



Helping dairy farmers to produce more



MEDIA TRIAL VS MEDIA ACTIVISM

The media has to check that the distinction is never blurred

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ODE TO TAGORE

Buddhadeb makes 13 films based on the bard's 13 poems

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OBAMA'S TERRIBLE WEEK

Ritualistic invocation of Watergate makes his scandals appear smaller

PAGE 8

Silver lining fading

BNP gives up on polls-time govt proposal as govt sticks to its guns

SHAKHAWAT LITON and RASHIDUL HASAN

The BNP-led 18-party alliance aims to step up street agitation to force the government to concede its demand for a non-partisan polls-time administration.

The opposition MPs, who are to join the parliament session beginning on June 3 to save their membership, will not place any proposal on the election-time government for discussion, as suggested by the ruling Awami League, said two BNP policymakers.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, they said placing any proposal would bring no result until the ruling party agreed in principle to their demand.

They also said they were looking for ways to intensify street agitation, as the party in power was not "sincere" in resolving the ongoing political crisis through talks, the possibility of which seems to have fizzled out.

The two leaders believe the government will not pay heed to their core demand unless it is forced to do so through vigorous agitation.

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Join, stay in JS

PM urges opposition for talks

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday urged the opposition lawmakers to join parliament for discussing current political issues, not for retaining memberships only.

"They [opposition lawmakers] will join parliament session now as their membership will stand cancelled if they are absent from seven more consecutive sittings," she said. "I will request you to come to the parliament for discussion. Do not leave after retaining membership."

She also warned the opposition party of tougher action unless it stops killings and destructive activities carried out in recent times.

"Stop these murders and destructive activities," she said.

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15 editors concerned

Ask govt to reopen Amar Desh, 2 TVs and free Mahmudur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Editors of 15 national dailies yesterday demanded reopening of the press of daily Amar Desh, freeing its acting editor Mahmudur Rahman and allowing the broadcast of Diganta and Islamic TVs.

In a joint statement, they also demanded withdrawal of cases against Mahmudur's mother and

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Act right away

US spurs govt on labour rights, safety inspection

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

The United States has asked Bangladesh to amend the labour law immediately and effect prompt improvement in fire and building safety inspections and addressing workers' rights issues.

US Secretary of State John F Kerry made the call at an hour-long meeting with Bangladesh Foreign Minister Dipu Moni at the State Department in Washington DC on Friday.

Expressing condolence to Dipu for the recent Rana Plaza collapse that killed 1,127 garment workers, Kerry said, "Everybody in America shared the agony of those losses, and our hearts go out to the families. We hope that this will be able to help all of us cooperate on the issue of labour and

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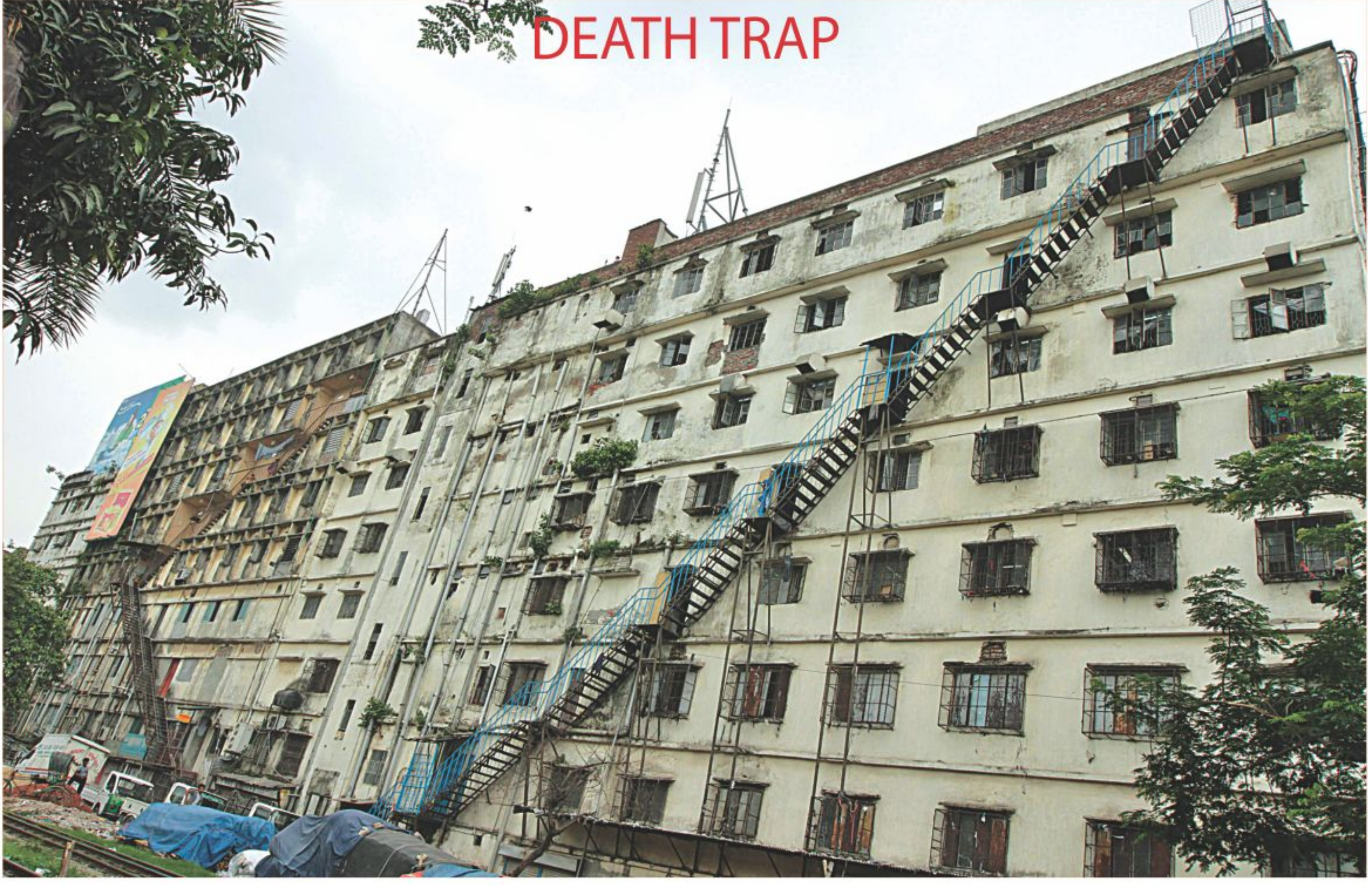


PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

The narrow, rusty and wobbly fire escape of garment factories housed in a dilapidated building at Chairmanbari of Banani in the capital. How the fire escape will hold in case of an emergency, when hundreds if not more than a thousand workers use it, beggars belief. Another photo on page 2.

Fix law, get benefits

ILO, WB block Bangladesh from joining Better Work programme; term labour laws very weak, rights treacherous

STAR REPORT

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the World Bank are firm about not letting Bangladesh join a global textile industry monitoring programme run by them until the country implements the proposed amendments to its labour law.

In a bid to enhance the image of the country's garment sector, factory owners and the government after the Tazreen fire last year sought to join the Better Work programme. It involves unannounced, independent inspections of participating textile plants and technical help from the WB for managers and plant owners.

But ILO officials said the country's labour laws at present are so "weak", and the conditions for unions and workers so "treacherous" that the organisation has demanded major changes prior to approving its participation in the programme.

"There were unacceptable risks of failure to starting a programme before these conditions are realised," Dan Rees, director of the programme, told The Washington Post.

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Hartal unacceptable

Say 6 foreign chambers

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Six leading foreign chambers in Bangladesh have joined hands to condemn the ongoing political violence in the name of hartal.

"The chambers are pleased that Bangladesh is by constitution a secular country. Unfortunately, the political turmoil is harming the business potential and the image of the country," they said in a joint statement yesterday.

The country should maintain its secularism, they said.

The shutdowns are discouraging foreign investors and that would ultimately have a negative impact on the economy, they said at a press briefing at The Westin Dhaka.

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PURE GOLD



The amount of impurities makes the difference between ordinary and high quality steel!

Steel's Chemical Composition – Standard					
Elements (Maximum Values in wt.%)	America	Europe	India	Bangladesh	AKS (BUET Test)
Carbon	0.18	0.20	0.30	0.24	0.17
Manganese	1.60	1.70	1.65	1.70	0.82
Silicon	0.40	0.55	0.50	0.65	0.19

Addition of little amount of impurities makes pure gold less precious. Impurities create the same difference between ordinary & high quality steel. Making steel simply by melting iron without proper refinement leaves the impurity elements in uncontrolled proportion. Hence, the steel produced is below International Standard. AKS TMT Bar, produced from 100% refined steel, conforms to the high standards demanded in Bangladesh, Indian, American & European Standards.



100% REFINED STEEL

AKS

TMT 500W

It is critical to test the quality of steel before use!