

Workers of 12 RMG factories protest for 15pc increment

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

Workers of at least 12 garment factories in the Ashulia area of Savar demonstrated yesterday demanding 15 percent annual increment instead of the government proposed 9 percent.

Owners of the 12 factories declared a general holiday for today, said Mohammad Mominul Islam Bhuiyan, superintendent of Ashulia Industrial Police-1.

Workers of Ha-Meem Group, Sharmin Group, Medlar, Next Collection, Al Muslim, Setara Group and six other factories left their workplaces in the morning yesterday and demonstrated.

Police said the protests were peaceful and there was no chaos.

An annual increment and wage review committee on Monday recommended that the government raise the minimum wage of garment workers by 9 percent.

Over 99 percent of factories under the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) have implemented the previous minimum wage, as promised by the factory owners, according to a report from the Ministry of Labour and Employment.

In late November last year, the minimum wage board finalised Tk 12,500 as the minimum monthly salary.



An official X handle of India's defence ministry published this photo of detained Bangladeshi fishermen on Tuesday night. The Indian Coast Guard detained dozens of Bangladeshis from two trawlers on Monday on charges of illegally fishing in Indian waters.

PHOTO: PRO DEFENCE KOLKATA/X

Court denies Chinmoy bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chattogram court yesterday rejected the anticipatory bail appeal filed for ex-ISKCON leader Chinmoy Krishna Das Brahmachari in a sedition case filed in connection with disrespecting the national flag of Bangladesh.

Chattogram Metropolitan Sessions Judge Md Saiful Islam rejected the order after a lawyer from Dhaka placed the application, saying that the lawyer did not have a Vakalatnama to represent Chinmoy in court.

A Vakalatnama is a document that authorises a lawyer to act on behalf of his/her client.

On October 31, a BNP leader filed a case with Kotwali Police Station, accusing Chinmoy and 18 others of disrespecting the national flag in Chattogram's New Market area during a rally of the Hindu community on October 25. The BNP leader was later expelled from the party for breaching rules and regulations.

Chinmoy was arrested in Dhaka on November 25 and sent to jail the following day. Rajesh Chowdhury and Hridoy Das have also been arrested in the case.

The bail hearing for Rajesh and Hridoy was scheduled yesterday.

Rabindra Gosh, a senior high court lawyer, placed multiple applications to the metropolitan session judge court, saying his client was arrested in a false

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REGIONAL RESISTANCE

PART 8

During the 1971 Liberation War, dozens of regional forces emerged across Bangladesh. Just as the freedom fighters trained under the sub-sectors and the Bengal Regiment fought valiantly, these regional forces also put up tough resistance against the Pakistan army. In the month of victory, we bring you the stories of some of these heroic forces.

Aftab Bahini of Kurigram

AHMAD ISTIAK

The Aftab Bahini, led by Aftab Ali, a subedar in the 3rd East Bengal Regiment, was a formidable regional force that operated along the Brahmaputra and Teesta rivers during the 1971 war.

The force's influence extended from Dewanganj in Jamalpur to Ghughumarir Char in northern Kurigram near the Indian border.

The Aftab Bahini freedom fighters engaged in over 30 battles against the Pakistani forces and successfully defended the 600 square-mile "Rowmari Muktanchal" (Liberated Zone). These battles resulted in significant casualties among Pakistani soldiers and Razakars.

Colonel Abu Taher, Bir Uttam, commander of sector II, acknowledged Aftab's crucial role in defending Rowmari and his exceptional bravery in the book "Swadhinota Juddho: Dolil Potro (Volume 10)."

Abu Taher writes that when he briefed Aftab about the strategic importance of defending the Rowmari liberated zone, Aftab resolutely declared, "Sir, the Pakistanis will only enter Rowmari over my dead body."

Despite being shot four times on the battlefield, Aftab's unwavering courage and determination remained steadfast. His bravery, along with that of his forces, continues to inspire the people of Kurigram and Gaibandha to this day.

In May of this year, The Daily Star spoke to over 40 freedom fighters of Aftab Bahini during a visit to Kurigram and Gaibandha.

Speaking to The Daily Star, Noor Hossain, an Aftab Bahini freedom fighter, said, "Aftab was a man of unwavering courage and strong moral character. He had the ability to inspire and motivate us all."

In recognition of his heroic contributions to the war, the Bangladesh government honoured Aftab with the titles of Bir Uttam (the second highest gallantry award) and Bir Pratik (the fourth-highest gallantry award).

Many Aftab Bahini fighters were also awarded the titles of Bir Uttam and Bir Pratik.

Some of the notable operations conducted by Aftab Bahini between July and October include the Durgapur bridge operation and attacks on the Kamarjani police outpost and the Sundarganj Police Station in Gaibandha; and the capture of the Kalir Haat jute warehouse, the battle of Ulipur, and the Chilmari raid in Kurigram.

FORMATION, TRAINING

According to "Bangladesher Swadhinota



Juddho - Sector Bhattik Itihas (Sector II), in early March, Aftab Ali was serving in the Delta Company of the 3rd East Bengal Regiment, headquartered in Saidpur Cantonment.

Following the massacre of March 25, the Bangalee soldiers of Delta Company, deployed in Palashbari of Gaibandha, revolted and put up resistance against the Pakistani authorities.

By mid-April, a platoon of Delta Company relocated to Rowmari in Kurigram across the Brahmaputra and Teesta rivers to mobilise and train freedom fighters.

"From March, freedom fighters began training at Rowmari CG Zaman High School under the leadership of Constituent Assembly member Nurul Islam Papu Miya," freedom fighter Azizar Rahman told this newspaper.

He added that the initial progress was slow, but the arrival of the Delta Company platoon invigorated the freedom fighters.

Here, the Aftab Bahini was formed, and trained youths began joining the force.

"Initially, Aftab Bahini trained at the Rowmari High School ground. However, due to security concerns, Aftab shifted the force headquarters to the house of Jadurchar union chairman Matiur Rahman. A training camp was also set up at the nearby Jadurchar High School," said another freedom fighter Lutfor Rahman.

In early May, the main training

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STALLED PASSPORT RENEWAL

Migrants in KSA, Malaysia to get MRPs

Says law adviser

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has decided to start issuing machine-readable passports on December 15 to Bangladeshi migrant workers, who are facing uncertainty abroad over renewing their passports.

The decision was taken at a meeting between foreign and home ministries, along with representatives from the immigration departments, on Tuesday, Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Adviser Asif Nazrul said yesterday.

During a Facebook live session, Asif assured that all applicants would receive their passports within three to four weeks after the distribution begins.

Priority will be given to expatriates in Saudi Arabia and Malaysia, followed by those in other high-demand regions, he added.

Asif blamed the previous government's handling of the passport issuance process for the backlog.

"The problem originated under the previous fascist regime when an attempt was made to award the task to a company through illegal means. This



Asif Nazrul

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Mob beats man to death for 'rape, murder'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

A man was beaten to death by a mob in the presence of police allegedly for killing a seven-year-old girl after raping in Faridpur yesterday.

Haider Mollah, 55, was a resident of Nashipur village under Faridpur Sadar upazila.

Locals said Tahiya, daughter of Zia Mollah of the same village, went missing on Tuesday afternoon. Her family members filed a complaint the same night.

Villagers suspected that Haider might have been involved in the incident as he had served time around 30 years ago on rape charges, said locals.

A police team with the help of villagers raided Haider's home and found the body wrapped up in a sack yesterday evening.

"Seeing this, hundreds of villagers became furious,

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EXTRADITION OF AL LEADERS

Death penalty provision has to be reconsidered

Says special adviser to ICT's chief prosecutor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh has to rethink the death penalty if authorities want international support in trying members of the previous regime, said Toby Cadman, special adviser to the chief prosecutor of the International Crimes Tribunal (ICT).

"For a number of states, particularly European states, there is a refusal to extradite or to provide evidence about proceedings [to countries] where the death penalty is maintained," Cadman told journalists at a press briefing yesterday.

"That will have to be a discussion that the government will need to engage in about whether it is appropriate to maintain the death penalty in these proceedings.

"These proceedings will require the full assistance and support of the international community. I have discussed this with the United Nations, the UK and US embassies, and the European Union," said Cadman.

Describing the aim of this new chapter in the country's history as "towards justice, not retribution or revenge", the legal expert said that while the ICT has made significant improvements to ensure

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Toby Cadman



Wearing handcuffs, Chuadanga Municipal Chhatra League leader Jahangir Hossain, out of jail on parole for four hours, carries the body of his mother towards a graveyard on Tuesday afternoon. Chuadanga police allowed Jahangir, who has been in jail since November 12 in a case filed on August 5, to attend the funeral but did not uncliff him.

PHOTO: ANIS MONDOL