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SHIPBREAKING YARD 12 workers suffer burns in explosion

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Ctg*

Twelve workers sustained burn injuries in an explosion at a shipbreaking yard in Chattogram's Sitakunda upazila yesterday. Of them, ten are in critical condition.

The injured were identified as Jahangir, 48, Ahmadullah, 38, Kashem, 39, Sagar, 20, Al Amin, 23, Karimul, 21, Habib, 36, Barkat, 23, Anwar, 50, Rafique, 30, Saiful, 30, and Rafiqul Islam, 30.

According to hospital sources, Ahmadullah sustained the most severe burns, with 90 percent of his body affected, followed by Al Amin and Karimul with 80 percent burns each.

Besides, Jahangir had 70 percent; Barkat had 50 percent; Habib had 40 percent; Kashem had 35 percent; Sagar and Anwar had 25 percent each; and Rafique had 10 percent burns on their bodies.

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An explosion and fire in the engine room of this ship left 12 workers seriously injured when they were dismantling the vessel at SN Corporation Yard of Sitakunda, Chattogram, yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

257 lives lost in accidents over last 2 decades

ARUN BIKASH DEY, *Chattogram*

Over the past two decades, casualties have become a recurring tragedy at shipbreaking yards in Chattogram's Sitakunda upazila.

A total of 257 people were killed and many more sustained injuries in accidents at these shipbreaking yards between 2005 and 2024.

Of them, 140 workers were killed between 2014 and 2024, according to the data compiled by NGO Shipbreaking Platform, an international NGO coalition campaigning for clean and safe ship recycling.

In yesterday's incident, 12 workers sustained burn injuries in an explosion at the shipbreaking yard of SN Corporation.

According to hospital sources, most of the injured workers had inhalation burns, and they were in critical condition. Of them, seven injured workers were immediately transferred to Dhaka for better treatment.

The shipbreaking yard of SN Corporation has a green compliance certificate.

ClassNK, a Japan-based organisation, provides the certificate to shipbreaking yards based on environment friendliness, workers' safety, and working environment, said Muhammed Ali Shahin, assistant director of Young

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Dhaka seeks Yunus-Modi talks during UNGA

Delhi yet to respond

STAR REPORT

India is yet to make a call on a request by Bangladesh for a meeting between Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New York on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly later this month.

Bangladesh made a formal request in this regard earlier this week, reported Hindustan Times yesterday quoting people familiar with the matter.

A Bangladesh foreign ministry official also confirmed The Daily Star that Dhaka wrote to New Delhi requesting the meeting.

"We are yet to receive feedback from New Delhi," the official said.

A meeting between the two leaders appears unlikely following comments by Yunus in an interview with an Indian media outlet earlier this week, Hindustan Times reported citing those people.

Yunus's remarks did not go down well in New Delhi, they said.

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ASHULIA INDUSTRIAL AREA

Normalcy yet to return

Workers walk out of 17
garment factories

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Savar*

Normalcy has yet to return to the Ashulia industrial area despite the higher presence of law enforcement officials yesterday.

After two rounds of meetings with law enforcement agencies, local political leaders and leaders of various trade unions on Friday, the leaders of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association decided to open all garment factories from Saturday.

But thanks to worker protests from the morning, several factories remained shut.

In the Narsinghpur area on Baipail-Abdullahpur road, the locus of unrest for the past few days, workers of 17 factories including Ananta Apparels and Al-Muslim staged a walkout.

Several workers of a factory of Al-Muslim Group in the Narsinghpur area told the correspondent that they left the factory after 11 am yesterday as their demands were not resolved by the owner.

The factory of Pearl Garments, a concern of EPIC Group in Palash Bari area of Ashulia, was declared closed for the day as its workers continued their protests.

In the factories that were open, workers either left after punching the card or remained inside the premises but did not work.

However, there was no news of attack or vandalism in any factory or workers blocking any road, with the presence of industrial police, army, Border Guard Bangladesh and RAB personnel higher than normal.

"The atmosphere in the industrial area of Ashulia was very normal yesterday than in previous days -- the workers did not create chaos on the roads," said Mohammad Sarwar Alam, the superintendent of Ashulia Industrial Police-1.

Three people were detained as they tried to create chaos in the industrial area, he added.

'Humanity must prevail'

Says UN as Israeli offensive in Gaza enters
12th month with no truce deal in sight

AGENCIES

The war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza entered its 12 month yesterday with little sign of respite for the people of the Palestinian territory or hope for Israeli hostages still held captive.

The chances of a truce that would also free hostages held by Hamas in exchange for prisoners held by Israel appear slim, with both sides sticking doggedly to their positions.

Hamas is demanding a complete Israeli withdrawal, but Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu insists that troops must remain on a key strip of land along the Gaza-Egypt border.

The United States, Qatar and Egypt have all been mediating in an effort to bring about a ceasefire in the conflict that authorities in the Gaza say has killed at least 40,939 people.

According to the United Nations human rights office, most of the dead are women and children.

Israel's announcement last Sunday that the bodies of six hostages including a US-Israeli citizen had been recovered shortly after being killed sparked grief and anger in Israel.

Marking the anniversary, UN Palestinian refugee agency (UNRWA)

chief Philippe Lazzarini posted on X yesterday: "Eleven months. Enough. No one can take this any longer. Humanity must prevail. Ceasefire now."

Meanwhile, the heads of the American and British foreign intelligence agencies yesterday said they are "working ceaselessly" for a cease-fire in Gaza, using a rare joint public statement to press for peace.

CIA Director William Burns and MI6 Chief Richard Moore said their agencies had "exploited our intelligence channels to push hard for restraint and de-escalation."

In an opinion piece for the Financial Times, the two spymasters said a cease-fire in the Israel-Hamas war "could end the suffering and appalling loss of life of Palestinian civilians and bring home the hostages after 11 months of hellish confinement."

International pressure to end the war was further underlined by Friday's shooting dead in the West Bank of a Turkish-American activist demonstrating against Israeli settlements in the occupied territory.

The family of 26-year-old Aysenur Ezgi Eygi has demanded an independent investigation into her death, saying yesterday her life "was taken needlessly, unlawfully, and violently by the Israeli military".

UN warns of "permanent damage" as Gaza children miss schooling for the second year

US, UK spy chiefs issue a joint call for a ceasefire

Israeli attacks kill 61 in Gaza in 48 hours

FLASH FLOODS

4 dists count Tk 2,822cr in losses

STAR REPORT

The recent floods have damaged crops on over 1.31 lakh hectares of land in Noakhali, Cumilla, Brahmanbaria and Moulvibazar, leaving farmers in dire straits, said officials.

Besides, around 88,688 fish enclosures and ponds have been wash away and some five lakh livestock affected in those four districts.

Officials estimate that the financial damage caused by the floods in the four districts amounts to approximately Tk 2,822 crore.

According to farmers, Aman and Aush paddy, Aman seedlings and seedbeds, and vegetables and fruit crops have been damaged.

Flooding has affected over five million people in 11 districts. At least 71 flood-related deaths have been reported so far in nine of those districts, according to the disaster management and relief ministry.

In Noakhali, crops on around 38,367 hectares have been ruined, resulting in an estimated loss of Tk 158 crore, said DAE officials.

"I planted paddy saplings on around five acres with a loan of Tk 1 lakh. But all those saplings have been damaged by floodwaters," said Abu Soleman, a 65-year-old farmer from Noakhali Sadar upazila's Char Darbesh village.

Abul Kashem of Purbo Shulyakia village in the same upazila said his Aush paddy on around two and a half acres had been under water for about two weeks. His seedbeds have also been damaged.

"We have written to the higher authorities seeking budgetary allocations to help the affected farmers," said Seema Rani Das, deputy director of DAE in Noakhali.

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Teenager sued under CSA for Facebook post on religion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

The teenage boy, who was beaten up by a mob inside a police office in Khulna last week, has been accused of hurting religious sentiments in a case filed under the controversial Cyber Security Act.

Nasir Uddin, a 42-year-old resident of Sher-e-Bangla Road, filed the case with Khulna Sadar Police Station on September 5 under three sections of the act, which is deemed by rights activists as repressive.

The boy says he is 15, but he has been accused in the case as a 19-year-old.

Asked about the matter, Kamal Hossain Khan, officer-in-charge of the police station, said the actual age of the accused was higher than the age mentioned in his birth certificate and other documents.

The boy was assaulted inside the room of a deputy commissioner of Khulna Metropolitan Police on September 4 after he allegedly made a Facebook post about religion.

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An injured Palestinian man takes part in a namaz-e-janaza over the bodies of his family members who were the victims of Israeli bombardment in Deir el-Balah in the central Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Demand for changing nat'l anthem affront to the nation Say 48 noted citizens

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Forty-eight citizens, including prominent human rights activists, academics and civil society members, have condemned the demand for changing Bangladesh's national anthem.

In a statement yesterday, they described it as an affront to people's emotions about the Liberation War and called on people to be vigilant and united against such "audacious" questioning of issues that are established by people's mandate historically and related to the 1971 war.

They also threatened to announce programmes to build resistance if such statements or false information about the war and the national anthem do not stop.

Dhaka University Professor Emeritus Dr Serajul Islam Choudhury, human rights activist Sultana Kamal, Nijera Kori Coordinator Khushi Kabir, Jahangirnagar University Prof Anu Muhammad, Supreme Court lawyer ZI

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