

GAZI TYRES FACTORY Fire doused fully, families demand whereabouts of those missing

SHAHEEN MOLLAH and SOURAV HOSSAIN SIAM

The massive fire at the Gazi Tyres factory in Rugganj, Narayanganj, was completely extinguished at 6:05 pm yesterday, after five days.

Confirming the development, Abdul Mannan, deputy assistant director of the Narayanganj fire service, said all fire service personnel had returned to their stations by 8:00 pm.

Army, police and BGB personnel have taken position in front of the facility.

Mannan said they had not yet found any bodies inside the facility.

Due to the building's hazardous condition, an extensive search operation remains risky and has not been conducted, he said.

However, drones were used to spot the possible presence of any bodies inside the six-storied building, he added.

On Monday, law enforcement officials, district administrators, and the factory owners will meet to discuss the next steps for retrieving any potential remains.

"The building needs to be partially dismantled to conduct a thorough search operation. This will take some time," said Mannan.

Around 100 families of the missing persons gathered outside the factory yesterday, protesting and demanding answers about their loved ones.

The families, who believe their relatives were trapped inside when the fire broke out, are calling for information on their status and, if deceased, the recovery of their remains.

Representatives from these families were taken inside the premises by fire service personnel to make them understand the risks involved in searching the severely damaged building.

Mohammad Rana, brother-in-law of Mamun, a worker who was reportedly trapped inside the factory, expressed frustration over the ongoing situation.

"Fire service should not have left without retrieving the bodies of those burnt inside. All bodies from inside the tower should be retrieved immediately," he said.

The factory, owned by former minister and lawmaker Golam Dastagir Gazi, was set ablaze on August 25 by arsonists. The fire destroyed much of the facility.

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PHOTO: TITU DAS

In a bid to help collect relief funds for the flood-affected people in the country, these young artists of Barishal have put their artworks on sale. The photo was taken on the Hospital Road in Barishal city yesterday.

A pleasant surprise at Dhaka airport

Inbound passengers say they have been getting luggage quickly

RASHIDUL HASAN

For passengers with past experience of the Dhaka airport, the prospect of flying into Bangladesh's capital has not been a pleasant one, chiefly because of the seemingly interminable delays in getting their checked-in baggage.

But things appear to have changed as passengers are now getting their luggage very soon after landing at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport.

"It's a dramatic change at the



airport. Earlier, we had to wait for a long time to get luggage and also for completion of immigration formalities. But at present the scenario has changed. I have got my luggage immediately after reaching

the luggage belt," said Md Kamal Hossain, who came from New York by a Qatar Airlines flight recently.

Different groups in Facebook lauded the recent positive change at the Dhaka airport over the past two weeks or so.

Abul Kasem, who recently came from Singapore, said the behaviour of immigration and other officials had changed. He also said he got his luggage within 20 minutes of landing.

Group Captain Kamrul Islam, SEE PAGE 4 COL 6

'I want protection' Says Priya, who was severely injured in attack by her husband in Dhaka

SHAHEEN MOLLAH

It was around 1:30pm on April 10 when Tasnim Sarah Priya, 27, a resident of Uttara in the capital, was saying her prayer at her mother's house.

Suddenly, she was startled by a loud noise from another room, which quickly escalated into a horrifying attack.

"My husband burst into the room and started slashing my face with a knife. I tried to defend myself, but he kept attacking," Priya told The Daily Star.

Priya was initially treated at Dhaka Medical College Hospital and was later admitted to Health and Hope Hospital in the capital, where she spent 20 days recovering from her severe injuries.

After receiving treatment, she was living with her mother in Uttara.

On August 22, Priya filed a case against her husband, Mohammad Roni, and three of his associates under the Suppression of Violence against Women and Children Act and the Dowry Prohibition Act.

The brutal attack left Priya's face severely disfigured, and she now avoids mirrors altogether.

"I can't bear to look at my face. Every scar terrifies me. I haven't been able to sleep at night since the attack," she said, breaking down in tears.

Roni, a trader who owns twelve shops across various districts including Dhaka and Chattogram, married Priya in November 2022. They have one child.

However, their marriage quickly turned abusive, with Priya enduring repeated physical and emotional torment.

"In the last few months, my husband forbade me from using Facebook and even restricted me from leaving the house," Priya said.

Defying these restrictions, Priya sought a divorce, which further enraged Roni.

"When I mentioned divorce, he became furious and assaulted me multiple times. One day, he came to my mother's house and attacked my face," Priya said.

After filing the case, Priya revealed that her husband had threatened her, demanding she withdraw the charges.

"On Tuesday night, Roni came to my house, shouting that he would kill me. To save my life, SEE PAGE 4 COL 5



More than just NUMBERS

A 24-year-old mason fatally shot in the chest in Gazipur. A 16-year-old student gunned down by cops in Tangail. A 37-year-old driver shot dead in Dhaka. At least 400 lives (the actual number could be much higher) were lost when law enforcers opened fire on protesters during the recent unrest. But these victims are not just statistics; they are children, parents, and friends. In this report, we try to know the stories of three such names among these tragic numbers.



I have lost my son. Nothing can bring him back
Says father of Siam, 19,
who was shot in Sirajganj

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPU,
Pabna

Nineteen-year-old Siam Hossain, a madrasa student, had his future mapped out.

He finished his "hafezi" degree and had plans to further advance his studies. Siam also balanced his academic ambitions with a commitment to his community. Working as a "Moyazzin" at a mosque in Betil village of Sirajganj district, he was a familiar figure in his local circle.

But on August 4, his aspirations were cut tragically short.

Siam joined a student protest



I have nothing left to live for
Says mother of Zakir, 22, who was
shot in Kanchpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Mymensingh

Two years ago, Zakir, a 22-year-old from Durgapur upazila in Netrakona, made a life-changing investment.

With the goal of building a home for himself and his mother, he purchased a 15 decimal plot of land for Tk 150,000. This was not merely an investment in property, but in a future he dreamt of -- a safe haven for his family.

Tragically, Zakir's aspirations were shattered by a single, devastating bullet.

Zakir's father had passed away when he was just five. His mother,

in the Enayetpur market area. As the procession moved toward the local police station, tensions escalated, and the authorities opened fire on the demonstrators.

Among those caught in the crossfire was Siam, who was

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Misili Begum, was left to raise him alone. To make ends meet, she migrated to the Natun Bazar area in the capital two decades ago, taking on menial jobs such as trash collection and housemaid work.

Her tireless efforts ensured Zakir had a chance at a better life.

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153 new dengue patients

UNB, Dhaka

Another 153 people were hospitalised with dengue in 24 hours till yesterday morning.

Of the new patients, 68 were admitted to different hospitals in Dhaka, while the rest were outside in Dhaka, according to the Directorate General of Health Services.

Some 1,277 patients are receiving treatment in different hospitals across the country.

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Homecoming ends in heartbreak

Malaysia expatriate
Saiful, 32, fatally
shot in Uttara

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Mymensingh

The return of 32-year-old Saiful Islam Sekul was eagerly awaited in his village home of Baroikandi in Netrakona's Durgapur.

Saiful had travelled from Malaysia to Dhaka to reunite with his family. But his homecoming on August 3 would turn into a heartbreak for his loved ones, culminating in a tragedy that would forever alter their lives.

Saiful, the second eldest of four siblings, had been working in Malaysia for a year to provide for his family following the death of his father.

His efforts in sending remittances had been a lifeline for his eight-member family, ensuring their sustenance and well being.

After landing in Dhaka, he stayed at a relative's house in Uttara.

On August 5, Saiful, accompanied by his younger sister Lima Akter Rimu, joined the student protests in the area.

The atmosphere was tense as thousands gathered to protest.

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