



THE KANCHPUR-MEGHNA-GUMTI BRIDGES ARE BEING BUILT WITH HIGHLY DUCTILE GRADE 420 BSRM ULTIMA BARS



# RMG workers' wage demo continues

They block highway at capital's Uttara for five hours; torch bus

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Around 3,000 garment workers blocked the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway at Uttara in the city for five hours yesterday on the second consecutive day of their protest over the disparity in pay in the new wage structure.

Thousands of passengers suffered from a massive tail-back in the area as the road was blocked for five hours. The demonstration took an ugly turn when some protesters burnt a passenger bus.

Workers said the protest arose due to a disparity in the raise of wages among the different grades in the latest wage gazette for the garment workers.

Nazma Akter, president of the Sammilito Garment Sramik Federation, a workers' rights body, said some of the factories had paid the wages for the month of December to the workers but there was a huge disparity in the pay.

"This is the main reason for the current unrest," Akter said. She also added that in some cases the management of the factories paid the workers following the old pay structure.

The new wage was made effective from December 1. However, it came with a huge difference in the wage hike among the third and fourth grades, as their pay did not rise like that of entry-level workers.

The workers said the monthly wage for those in the seventh grade, who are entry-level workers, increased to Tk 8,000 from Tk 5,300 as per the latest gazette published by the government last year. But, the wages of the workers in other grades did not increase at the same rate.

Senior operators, who have been working for more than seven to eight years, saw a rise of only Tk 500, whereas entry-level worker's wages increased by Tk 2,700 at one go.

This was the case for workers in the third and fourth grades.

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Plumes of smoke billowing from a bus set alight during a garment workers' demonstration for wage hike on the Airport Road in the capital's Uttara yesterday afternoon. *Left*, agitating workers intercept a car. *Right*, police drive protesters away from the spot.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



## Of a polls observer group

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

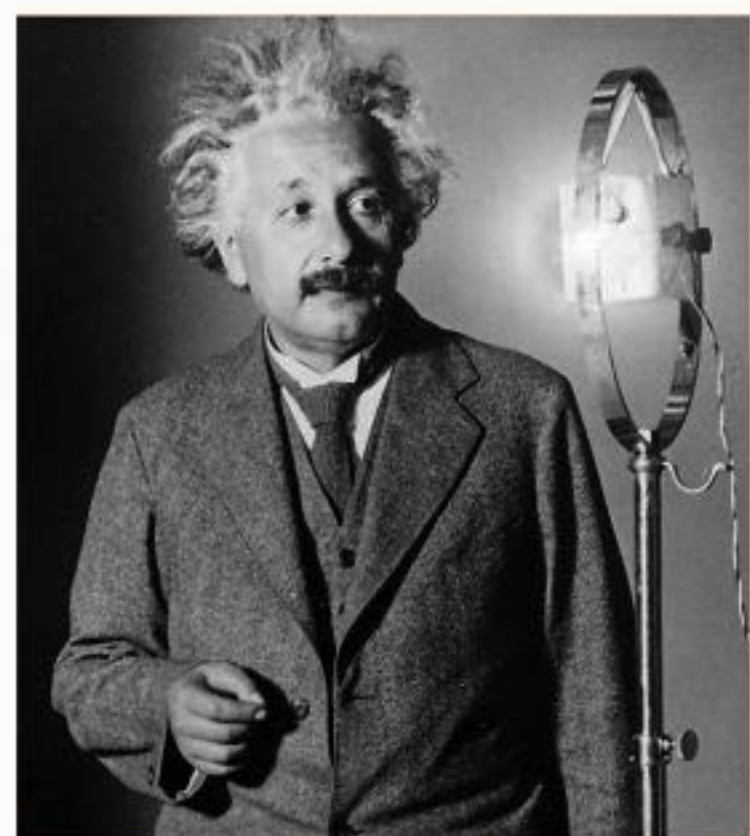
An EC-registered organisation which observed the December 30 election and termed it "free and fair" is said to have links with the ruling Awami League led grand alliance.

Its advisers included RAM Obaidul Muktaad Chowdhury, an Awami League leader who won from Brahmanbaria-3, and one leader from the Jatiya Party (Ershad) and one from the JP (Manju). The JP factions are part of the grand alliance which won in the polls.

Obaidul has been an adviser to the organisation -- SAARC Human Rights Foundation (SHRF) -- since its inception in 2014. The Daily Star learnt after talking to the polls observer's Secretary General Mawlana Mohammad Abed Ali.

The Dhaka-based SHRF is part of the Election Monitoring Forum (EMF), a platform of 31 organisations registered with the Election Commission (EC) and 26 non-government organisations, which was formed in November last year. The association deployed 5,765 observers in 214 constituencies, who visited 17,165 polling centres on December 30.

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## Einstein vs Modi Indian scientists slam ancient stem cell claim

APP, New Delhi

The organisers of a major Indian science conference distanced themselves Sunday from speakers who used the prestigious event to dismiss Einstein's discoveries and claim ancient Hindus invented stem cell research.

The Indian Scientific Congress Association expressed "serious concern" as the unorthodox remarks aired by prominent academics at its annual conference

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## One killed as AL men clash

Locals say 2 Jubo League groups fought over control of footpath in Mirpur

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A man was killed and at least two others were injured in a clash between two groups of "Jubo League men" allegedly over controlling collection of extortion money from footpath vendors in the city's Mirpur area yesterday.

The dead has been identified as Roman, 32.

Police and locals said two Jubo League groups, each having eight to 10 members, sat in a meeting at a makeshift election camp of an Awami League MP candidate at Block-B of Mirpur-6 around 2:15pm to decide who would collect extortion money from which portion of footpaths in Mirpur-10 area.

At one stage, the two groups attacked each other with sharp weapons, said a police official, wishing not to be named.

During the clash, Roman and two others named Al Amin and Saiful sustained stab injuries.

Police later reached the spot and found Roman lying dead on the spot. They seized four motorbikes from outside the election camp.

Locals sent Al Amin and Saiful to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) and the National Institute of Traumatology and Orthopedic Rehabilitation.

A group of five to six youths stabbed Al Amin near the kitchen market at Block-B of Mirpur-6 and fled the scene, a witness told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity.

Al Amin, a resident of Mirpur's Rupnagar, used to sell engine oil on a

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## British citizen of Bangladesh origin found dead in rehab

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A Bangladesh-born UK citizen was found dead at a drug rehabilitation centre in Moulvibazar town on Sunday night.

Police recovered the body of Jalal Uddin, 45, who was admitted to Uddipon Madok Niramoy Kendra on December 29, from an ambulance parked on its premises.

Police and doctors said there were many injury marks on his body.

Jalal's mother Ruksana Akhter told reporters that the rehab authorities called her around 7:00pm on Sunday and said her son was admitted to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital after he fell seriously ill.

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## ROHINGYA DETAINEES IN KSA

## Riyadh moves to deport them to Bangladesh

Reports London-based news portal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Saudi Arabia is going to deport scores of Rohingyas, held indefinitely by the kingdom, to Bangladesh, reports Middle East Eye (MEE), a London-based news portal covering events in the Middle East.

The Rohingyas, some of them having spent nearly five to six years in Saudi detention, were being prepared on Sunday for deportation at the Shumaisi detention centre in Jeddah, it reported on Sunday.

Quoting Rohingya rights activists, journalist Areeb Ullah of the MEE tweeted yesterday that the Rohingyas were scheduled to board a Saudi Airlines flight at 5:00pm (Saudi time) yesterday and arrive in Bangladesh early today.

Many Rohingyas locked up in the Shumaisi detention centre went to Saudi Arabia on Bangladeshi passports, obtained via fake documents.

Contacted, Mujibur Rahman, counsellor at Bangladesh Consulate General in Jeddah, however, said they did not issue travel pass to any Rohingya.

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## Schoolgirl murdered after 'rape'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

An eight-year-old girl was killed after being "raped" in Gabtala village of the district's Ashashuni upazila on Sunday evening.

Police recovered the body of Sushmita Das, daughter of Prashanto Das of the village, from a septic tank around 11:00pm.

A youth was arrested in this connection.

Prashanto said Sushmita,

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## PRAYER TIMING JANUARY 8

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha  
AZAN 5:30 12:45 4:00 5:30 7:00  
JAMAAT 6:05 1:15 4:15 5:35 7:30

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

জনাব মোঃ তাজুল ইসলাম, এমপি  
মাননীয় মন্ত্রী  
স্থানীয় সরকার, পল্লী উন্নয়ন ও  
সমবায় মন্ত্রণালয়

গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকারের মন্ত্রীসভায়  
বন্ধ ও পাট মন্ত্রণালয়ের দায়িত্বপ্রাপ্তিতে  
মাননীয় মন্ত্রী গোলাম দস্তগীর গাজী, বীর প্রতীক, এমপি  
প্রাক্তন চেয়ারম্যান, যমুনা ব্যাংক লিমিটেড  
এবং

স্থানীয় সরকার, পল্লী উন্নয়ন ও সমবায় মন্ত্রণালয়ের দায়িত্বপ্রাপ্তিতে  
মাননীয় মন্ত্রী মোঃ তাজুল ইসলাম, এমপি  
প্রাক্তন চেয়ারম্যান, যমুনা ব্যাংক লিমিটেড-এর প্রতি  
যমুনা ব্যাংকের পক্ষ থেকে আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন।

মাননীয় মন্ত্রীদ্বয়কে জাতির আগামীর পথচলায় গুরুত্বপূর্ণ ভূমিকা রাখার  
সুযোগ করে দেবার জন্য  
মাননীয় প্রধানমন্ত্রীর প্রতি কৃতজ্ঞতা ও বিশেষ ধন্যবাদ।

JAMUNA BANK

জনাব গোলাম দস্তগীর গাজী  
বীর প্রতীক, এমপি  
মাননীয় মন্ত্রী  
বন্ধ ও পাট মন্ত্রণালয়

