

Commotion

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Kalpana, whose identification card number is 1,823, says she is entitled to a payment of over Tk 15,000 -- three months and 13 days' salary at the rate of Tk 2,634 per month, her gross salary of Tk 3,900 for November and another Tk 3,000 for her earned leave she did not enjoy. She joined Tazreen Fashions on April 9, 2011.

"I want my full salary. I refused to take the money [Tk 7,000] on Wednesday," she told The Daily Star yesterday.

Her colleagues Salma Begum, Jaeda Begum and Nurjahan Begum also did not take their salaries on the same ground.

Some, however, were compelled to accept whatever the factory authorities offered.

"I agreed to take my salary as I am in financial problems. I have to pay my house rent and bills at the grocer," said Marium Begum. "I got Tk 9,900 but some of my colleagues got Tk 11,000 to 12,000."

Marium said two of her sisters, Moushumi and Khadiza, who were machine operators, worked on the same floor as she did. But her sisters are not on the list.

Jahanara Akhter, a senior executive, compliance and labour of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), said some 150 unlisted workers came to the school ground demanding their pay.

She said the organisation received complaints about some workers getting less salary.

"We have asked the workers to bring documents to support their claims," Jahanara said.

Shahnaz Parveen, a line controller in sewing section of the factory, said 74 workers were under her supervision. Of them, 49 got their salaries while the rest were yet to be paid.

Jahanara said the BGMEA made a list of the missing workers -- the number is 53 so far.

On Wednesday, 1,318 workers got salaries and compensation under BGMEA's supervision.

Mosquitoes

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town of Key West.

If approved by the Food and Drug Administration, it would be the first such experiment in the US. Some Key West residents worry, though, that not enough research has been done to determine the risks that releasing genetically modified mosquitoes might pose to the Keys' fragile ecosystem.

Officials are targeting the Aedes aegypti mosquitoes because they can spread dengue fever, a disease health officials thought had been eradicated in the US until 93 cases originated in the Keys in 2009 and 2010.

The trial planned by mosquito control officials and the British company Oxitec would release non-biting male mosquitoes that have been genetically modified to pass along a birth defect that kills their progeny before reaching maturity.

The idea is that they will mate with wild females and their children will die before reproducing. After a few generations, Key West's Aedes aegypti population would die off, reducing the dengue fever risk without using pesticides and at relatively a low cost, the proponents say. There is no vaccine for dengue fever.

"The science of it, I think, looks fine. It's straight from setting up experiments and collecting data," said Michael Boyle, pointing to research Oxitec has had published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. He inherited the project when he took the lead at the Florida Keys Mosquito Control District in mid-2011.

The district's website says the modified genes will disappear from the environment after the mosquitoes carrying it die, resulting in no permanent change to the wild mosquito population. The district also says that the mosquito species isn't native to the Keys, nor is it an integral food source for other animals.

Dengue fever is a viral disease that inflicts severe flu-like symptoms — the joint pain is so severe its nickname is "breakbone fever." It isn't fatal but victims are then susceptible to subsequent exposures to dengue hemorrhagic fever, which can be.

WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL PEOPLE

ACCORDING TO FORBES MAGAZINE'S ANNUAL RANKINGS FOR 2012

1 Barack Obama President, US	11 Carlos Slim Helu & family Honorary chairman, America Movil
2 Angela Merkel Chancellor, Germany	12 Sonia Gandhi President, Indian National Congress
3 Vladimir Putin President, Russia	13 Li Keqiang Vice premier, China
4 Bill Gates Co-chair, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	14 Francois Hollande President, France
5 Pope Benedict XVI Roman Catholic Church	15 Warren Buffett CEO, Berkshire Hathaway
6 Ben Bernanke Chairman, US Federal Reserve	16 Michael Bloomberg Mayor, New York City (US)
7 Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz al Saud King of Saudi Arabia	17 Michael Duke CEO, Wal-Mart Stores
8 Mario Draghi President, European Central Bank	18 Dilma Rousseff President, Brazil
9 Xi Jinping General-secretary, China Communist Party	19 Manmohan Singh Prime Minister, India
10 David Cameron Prime Minister, Britain	20 Sergey Brin Cofounder, Google
	21 Larry Page CEO/Cofounder, Google

SOURCE: FORBES

Obama tops list

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names, a figure Forbes said it set as a cutoff because there are an estimated 7.1 billion people in the world and thus the ranking works out to one very heavy hitter for every 100 million people.

For the second year in a row, US President Barack Obama led the ranking, with Forbes noting that he won the popular vote, an electoral college majority, and seven of the seven toss-up states in the November election.

The silver medal of power went to Merkel, the German chancellor, whom Forbes described as the backbone of the 27-member European Union.

Third place went to Russian President Vladimir Putin. New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg 16th on the list. Microsoft founder Bill Gates was fourth, while Pope Benedict XVI, leader of

the world's 1.2 billion Catholics, ranked fifth.

Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg was 25th. He dropped from 9th in last year's ranking.

One less-than-savory name on the list: Mexican billionaire drug cartel leader Joaquin Guzman Loera, alias "El Chapo," the Sinaloa cartel leader who Forbes said is responsible for many of the illegal narcotics entering the United States every year. He was ranked 63rd.

North Korean leader Kim Jong-Un, 29, who took over from his late father Kim Jong-Il this year, ranked 44th.

Forbes said it assembled the list using four criteria: power over lots of people, financial resources controlled, whether the person has power in various spheres of life, and whether that person actively uses their power.

Keep vehicles

FROM PAGE 1
Democracy Day. On this day in 1990, military dictator HM Ershad was ousted from power through a mass uprising.

Blasting the government for corruption, Fakhru said the World Bank team of anti-corruption experts was not happy with the ACC's investigation and they have already left the country. "The prime minister had termed Abul Hossain a patriot, but now it has been proved that he is a king of thieves."

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) does not want to include the name of former communications minister Abul Hossain among the accused in the Padma bridge corruption conspiracy case as it (ACC) knows that all the bribe money was siphoned off by this person (Abul), he complained.

The BNP leader expressed apprehensions that the prices of gas, electricity and oil might be hiked again. "But we won't accept it. We will organise a movement against any price hike decision," he warned.

Party leaders Rafiqul Islam Mia, Abdul Moyeen Khan, Mirza Abbas, Moazzem Hossain Alal, among others, spoke at the rally, with BNP Dhaka city unit member secretary Abdus Salam in the chair.

Several thousand opposition leaders, workers and supporters attended the rally on the Nayapalton road, causing a halt to traffic for several hours.

The 18-party alliance had declared the road blockade programme as part of its ongoing movement to restore the caretaker government system.

STANDING COMMITTEE MEET
Meanwhile, the BNP chairperson urged the leaders of her party and the 18-party alliance to "actively participate" in the blockade programme.

Khaleda Zia made the call last night at separate meet-

ings of the BNP standing committee and 18-party alliance at her Gulshan office in the capital, insiders said.

The opposition chief, however, asked the party leaders and alliance partners to observe the programme peacefully and not to engage in clashes with law enforcers.

"The government will have to take all the responsibilities for any situation arising from any obstruction by the authorities or the ruling party men," Mirza Fakhru told reporters after the meeting.

Global food production to slow: UN

AFP, Rome

Global food production will slow over the coming decade following an exceptional but unsustainable rate of growth in developing countries, with more investment needed in the sector, the UN's food agency said yesterday.

"The average annual growth in global agricultural production through 2021 will slow to 1.7 percent, down from the 2.6 percent of the previous decade," the Food and Agriculture Organisation said in its yearly report.

"Agriculture in many countries has grown at a pace that cannot be sustained," it said, adding that production shot up by over 50 percent over the last 12 years in Latin America as a whole and by 70 percent in Brazil alone.

Production had also increased by over 40 percent in Sub-Saharan Africa, eastern Europe and central Asia, and by 20 percent in the United States and western Europe, the Rome-based agency said.

According to the report, most of the best land is already being used globally for agriculture, and what is left is either in remote locations inaccessible without infrastructure development or is wanted for urban use.

FLYOVER COLLAPSE

CDA to compensate victims

PRABIR BARUA
CHOWDHURY, Chittagong

Chittagong Development Authority (CDA) yesterday decided to compensate the families of those killed or injured in the collapse of three flyover girders in the port city on November 24.

Each family of the dead will be given Tk 2 lakh, the injured who lost their limbs Tk 1 lakh and the rest with less severe injuries Tk 50 lakh, CDA Chairman Abdus Salam yesterday told The Daily Star.

He, however, could not provide numbers of those that lost limbs and those that sustained minor injuries. "We will collect the list [of the injured] from Chittagong Medical College and Hospital," he said.

The decision was taken at an emergency board meeting, the first such meeting of the CDA since the accident.

Twelve people were killed and 15 injured when three concrete girders of the flyover at Bahadurhat collapsed on a makeshift kitchen market.

One dead in Kenya bomb blast

AFP, Nairobi

One person has died hours after a bomb blast in the Kenyan capital that wounded eight others, the latest in a string of attacks, police said yesterday.

The attack, a "roadside bomb which had been placed in a hole in the ground", according to Nairobi police chief Moses Nyakwama, was detonated during rush hour on Wednesday evening as people returned home from work.

ACC report

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The WB panel left Dhaka on Wednesday night seemingly unhappy over the omission of ex-minister Syed Abul Hossain as a top corruption suspect in the project.

Preferring anonymity, an ACC high official said the panel gave the ACC more information on the alleged corruption conspiracy involving several persons, including ex-communications minister Syed Abul Hossain.

"The enquiry team has already started re-investigating the allegations against Abul Hossain," said the official.

Sources in the ACC said the draft report that the enquiry team submitted to the ACC contained the name of the former communications minister but the commission later dropped his name.

The WB on November 13 sent the ACC a third report containing detailed evidence of corruption against public officials concerned as well as others.

Meanwhile, Finance Minister AMA Muihith told reporters in his secretariat office, "They [the WB panel] came and observed everything, but the decision will finally be taken by us."

The ACC launched the enquiry in September last year after the WB raised corruption allegations in the project.

The WB panel headed by Luis Moreno Ocampo, former chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, earlier visited Dhaka in October.

The two other panel members are Timothy Tong, former commissioner of the Independent Commission against Corruption of Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, and Richard Alderman, former director of Britain's Serious Fraud Office.

ACC sources said that unless the anti-graft body files a First Information Report, it cannot proceed from its enquiry to an investigation as expected by the global lender.

The WB cancelled its \$1.2 billion funding on June 29, saying it had proof of a "corruption conspiracy" involving Bangladeshi officials, executives of a Canadian firm and some individuals.

The global lender on September 21 decided to revive the loan after the Bangladesh government agreed to the WB's terms and conditions.

Safety gets risky for corruption

FROM PAGE 1

Industry people say rampant corruption by regulators and factory owners' "greed" for excessive profit lead to many such accidents.

"Factory owners without having to put in place any safety measures can get licences from the government authorities in exchange for bribe," a Gazipur-based garment factory director told The Daily Star.

Officials responsible for visiting factories to check safety issues go to the factories to collect Tk 5,000-10,000 every month, said the apparel maker, adding that the same goes with the Office of the Chief Inspector of the Factories, the top authority to ensure compliance and workers' safety.

And owners for their part care little about safety of the workers, he said, requesting anonymity.

For example, he adds, garment owners sometimes discourage workers from taking part in monthly fire drills as it "would cost them production loss".

In case of Tazreen Fashions in Ashulia, the building had no approval from Rajuk in the first place. Then it was faultily designed: It had no overhead or under-

ground water reservoir mandatory to get fire safety clearance from the fire service.

A top Rajuk official on condition of anonymity confirmed that Tazreen authorities had no permission to set up the factory. He, however, would not comment on how an eight-storey building could be erected without the Rajuk having noticed it.

Also, the building's emergency exits led to the ground floor. Under the rules, emergency exits should lead outside the building. Worse, the authorities built a store-room blocking the passageways, defying building code.

In spite of these major violations of the rules, Tazreen had no problem in getting licences from various regulators. The fire service department and the office of the chief inspector of factories issued licence to the factory in 2010 and renewed it in 2011 and 2012.

Law has it that these two authorities will issue licences only after they have seen the factory has adequate road space, exit stairs (at least two for less than 500 workers and at least three for over 500), fire extinguishers and firefighting equipment,

including 10 gas masks in each section.

According to basic compliance check list, factory evacuation drills must be conducted every month and 25 percent of the total workers should be trained in firefighting. There should be a firefighting committee in every factory comprised of a firefighting team, a salvage team, an assisting team and a cordon team.

Moreover, there should be first aid boxes, resident doctors and mesh gloves, among other things.

Of them all, Tazreen had just 78 fire extinguishers.

Fire service Director (operations and maintenance) Major Muhammad Mahboob said, "We find everything okay during our inspection. But things change later."

For instance, he added, "The storeroom on the ground floor was not there [during our visit]; they [management] built it later."

Giasuddin Bhuiyan, joint secretary and in-charge of fire safety cell of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, said Tazreen workers were not at all trained in firefighting.

"There were 78 fire extinguishers in the building,

but not a single one was used," said Giasuddin, also a former official of the fire service department.

Officials from other government agencies such as environment department, boiler licensing authority, Power Development Board, Wasa and Titas Gas also make regular visits to factories.

They make these visits often to make money, not to see safety issues, businesspeople say.

Insurers also have a role to play as export-oriented garment makers must have insurance.

"We are concerned. We have formed a committee after the Tazreen fire to devise a policy for the insurers in the wake of increasing number of accidents," said Sheikh Kabir Hossain, president of Bangladesh Insurance Association.

Contacted, Tazreen Fashions Managing Director Delowar Hossain on Monday said he had Rajuk's approval for a three-storey building.

Asked about his violating other building codes and workers' safety rules, Delowar said over the phone: "Please don't ask me anything, I'm not in a condition to speak now."

Sayedee verdict anytime soon

FROM PAGE 1

Sayedee is facing 19 charges of crimes against humanity at the tribunal.

Tribunal-1 and Tribunal-2 are dealing with eight other crimes against humanity cases filed so far against Jamaat and BNP leaders. This is the only case which is awaiting verdict. Proceedings in the other cases are still going on.

His case was the first to go into trial.

The three-member Tribunal-1, led by Justice Md Nizamul Huq with members Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim and Justice Anwarul Huq, adjourned the case proceedings for verdict (Case Adjournment for Verdict), which according to lawyers means that the judgement could be delivered any day.

Before adjournment of the case yesterday, the trial proceedings against Sayedee came to an end with the prosecution and the defence completing their closing arguments.

It took one year to complete recording testimonies of the prosecution and defence witnesses and arguments of both sides. The first prosecution witnesses testified on December 7, 2011.

Expressing gratitude to the Almighty, Justice Md Nizamul Huq yesterday said they would deliver the verdict on the basis of evidence. "We will not look into anything else," he added.

"Any party could be dissatisfied by the judgement," he said addressing the prosecution and the defence.

During the closing arguments, Justice Jahangir Hossain Selim said it would be very difficult for them (judges) to reach a decision.

"While hearing your [defence] statement, it seems your case is proper. While hearing their [prosecution] statement, it seems they are right," he said while a defence counsel was placing arguments.

Defence counsel

Mizanul Islam completed his argument saying, "There is no alternative to giving Sayedee an acquittal."

He said Sayedee was being tried only for political reasons. Had he not been involved in politics, he would not have been indicted, he claimed.

An individual, rather than the crimes, was being tried, he observed.

Meanwhile, Prosecutor Syed Haidar Ali said the defence counsel addressed the prosecution witnesses and the investigation officer in an improper way.

On behalf of the prosecution and the defence, Prosecutor Haidar Ali expressed gratitude towards the tribunal, visitors, the investigation agency and the media.

"Beyond any doubt, we have become successful in proving 19 charges out of the 20," he said.

The prosecution had dropped one of the charges filed against Sayedee during the case proceedings.

The prosecution then prayed for capital punishment for Sayedee.

With the permission of the tribunal, Sayedee from the dock said, "Touching Quran, I say that if at least one among the 19 charges could be proved, I would not die with Iman [faith in Allah]". Sayedee then cursed the investigation officer of the case.

Following a Dhaka court order, Sayedee was arrested along with Jamaat leaders Motiur Rahman Nizami and Ali Ahsan Mohammad Mojaheed on June 30, 2010, in connection with hurting religious sentiment of the Muslims.

Nizami and Mojaheed are now also facing crimes against humanity charges at the tribunals.

Chief prosecutor Ghulam Arief Tipoo of the International Crimes Tribunal placed the charges against Sayedee before the tribunal through its registrar

on July 11, 2011.

The tribunal framed 20 specific charges against Sayedee on October 3, 2011.

The trial finally began on November 20, 2011, with the prosecution's opening statement.

The defence produced their first witness on September 2 this year. Due to frequent failure of producing witnesses, the tribunal got annoyed and closed recording of defence witness testimonies on October 23.

A total 28 prosecution witnesses testified against Sayedee and 17 defence witnesses testified for him.

The prosecution began placing its closing arguments on November 5 while defence counsels began theirs on November 18, which ended yesterday.

TESTIMONY AGAINST AZAD
Meanwhile, a war-wounded freedom fighter yesterday testified that expelled Jamaat member Abul Kalam Azad used to train Razakar and Al-Badr men occupying civilians' houses during the Liberation War.

Probooth Kumar Sarkar, the 15th prosecution witness in the case, said Azad led Razakars used to assist the Pakistani army in identifying the Hindus, Awami League supporters and pro-liberation people and handing them over to the Pakistani army.

The 62-year-old witness from Faridpur said as per the blueprint of the Pakistani military governor Tikka Khan, the Pakistani army entered Faridpur town on April 21, 1971.

On their way to the town, they killed eight priests of Prabhu Jagatbandhu Ashram (temple). "Afterwards, the Pakistani army formed Peace Committee at Faridpur to execute their blueprint," said Probooth.

"Advocate Afzal was the convener of the Peace Committee while Ali Ahsan

Mohammad Mojaheed, Abul Kalam Azad alias Bachchu Razakar, Alauddin Khan, Chan Quazi, Jafar and Khokan were members of the 28-member committee," he said.

"Later, Razakar force was regrouped locally and Abul Kalam Azad led the force," he added.

"In cooperation and consultation with the Razakars at Faridpur Circuit House, the Pakistani army used to kill and torture people," said Probooth, a writer on Liberation War.

In the last part of May 1971, Azad, as Al-Badr commander, occupied the house of Badri Narayan Agarwal and Hiralal Mokter and used to train Razakar and Al-Badr men there, he added.

Probooth will face cross-examination on Sunday.

4th ODI today

FROM PAGE 1
played on a raging turner with both teams' spinners enjoying a field day as Bangladesh, put in to bat first, were all out for 227 before making West Indies fight hard for the win. It took a high-class, patient century from Marlon Samuels for the tourists to come out on top.

The pitch for today's game is likely to be a batting-friendly one. Regardless, the toss is crucial as the side batting second under lights will enjoy the better of the conditions as dew in the evenings is a major factor making it hard for the spinners to grip the wet ball.

Left-arm spinner Elias Sunny has been drafted into the Bangladesh squad and it is possible, with off-spinner Shohag Gazi already opening the bowling, that Sunny may replace pacer Rubel Hossain for today's match in order to increase the hosts' spin advantage. Another less likely change is Jahurul Islam taking the place of batsman Naeem Islam.

Tribunal chief's net talks

FROM PAGE 1

The paper possessed the record of his Skype conversation with International Criminal Law expert Dr Ahmed Ziauddin.

At one stage of closing arguments by defence counsel of Delawar Hossain Sayedee yesterday, the chairman said he had occasionally discussed with Dr Ahmed, a Bangladeshi living in Brussels, the developments on International Criminal Law.

The tribunal yesterday served a notice on two journalists of The Economist -- Chief Editor Rob Gifford and South Asia Bureau Chief Adam Roberts.

It asked the duo to reply within three weeks why proceedings under 11(4) of International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973 shall not be taken against them.

The tribunal asked The Economist to keep secret the information which it had gathered from the chairman's Skype and email accounts. Otherwise, proper action will be taken.

The court also ordered sending copies of the directives to the inspector general of police and the chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission for necessary action.

Issuing the order, Justice Nizamul said the International Crimes (Tribunals) Act, 1973 is a new law. To understand the law, it is necessary for the judges to look into the process and orders of different tribunals and consult experts.

He has had privileges of consulting expatriate Bangladeshis, including Dr Ahmed.

"Yesterday [Wednesday] at about 10:00pm, the chairman received a telephone call from +919810016662 [Indian number]," the order read.

The person on the phone said the call was from The Economist and "the conversation between the chairman and Dr Ahmed Ziauddin is in their possession."

"The caller also asked the chairman some questions regarding this information," the order read.

"By questioning him over the telephone, the person on the other side has also involved himself in speaking with the chairman." This is not allowed under the law, it added.

Justice Nizamul mentioned the email and Skype accounts of Dr Ahmed had also been hacked and all the materials he had received from the expert were also in

the paper's possession.

Termining it "a serious breach of privacy," he said the persons involved in disturbing the ongoing processes of the tribunal have links to the hacking.

Breach of privacy through hacking in the pursuit of stories has been discussed around the globe, especially in the United Kingdom, for the last two years.

Last year, the UK launched an inquiry, headed by Lord Justice Leveson, into the culture, practices and ethics of the British press following the News International phone hacking scandal.

The scandal, which has led to the closure of the News of the World, halted Media tycoon Rupert Murdoch's BSkyB takeover bid, and prompted the arrest of several key figures.