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Ashulia RMG hub abuzz again

Factories reopen, but 541 workers suspended over unrest

STAR REPORT

Fifty-nine Ashulia-based garment factories reopened yesterday as normally returned in the industrial belt after around two weeks of demonstrations by workers for wage hike. However, over 541 workers have been suspended for their alleged involvement in the unrest.

Most of the workers were reportedly suspended from Ha-Meem Group, Sharmin Group, Setara Group and Windy Apparels Ltd. The factory authorities pasted the lists of terminated workers at the gates of their respective units.

In some cases, the list also included photos of the suspended workers.

AK Azad, managing director of Ha-Meem Group, said he could not give an exact number of suspended workers.

"We will form a committee soon to investigate the suspensions. During interrogation by the committee, every suspended worker

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Garment factory workers head for their workplaces in Savar's Ashulia. Fifty-nine readymade garment units there reopened yesterday after remaining closed for six days following labour protests for wage hike. Left, workers checking the list of suspended employees, and members of law enforcement agencies deployed in front of a factory.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

97 IS militants killed in Mosul

Says Iraq's Joint Military Command

CNN ONLINE

Iraqi security and coalition forces have killed 97 IS militants in eastern and southern Mosul on Sunday, Iraq's Joint Military Command said, as the group continues to defend its Iraqi bastion with suicide attacks and artillery.

The militants were killed in three separate incidents, the Iraqi military said in a statement.

In one incident, IS fighters tried to advance near a federal police position, south of Mosul, before Iraqi forces detonated two vehicle-borne IEDs and killed 21 "terrorists", the military said.

In a second incident, the military said it killed 51 IS fighters and injured a number of others after the militant group -- using vehicle-borne IEDs and suicide bombers -- tried to launch attacks on Iraqi military positions in the neighborhoods of Intesar, al Salam and al Shaimaa' in southeastern Mosul.

Separately, aircraft belonging to the coalition forces carried out airstrikes on an IS gathering in al Wahda neighborhood in eastern Mosul, killing 25 terrorists, the military said.

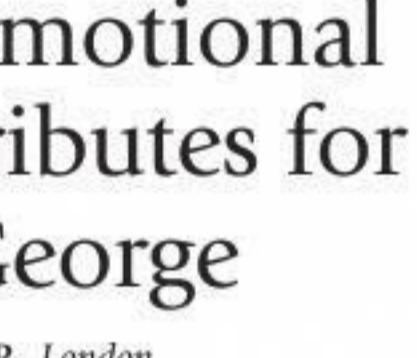
Mosul, Iraq's second-most populous city, is IS' last major stronghold in Iraq and the terror group is well entrenched there.

Massively outnumbered by the advancing coalition -- a 90,000-strong force of Iraqi government troops, Kurdish Peshmerga fighters and irregular militia soldiers -- IS relies on asymmetric warfare tactics to inflict damage on its opponents, and terrorize long-suffering civilian populations.

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Emotional tributes for George

AFP, London

Fans gathered in silence outside the north London home of George Michael yesterday following his death aged 53, speaking emotionally about the late pop superstar whose music touched millions.

"He died so young!" said Karen Walkden, 52, who brought a message to

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11kg gold bars seized from Qatar aircraft

Smuggler could not be arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Customs seized 100 gold bars weighing around 11.6 kilogrammes from a Qatar Airways flight at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in the capital yesterday.

Acting on a tip-off, customs officials searched the aircraft that reached Dhaka from Doha around 11:00am and found the gold bars abandoned beneath a passenger seat, said HM Ahsanul Kabir, assistant commissioner of customs.

No one was arrested in this connection.

Kabir believes that the bars, wrapped in a red piece of cloth, would have taken out, if not seized, afterwards by anyone having security passes.

The estimated price of the gold bars is Tk 6 crore, he said.

According to customs, cleaners, food suppliers and staff of an airway have access to an aircraft after it lands. Customs officials are looking for the people involved in

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City for one million now a ghost town



CNN ONLINE

Once intended to accommodate over one million residents, the new town of Kangbashi in northern China is today home to just one-tenth of its projected population.

In the early 2000s, Chinese government officials poured over \$1 billion into the development of the city, several miles south of Ordos in Inner Mongolia. The result, according to French photographer Raphael Olivier, is a "very beautiful city, full of contradictions."

Drawn to the "post-apocalyptic" feel generated by the juxtaposition of vacant, large-scale buildings

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TORTURE ON WIFE Accused sent to jail after surrender

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet



Belal

The man, who allegedly cut off his wife's tongue and slashed the tendon of her left leg for dowry, was sent to jail after he surrendered before a Sylhet court yesterday.

Akther Hossain, officer-in-charge of Jalalabad Police Station, said Belal Ahmed, prime accused in the case filed in connection with torturing her wife Suma Begum for dowry, surrendered before Sylhet Metropolitan Magistrate's Court-1 around 10:00am, and the court sent him to jail.

Police would pray to the

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Winter late due to recent cyclone in Bay

Met predicts mercury would drop soon in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Nearly half of the Poush, the first of the two winter months, is already over, but the weather in the capital is not turning wintry yet.

People are not wearing warm clothes. Even many are having their ceiling fans on at night.

"I don't feel cold at all. I need to turn on my ceiling fan while sleeping at night," Reazul Ahmed from the city's Rayerbazar said yesterday.

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PRAYER TIMING DECEMBER 27

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghribi

AZAN 5-30 12-45 4-00 5-27 7-00

JAMAT 6-05 1-15 4-15 5-30 7-30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

EKUSHEY BOOK FAIR Publisher banned for stance against academy decision

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangla Academy has decided not to give Shrabon Prokashani any stalls in the next two Amar Ekushey Book Fairs allegedly for protesting the academy's actions against another publisher.

The authorities made the decision on November 10, a Bangla Academy official said. However, Robin Ahsan, owner of Shrabon Prokashani, said he came to know about the decision yesterday.

During this year's book fair in February, the academy shut down Ba-Dwip Prakashan's stall for selling a book that "hurt religious sentiments". Later, law enforcers arrested three people, including the editor of the "controversial book".

But the owner of the Shrabon Publications "had taken a stance" that could have allowed the book to be sold inside the academy's fair, Jalal Ahmed, a director of Bangla Academy, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The academy's executive council was of the opinion that its stance went against the "greater interest of the fair", said Jalal, also member secretary of the book fair committee.

In a meeting on November 10, the council made the decision not to allocate any stalls for Shrabon Publications for two years, he said.

Contacted, Robin said he did not take any stance regarding selling of the book in the fair, but he along with others had protested at the arrest of Shamsuzzoha Manik, editor of the book.

He said Bangla Academy "banned" his publishing house

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With headlights on around 7:00am yesterday, vehicles move slowly on Chittagong-Cox's Bazar highway due to dense fog. Though winter has set in and thick fog blankets most parts of the country, there is a little nip in the air in the capital.

PHOTO: ANURUP KANTI DAS