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Factory fire kills 3 in Savar



STAR REPORT

Three workers were burnt to death after a massive fire broke out at a shoe factory in Savar's Ashulia yesterday afternoon.

Abdul Alim, deputy assistant director of fire service in Savar, told The Daily Star that of the victims, two were female and the other was male.

The male victim was identified as Sumon, but the identities of the two others could not be known immediately, he said.

Around 60 to 70 workers were inside United Footwear factory when the fire broke out, Alim said, quoting locals.

"We recovered two bodies from the factory's bathroom and another from the floor."

He added that on information, they rushed to the spot and doused the fire.

At least 40 people were injured in the incident, reports UNB, quoting Ashulia Police Station Officer-in-Charge Kamruzzaman.

The cause of the fire could not be known immediately.



Boats lie abandoned on the banks of Jadukata river, badly affected by erosion and sand lifting, in Badaghat area of Sunamganj's Tahirpur upazila. Locals say an influential quarter has been extracting sand and stones during the dry season every year, hampering the river's biodiversity. Those who protest end up being harassed, they said. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: SHEIKH NASIR

War fear grips Bangladeshis in Ukraine

PORIMOL PALMA

Crowds and traffic have been relatively thin on the streets of Kyiv as people fear a war may break out between Ukraine and Russia anytime.

While shops and offices remain open, people are only leaving their houses to buy essentials.

"They are afraid they may have to move anytime in case of a war... The situation is apparently normal. However, the tension is evident on everyone's faces," Khaled Mosharrif, a Bangladeshi expatriate, told this correspondent from Kyiv last evening.

With spring coming, businesses are supposed to be thriving. But the opposite is happening, he said.

After Russian President Vladimir Putin recognised independence of the parts of two states -- Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts -- on February 21, Bangladeshi expatriates said they are very fearful of the situation.

The Russian troops and tanks, which have been waiting on the border, may enter Ukraine anytime, they said.

Russia, with around 15,000 soldiers stationed, surrounds all the borders of Ukraine, except the one between it and Poland.

In 2014, Russia invaded and annexed the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine, which became an independent state after the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.

Since Russia's annexation of Crimea, Ukraine has been increasingly seeking to become a Nato member -- a move that Russia has been opposing. The US and most European nations have, however, been in support of Ukraine.

No diplomatic efforts by the US and European

UKRAINE MOBILISES RESERVES -- PAGE 2 SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

A sub-inspector planned it all

Alleges family of Wazir, whose death from 'custodial torture' sparked protests

DWOHA CHOWDHURY, back from Sunamganj

The custodial torture of Wazir Mia, who died from injuries in Sunamganj on Monday, was plotted by a sub-inspector over a feud with a UP member related to the policeman, alleged the victim's family.

Wazir was arrested in the early hours of February 10, along with Shahidul Islam and Akhter Mia, on charges of stealing cows. However, none of them were accused in the case filed on January 14 by Nur Mia of Amria village in Santiganj upazila.

The arrests were made on information given by Shamim Mia, who was arrested earlier.

Wazir's family members, and the other arrestees, Shahidul and Akhter, allege that SI Debashish Sutradhar, investigation officer of the case, arrested Shamim to use him as a pawn in his plan to arrest and torture Wazir. They also said Debashish was assisted by SI Akhteruzzaman and SI Pardon



WAZIR MIA

Kumar Singha.

The family claimed the IO is a relative of local union parishad member Ranjit Sutradhar, who has had a long-standing feud with them.

Wazir's brother Dalim Mia said, "In 2017, ours and Ranjit's family were feuding over establishing supremacy across two neighbouring villages. It was later settled. However, as Debashish came to the station a year ago, we believe they planned my brother's torture to take

revenge.

"After my brother was released on bail, he told us that SI Debashish asked him about the conflict [between the families] while torturing him and said he [Debashish] will leave him in such a condition that he won't survive long."

At least 21 locals, including Wazir, of Shatrumardan and Brahmanaganj villages filed a written complaint against Shamim and four others with the officer in charge of Shantiganj Police Station on January 20.

Dalim said Shamim gave Wazir's name during interrogation, as an act of revenge.

"The night police came to arrest my brother, Shamim was with them, wearing a police vest and boots."

Shahidul Islam, who was also arrested along with Wazir, said, "When in police custody, Shamim tried to have me say Wazir was the 'godfather' of a

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Take steps to improve services

PM urges Biman

UNB, Dhaka



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday asked Biman Bangladesh Airlines to take effective measures to provide world class passenger and cargo services to make it more profitable.

"For effective and skilled ground handling system, we want to create a separate unit.

Training and manpower are needed for this," she said.

The PM said the separate unit is needed as soon as possible so that the government could provide appropriate manpower there for ensuring better passenger services.

Hasina was addressing the golden jubilee anniversary programme of the national carrier at Balaka Building of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport after joining the event from the Gono Bhaban virtually.

She asked the Biman authorities to take steps for better ground handling.

Hasina said she wants Biman will internationally conduct its cargo services with its own planes.

Biman will be more profitable if its cargo service continues, she said, adding that the cargo

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BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia arrives at the Sheikh Russel Gastroenterology Institute and Hospital in the capital, where she got her Covid-19 booster dose yesterday afternoon.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

MONEY LAUNDERING ACC sues IGW operator over Tk 463.37cr

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday filed a case against Oviur Rahman Khan, managing director of Apple GlobalTel Communication Ltd, for laundering around Tk 463.37 crore abroad.

ACC's Deputy Director Jalal Uddin Ahmad lodged the case with its integrated district office in Dhaka against Oviur for not repatriating money earned from international calls between 2012 and 2015.

According to the case statement, the company obtained International Gateway licence for international calls from Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (BTRC) in 2012.

Analysing documents, the investigation officer found that Apple GlobalTel was legally bound to bring back through banking channels foreign currency earned from international calls.

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The long history of a movement

RAFIQUL ISLAM



I used to live in the railway colony. My father was a doctor. In 1948, I had seen those people, mostly students, participating in the procession. I was a student of class 10 then. In 1951 I became a student of Dhaka University and became directly involved in the Bangla language, literature and cultural movement. We staged plays in 1951 titled "Jobanbondi" (Confessions) by Munier Choudhury.

What happened in 1952 is part of history now. I had a Voigtlander camera and I was part of the procession that day. I was not one of the wounded persons.

One particular event is still etched in my memory: Some people brought in the dead body

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