



TAZREEN FIRE FOLLOW-UP

Owner is still on the run while 37 families of victims are yet to be compensated

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MAY DAY PRAYERS

Badrul Ahsan puts in words prayers meant for the dead in Savar collapse

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1ST DUTCH KING SINCE 1890

Willem-Alexander takes the throne after his mother

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TRAGEDY IN GARMENT SECTOR

Owners probe owners' fault

BGMEA investigation always comes to a zero

SAJJADUR RAHMAN and FAZLUR RAHMAN

The BGMEA's initiatives to ensure safety compliance in apparel factories seem to be an eyewash to cover up the faults of factory owners.

The trade body forms committees and taskforces after accidents in garment factories, but they never come up with any concrete findings that would eventually help ensure workers' safety in factories.

The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association had formed a committee to probe the Spectrum Sweater factory collapse that killed 64 workers in April 2005. The com-

mittee, led by BGMEA member Ali Azam Khan, was asked to submit a report in seven days, but it has yet to do so even after seven years.

Following a devastating fire at Tazreen Fashions in November 2012, the trade body formed a taskforce to check whether apparel factories were complying with safety regulations.

The then BGMEA chief headed the 15-member taskforce comprised of experts, buyers' representatives, BGMEA members and government officials.

The taskforce was supposed to visit at least 10 factories to prepare a report that

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A woman along with her son and relatives cries her heart out in front of collapsed Rana Plaza in Savar yesterday. Shariful Islam, her husband, is one of those ill-fated workers who were in the building when it caved on April 24.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

It's hard time, remain calm

Hasina asks workers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked garment workers to remain calm and refrain from vandalising industries "during these hard times."

"I don't believe the real workers are vandalising their industries that provide bread and butter for them," the premier told the House in her concluding speech.

The premier informed the House that her government had taken an initiative to create a fund for workers so that they

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18-party calls off hartal

PM thanks opposition

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Responding to the prime minister's call, the BNP-led 18-party alliance has postponed its countrywide hartal tomorrow to facilitate uninterrupted rescue and relief operations for the Savar disaster victims.

It said the decision was also to create scope for all to stand united to face this national tragedy.

The opposition combine announced the postponement of the shutdown through a press release yesterday, signed

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DEATH TOLL 388

Many still missing in Savar

Relatives see no hope of getting back their dear ones alive; 4 more bodies found

M ABUL KALAM AZAD and AKRAM HOSEN

With unnumbered decomposed bodies remaining stuck in concrete slabs of the collapsed Rana Plaza in Savar, rescuers yesterday recovered four more bodies while removing the building debris.

With this, the number of bodies recovered rose to 388 on the

seventh day of the rescue operation. No person was rescued alive in the last two days as the figure of survivors remained unchanged at 2,437, said ISPR and other sources.

Also yesterday, rescuers used two trained dogs to trace the dead.

Relatives of those still missing are losing patience. Neither the police nor the military could say

the figure of the missing persons. Many estimated the number would be several hundred.

"We are not going for massive demolition since there are bodies at different places of the building. We are trying to recover the bodies without any deformation," Lt Col Moin Uddin of Third Engineering Battalion (Savar Cantonment) told The Daily Star.

It could take another 12-15 days to remove the debris if a concerted effort is made. However, it might not be possible as the rescuers become careful whenever a body is found, he mentioned.

Debris is being transported in 20 trucks and dumped in a place near Savar Police Station.

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Some of the Savar collapse survivors admitted to the National Institute of Traumatology & Orthopaedic Rehabilitation (Nitor) yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Survived, only to suffer

SHAMIM ASHRAF and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Rikta Moni suddenly attempts to sit up on her bed, forgetting that a fracture in her spinal cord and several wounds in her body will not let her do so. Groaning in acute pain, she starts screaming, "Sister, get me out of here. The building is crumbling down!"

The building was not falling down. She just heard a very low sound of thunder. Neither was there Asha Begum, her elder sister whom a shuddering Rikta was calling out as she lay in a bed at Dhaka Medical College Hospital on Sunday evening.

Eighteen-year-old Rikta, a sewing machine operator, worked on the third floor of Rana Plaza that caved in last week leaving at least 388 dead. Aasha,

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Sangsad gets first female Speaker

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Shirin Sharmin Chaudhury has been elected, unopposed, as the country's first female Speaker by parliament yesterday.

She succeeds Abdul Hamid, who assumed the presidency on April 24 following the

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HOLIDAY

The office of The Daily Star will remain closed today, the May Day. Therefore, no newspaper will be published tomorrow. However, The Daily Star will continue to serve the readers through its online edition and SMS service.

VERDICT ON JAIL KILLING CASE APPEAL

Three ex-army men to die

SC upholds lower court judgment, finds 'conspiracy' behind killing 4 national leaders 38 years ago

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court yesterday upheld the death penalty of three former army personnel and life term imprisonment of eight others, 38 years into the killing of four national leaders inside the Dhaka Central Jail.

The verdict is exceptional compared to the earlier judgements delivered by the lower court in 2004 and the High Court in 2008 since the SC has found allegations of conspiracy behind the killing of

the four national heroes on November 3, 1975.

The lower court and the HC did not find any conspiracy behind the heinous killings.

The lower court awarded death penalty to three convicts and life term imprisonment to 12 others, while the HC awarded death sentence to one, acquitted six and did not say anything about the rest.

The three convicts who were awarded death penalty yesterday are Risalder (ret'd) Muslemuddin, Dafadar (dismissed) Marfat Ali

Shah and Dafadar (dismissed) Abdul Hashem Mridha.

The eight convicts who were handed down life term imprisonment are Lt Col (dismissed) Khondaker Abdur Rashid, Lt Col (relieved) Shariful Haq Dalim, Lt Col (ret'd) SHMB Noor Chowdhury, Lt Col (ret'd) AM Rashed Chowdhury, Maj (relieved) Ahmed Shariful Hossain, Capt (ret'd) Abdul Majed, Capt (relieved) Kismat Hasem and Capt (relieved) Nazmul Hossain.

All the convicts are on the run. The SC delivered the verdict

after allowing the government to file an appeal challenging the HC verdict in the case filed for killing the four national leaders -- Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmad, AHM Quamruzzaman and Captain Mansur Ali.

The six-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Md Muzammel Hossain also turned down the HC judgement, saying the allegations of conspiracy against the convicts had been proved before them.

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SUPPORT

FOR SAVAR BUILDING COLLAPSE
SURVIVING VICTIMS

The Board of Directors of Southeast Bank Limited in a meeting took the following decision in respect of the surviving victims – in physically impaired conditions – of Rana Plaza building collapse at Savar, Dhaka as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility.

Each physically impaired / handicapped victim who lost hand / leg / eye etc. will be given financial support to the extent between Tk.1.00 lac and Tk.2.00 lac, depending on the nature of physical injuries caused to the concerned victim on a case by case basis. The amount of money will be kept in the form of Fixed Deposit in the name of the victim. The mode of payment of the financial support will be decided in consultation with the appropriate authorities and Bangladesh Bank.

Southeast Bank expresses its deep condolence for the departed souls and profound sympathies for the surviving victims of the tragic incident.