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The whistleblower group launches political arm for Australian polls
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No doubt about article by Khaleda
Washington Times confirms amid her denial in Sangsad
REAZ AHMAD

Full freedom for trade unionism

Govt moves to amend labour law to win back GSP from US

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In a desperate bid to regain a duty waiver from the US, the government has decided to give workers full freedom to run trade unions in factories.

Parliament, amid pressure from the US and the European Union, two main export destinations for Bangladesh, is likely to pass the amended labour law on July 14.

It will be the government's first visible step to regain a trade privilege scheme known as the generalised system of preferences (GSP) that the Obama administration scrapped on June 27, citing "serious shortcomings" in safety and labour standards.

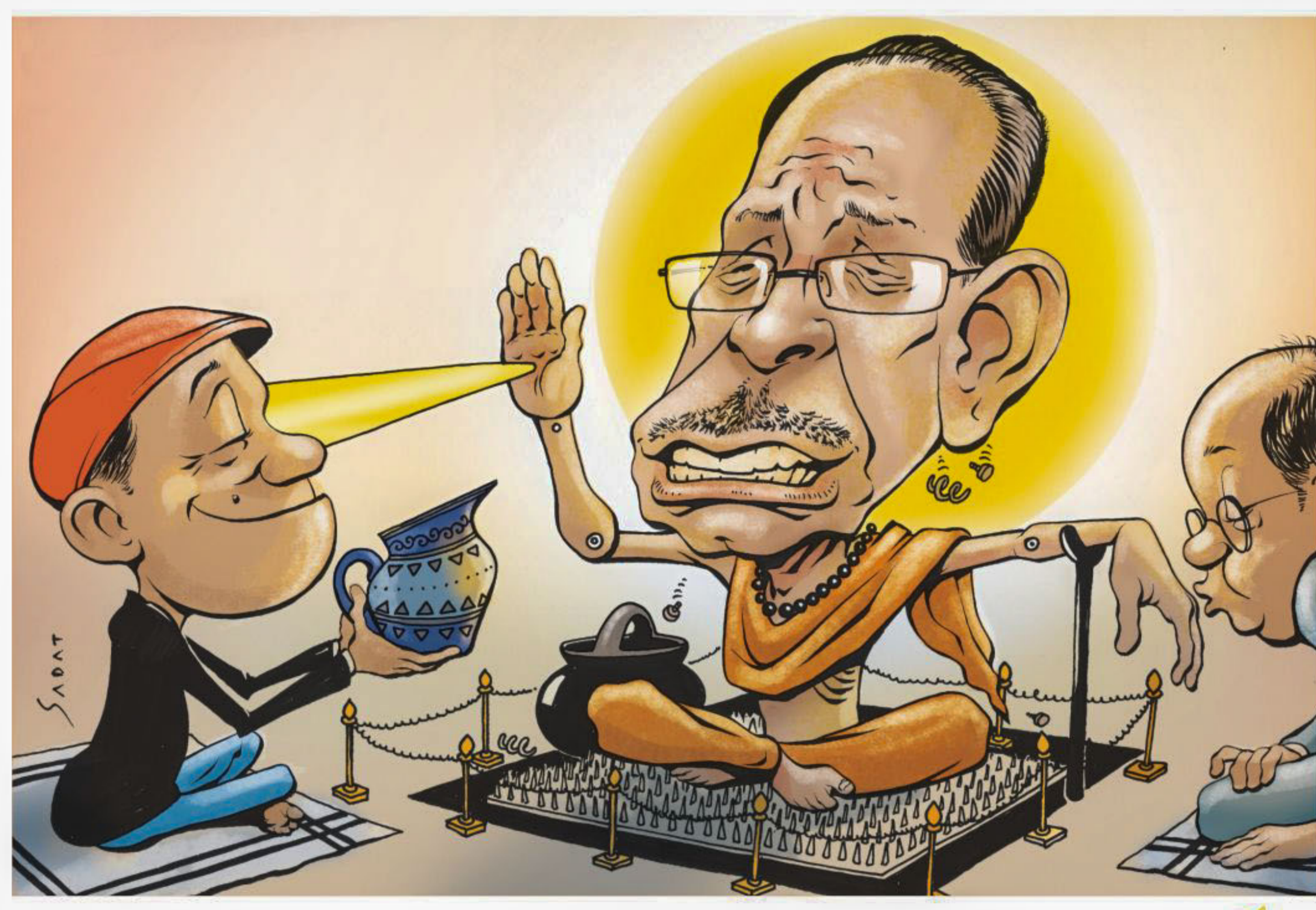
The cabinet approved the proposed labour law on May 13.

Khandaker Mosharrar Hossain, minister for expatriates' welfare and overseas employment, said, "The main purpose of the amending the law is to establish a warm relationship between workers and owners through trade unions."

But the workers must maintain discipline in factories, said Mosharrar, also chairman of a parliamentary sub-committee on labour law reforms.

According to the existing labour law, the names of union leaders must be approved by the management of a factory before the formation of a

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GAZIPUR CITY ELECTION 2013

TAX DODGING
NBR freezes Mannan's bank accounts
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) has frozen bank accounts of MA Mannan, BNP-backed mayoral candidate in Gazipur City Corporation polls, for dodging tax, said NBR officials yesterday.

The tax authority instructed the Mercantile Bank and IFIC Bank to block the accounts, as it

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Ershad in demand
After AL's Ajmat, BNP's Mannan gets his 'blessings'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

All of a sudden, Jatiya Party Chairman HM Ershad has emerged as the kingmaker at the Gazipur City Corporation polls as both mayoral aspirants have rushed to him for his blessings and support.

MA Mannan, who is backed by the BNP-led opposition alliance, visited Ershad yesterday, a day after his rival Ajmat Ullah Khan met the former military ruler.

Emerging from around an hour-long meeting at the JP leader's Baridhara residence, Mannan told reporters, "I came here to seek his [Ershad's] blessings."

Terming the ex-dictator a political mentor, he said "He [Ershad] blessed me and assured me of his party's cooperation in the polls."

MORE ON PAGE 5

Hasan bashes Mannan
Moudud says it's violation of code
STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Environment and Forest Minister Hasan Mahmud yesterday accused BNP-backed mayoral hopeful MA Mannan of "misappropriating" hundreds of crores of taka from Hajj pilgrims when the latter was state minister for religious affairs.

Although Mannan was a lecturer, he prefers to use

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SAUDI GOVT EXTENDS AMNESTY TIME

3 lakh workers get 4 more months

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Saudi Arabia has extended by four months the amnesty period for illegal foreign workers to regularise their status, transfer jobs or return home without prosecution.

A statement by Saudi interior ministry yesterday said the original three-month grace period, which was supposed to end on July 4, had been extended until November 4, reports Arab News.

"This is a great opportunity for us, our people. We thank the Saudi authorities," Emdadul Haque, labour minister at Bangladesh High Commission

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in Riyadh told The Daily Star in his instant reaction.

An estimated 3 lakh illegal Bangladeshi workers, who could not avail the opportunity, will be benefited by the time extension.

The Saudi government in April this year had declared the amnesty allowing irregular migrants to correct their status. The time limit however proved to be too short for preparing documents for a large number of illegal foreign workers.

According to the Saudi labour ministry, more than 1.5 million illegal foreign workers have come forward so far. Of them, some 180,000 have left the

Muhith gave JS false statement

Says Yunus Centre

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Yunus Centre yesterday protested Finance Minister AMA Muhith's statement about Grameen Bank and its founder Prof Muhammad Yunus, terming it "completely false".

The centre which promotes philosophies of the Nobel laureate made the protest six days after the minister launched a scathing attack on the microcredit pioneer in parliament on June 26.

About Muhith's claim that all Grameen social

FULL STATEMENT -- PAGE 6



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Problem in Grameen name

Commerce ministry sits on applications of Grameen Kalyan, Grameen Shakti for 2 years

REJAUUL KARIM BYRON and MD FAZLUR RAHMAN

For more than two years, two associated organisations of Grameen Bank have been facing problems amending their rules as the commerce ministry is delaying the process.

Grameen Kalyan and Grameen Shakti -- two of the many successful companies set up by Nobel Laureate Prof Muhammad Yunus -- applied to the commerce ministry in December 2010, seeking permission to bring about changes in their articles of association.

But there has been no headway. Officials of the organisations termed it as unusual given the approval they got in the past in a smooth manner.

According to them, the ongoing debate over the Grameen Bank could be a major factor behind this delay.

"The issue has been pending for long. The ministry has not made any queries," said Imamus Sultan, managing director of Grameen Kalyan.

He said they were also facing delay in getting certified copies from the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies

and Firms (RJSC) for any changes or amendments that the two organisations brought in.

The timing of seeking the approval coincides with the broadcast of a documentary on Norwegian TV, which alleged Grameen Bank had transferred donors' money to another associated organisation.

The Norwegian government dismissed the allegations, saying no irregularities or corruption had taken place in the transfer.

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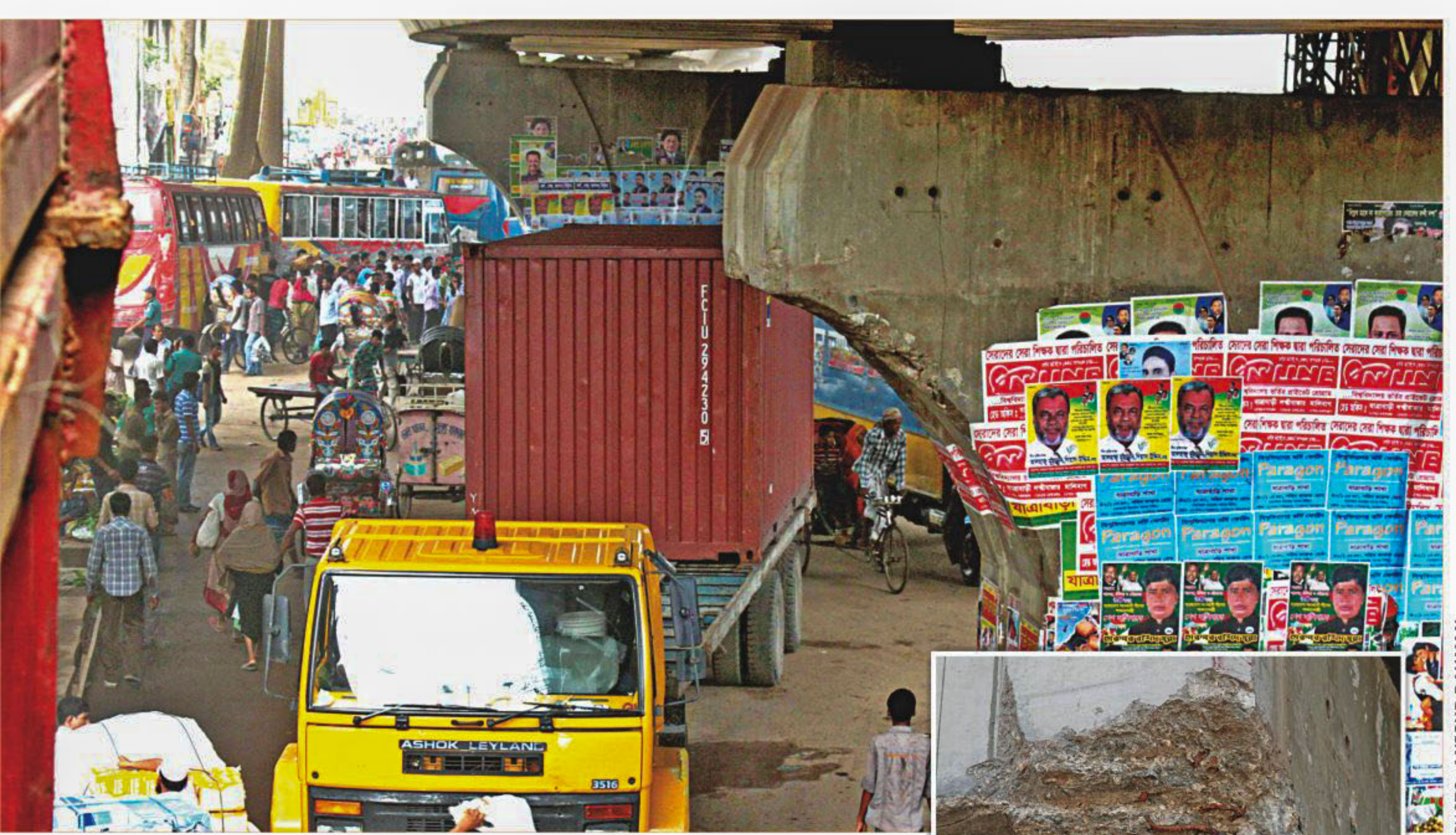
THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

PUNISHING BANGLADESH

US decision defies logic

The Obama Administration has finally found a nation it is willing to punish -- mighty Bangladesh. The US suspended tariff-free access to the US market for a small portion of Bangladesh's exports last week. US Trade Representative Michael Froman said the goal is "to see Bangladeshi workers in safe, appropriate work situations." But the real effect will be to hurt those workers and hand the AFL-CIO a protectionist victory.

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Hit by vehicles, four pillars of the under-construction Gulistan-Jatrabari flyover in the capital's Jatrabari have been damaged. The road here remains congested, having been narrowed down by the construction work. Traffic often runs into the pillars. The photo was taken yesterday.

TESCO PRESENTS GLOBAL "SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR" & "GOLD SUPPLIER 2013" TO DIRD GROUP

TESCO Europe & International Sourcing has awarded DIRD Group with the prestigious global "SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR" and the "GOLD SUPPLIER 2013". Mr. Itemad Ud Daulah, Chairman of DIRD Group, received the award on 13 June 2013 from Mr. Cristophe Roussel, International Sourcing & Logistics Director, TESCO International Sourcing and Mr. Laurent Madelaine, International Sourcing Director Clothing, TESCO International Sourcing.

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