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RANA PLAZA

Shop owners turn paupers

HELEMUL ALAM and BELAL HOSSAIN BIPOB

The collapse of nine-storey Rana Plaza in Savar has not only cost several hundred lives but also led many businesses in the building to bankruptcy.

The condition of 142 small and medium shop owners of the building is so bad that if they do not receive any compensation or easy loans soon, they will have to come down to the street.

Rana Plaza had housed 147 shops, including a Brac Bank branch, on the ground and first floors. These shops used to sell clothes, computer accessories, cosmetics and food items.

Each of the shops, ranging between 122 and 130 square feet, had been sold at Tk 11,500 per sq-ft on the ground floor and Tk 10,500 per sq-ft on the first floor.

"I have incurred a loss of around Tk 20 lakh due to the collapse. Now if I don't restart the business, I won't be able to manage even one meal for a day for the family," said Mahbubur Rahman Apu, owner of Progressive Computer.

Sharif Khan, who used to run a business in a rented shop at Rana Plaza, said he had fallen under a huge debt, as he, like most others, used to pay suppliers after sale.

He said he and 15 other sellers of computer accessories had moved in to the building around two years ago.

Businessman Abul Kalam Azad requested the government to create scopes so that the affected businessmen could get low-interest bank loans to restart their businesses.

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

People throng Jurain Graveyard in the capital on Wednesday as 32 unidentified victims of the Rana Plaza disaster are laid to rest.

Mass funeral at Jurain

32 unclaimed bodies buried

TUHIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

A large number of unclaimed bodies have been buried at Jurain graveyard in the capital for the second time in less than six months.

Several thousand people thronged the city corporation's burial ground when 32 victims of the worst-ever deadly building collapse in the country on April 24 were taken on their last journey on Wednesday.

They were laid to rest some 30 yards from the spot where 53 unidentified victims of the inferno at Tazreen Fashions in Ashulia in November last year had been buried.

"It hasn't been long since the Tazreen fire victims were buried here," said Tajul Islam, a guard, pointing to the western side of the ground.

The authorities decided

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Savar mayor suspended for negligence

UNO made OSD

STAR REPORT

Savar municipality Mayor Md Refatullah has been suspended for irregularities in approving the design of the nine-storey Rana Plaza that collapsed on April 24.

He has also been charged with negligence and failure to take proper action after several cracks had developed in the building, according to a circular issued by the Ministry of LGRD and Cooperatives yesterday.

The ministry also issued a show-cause notice on the mayor,

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INDUSTRIAL DISASTERS

Slow legal process delays justice

Culprits go unpunished

SAJJADUR RAHMAN

In 2005, at least 64 workers were killed in a building collapse at Spectrum Garments at Savar. The owners of the factory -- Shahriar Sayeed Hasan and Abul Hashem Fakir -- were sent to jail. But eventually they got out on bail in a month. A writ petition filed against them is still pending for more than seven years. They are now doing business under different names.

On November 24, 2012, a deadly fire at Tazreen Fashions factory on the outskirts of Dhaka killed 112 workers. A day after the accident Ashulia police filed a case saying the fire was set by outsiders.

Experts suspect police had said so to

save owner of the factory Delwar Hossain, despite his numerous faults, including blocking the exit passage and having no emergency exit. Hossain was never charged, let alone being arrested.

The latest one -- collapse of the nine-storey Rana Plaza in Savar that had housed five garment factories -- came with a massive shock, taking death toll to 442 so far.

The growing number of accidents and casualties in garment factories are heavily affecting the country's image abroad, according to an economist.

"The latest accident has received

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Martyr's wife testifies in war tribunal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A martyr's wife yesterday corroborated a genocide charge against war crimes accused Salauddin Quader Chowdhury before the International Crimes Tribunal-1.

Basonti Ghosh, 65, the 32nd prosecution witness, yesterday told the tribunal that during the Liberation War a Pakistani army man and a Bangalee had picked up her husband Monoronjon Ghosh from home and took him to the house of Khitish Mohajan.

Basonti said while Monoronjon was being

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Arrest order for Mueen, Ashraf

Tribunal accepts war crimes charges against the 2 Al-Badr leaders

STAFF CORRESPONDENT


The International Crimes Tribunal-2 yesterday accepted the war crimes charges brought against Chowdhury Mueen-Uddin and Ashrafuzzaman Khan in connection with the killing of 18 bright minds at the fag end of the Liberation War.

The three-member tribunal, led by Justice Obaidul Hassan with members Justice Md Mozibur Rahman and Judge Shahinur Islam, also issued arrest warrant against them and directed the police to submit a compliance report by May 12.

On April 25, the prosecution pressed 16 war crimes charges against Mueen-Uddin and Ashrafuzzaman, who were, according to post-liberation newspaper reports,

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The Daily Star



Integral Energy Limited

ONLINE POLL

Do you think families of the Savar building collapse victims will be compensated properly?

Yes

(14%)

No

(86%)

TOTAL VOTES: 255

TODAY'S POLL

Do you think that the ruling Awami League and the main opposition BNP will sit for a dialogue to resolve the current political impasse of the country?

PLEASE CAST YOUR VOTE AT

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PRAYER TIMING			May 3
	Azan	Jamaat	
Fajr	4-15	4-50	
Juma	12-30	1-15	
Asr	4-45	5-00	
Maghrib	6-31	6-35	
Esha	8-00	8-30	
Source: Islamic Foundation			



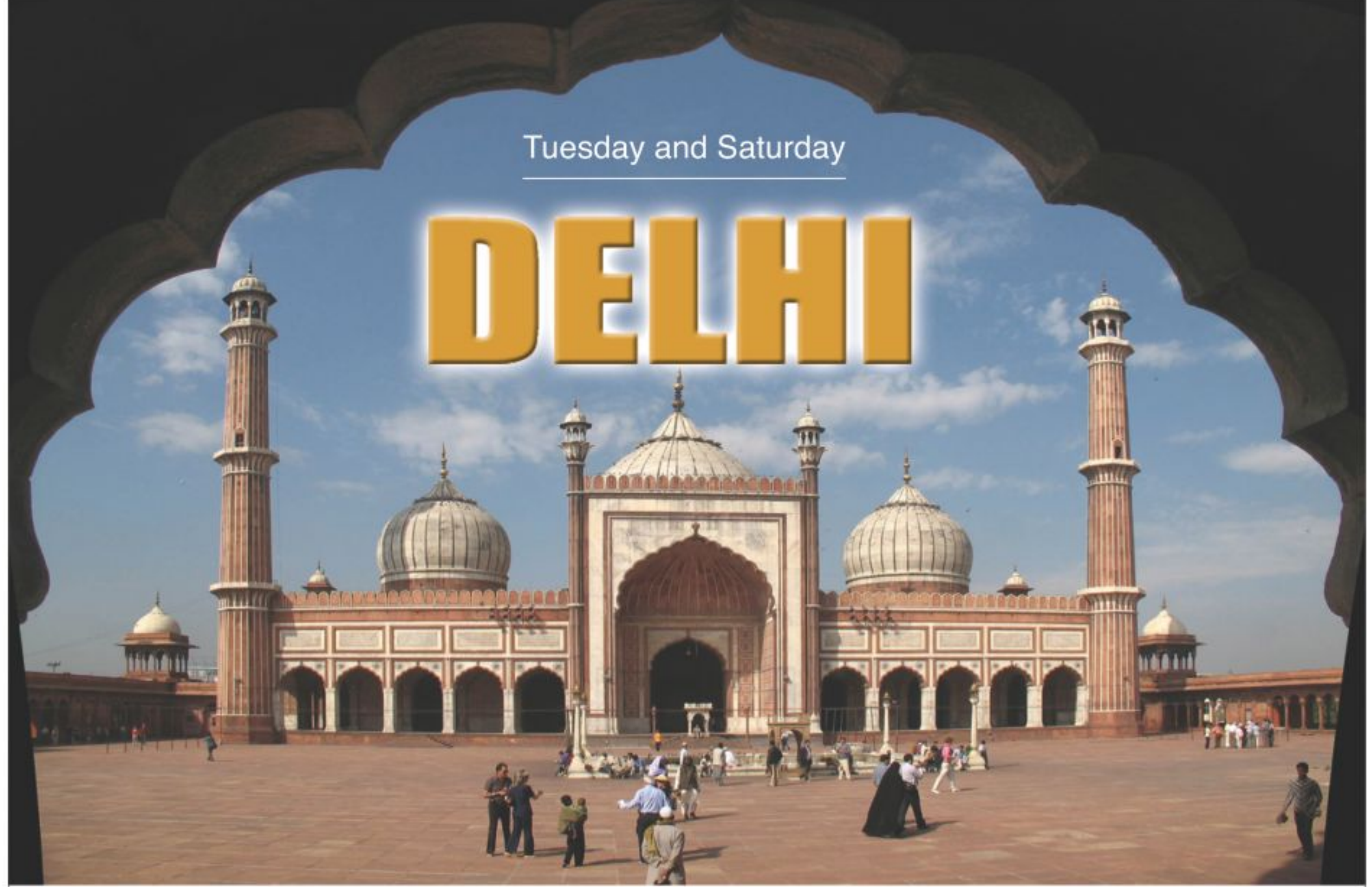
PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Waiting for a mother

Theirs is a world of innocence, yet to pass into the sadness of experience. And yet sadness is what awaits them, for tragedy has already cast its pale shadow on their lives. Their mother Helena Akhter has gone missing, under all that concrete and rubble which claimed so many hundreds of lives through the Rana Plaza collapse last week. These young siblings, Tasnur Islam and Tahseen Islam, despite holding up that picture of their mother, know not that she is gone for good, that her remains lie buried somewhere in that accursed soil.

For eight days these brothers have played happily on the grounds of Adhar Chandra School, as the very young are wont to do. Having made their way to Savar from Gaibandha with an aunt and uncle, the boys have lingered. They have played. They do not know of the reality. They will, sooner or

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