating teachers vowed to continue their demonstration until either the vice-chancellor (VC) and pro vice-chancellor quit their posts or are removed by the government.

"We hoped that the government would remove the VC and pro-VC within two days to uphold the dignity of the institution. But we didn't see any initiative from the government to resolve the crisis," Prof Ashraful Islam, general secretary of the Buet Teachers' Association, told The Daily Star.

The teachers, as usual, will stage a two-hour sit-in

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

Gunman kills 12 at US cinema

AFP, Denver

A gunman wearing a gas mask opened fire in a crowded US movie theatre screening the latest Batman film early yesterday, killing at least 12 and wounding nearly 40, police and reports said.

Witnesses described a scene of chaos at the midnight debut showing of "The Dark Knight Rises," saying the gunman had set off tear gas bombs and opened fire in the packed theatre in Aurora, a suburb of Denver, Colorado.

President Barack Obama, who was in Florida for election campaign, expressed shock at the shooting. His

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