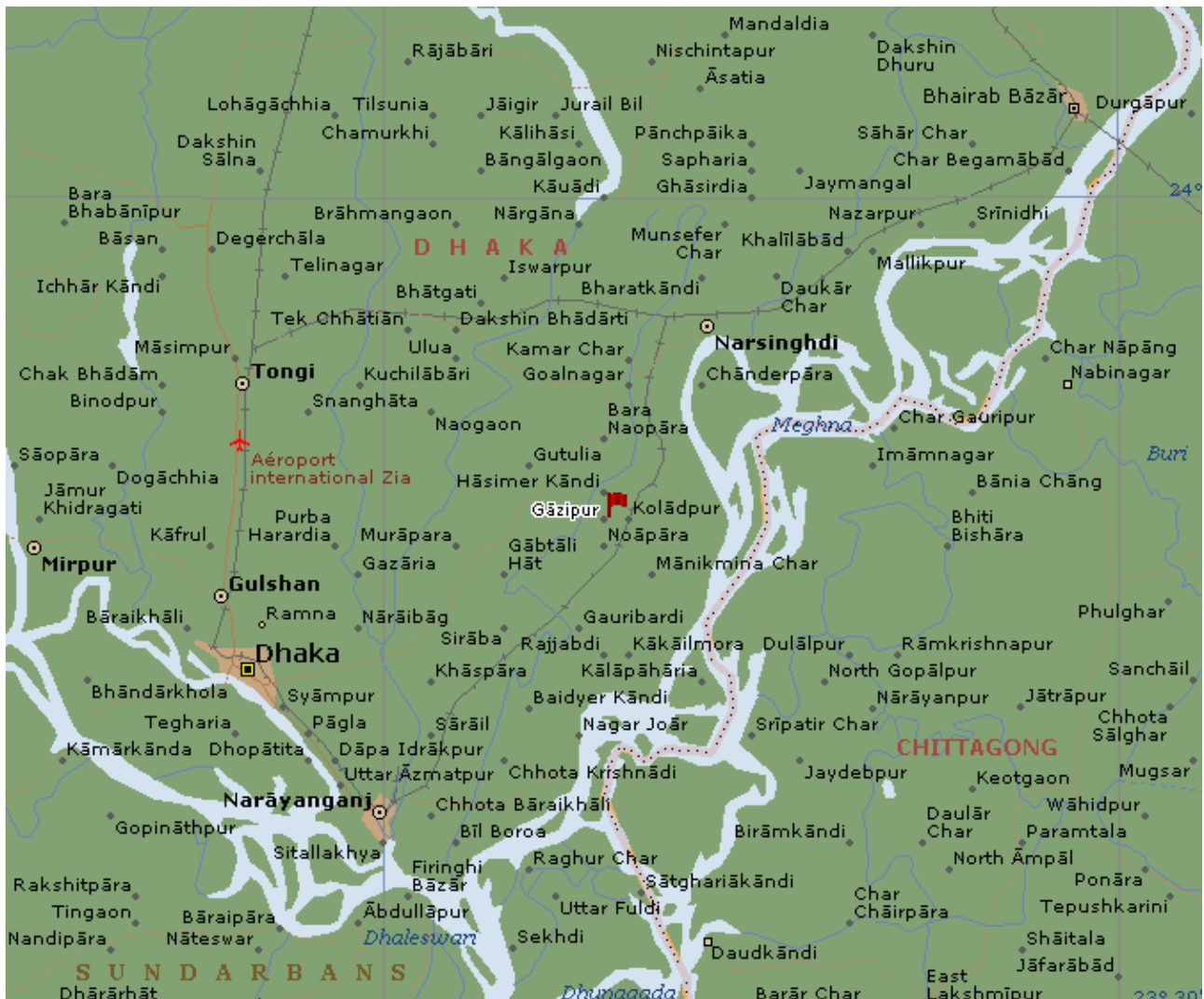


## 07 BAN 2 – 07-05-20 Gazipur

Laboratoire des frondeurs.org



Distance Gazipur - Dhaka  $\approx$  30 km.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/2007/05/20/d70520012516.htm>

Vol. 5 Num 1054  
Sun. May 20, 2007  
Front Page

### **RMG workers block highway for payment of arrears**

Our Correspondent, Gazipur

Aggrieved workers of an export-oriented garment factory in Gazipur went on a rampage yesterday blocking the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway for at least an hour over unpaid monthly and overtime wages.

The police said employees of Fortuna Apparels Ltd started protest, as they did not receive their last month's salaries and overtime since March.

The agitating workers blocked the highway at 1.45pm leaving hundreds of vehicles stranded on either side of the road.

Members of the joint forces and Rapid Action Battalion brought the situation under control by striking a deal under which the owner assured the workers that all outstanding bills would be paid by Tuesday.

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<http://www.cyberpresse.ca/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20070520/CPMONDE/70520035/1014/CPMONDE&template=printart&print=1>

Le dimanche 20 mai 2007

## **Manifestations d'ouvriers du textile au Bangladesh: un mort**

Dacca

**Au moins un manifestant a été tué et des dizaines de personnes blessées dimanche à Gazipur, à une quarantaine de km au nord de Dacca, dans des heurts ayant opposé la police à plusieurs milliers d'ouvriers de l'industrie du textile, a annoncé un responsable de la police.**

La police a tiré des balles de caoutchouc et fait usage de gaz lacrymogènes contre les protestataires, a indiqué le chef de la police locale Alamgir Alam. Les heurts ont éclaté lorsqu'au moins 4000 ouvriers travaillant pour l'entreprise Fortuna Garments ont bloqué une route, demandant des hausses de salaire.

«La police a tiré des balles en caoutchouc et fait usage de gaz lacrymogènes pour disperser les ouvriers qui étaient devenus violents et avaient attaqué nos agents», a ajouté le responsable.

Au moins un ouvrier a été tué dans les affrontements, a-t-il précisé.

Un policier, Naba Gopal, qui était présent sur les lieux, a indiqué que 12 policiers avaient été blessés, ainsi que des manifestants, tandis que d'autres sources ont évoqué une cinquantaine de blessés.

Il y a un an, des manifestations contre les bas salaires dans l'industrie du textile avaient dégénéré en émeutes lorsque des dizaines de milliers de protestataires avaient incendié au moins 16 usines et saccagé de nombreux autres établissements.

Les manifestations avaient connu une interruption en 2006 après que le gouvernement, les syndicats et les employeurs se furent mis d'accord sur un salaire minimum de 25 dollars par mois.

De nombreuses entreprises n'ont pas encore mis en application cet accord, malgré les avertissements du gouvernement.

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<http://story.malaysiasun.com/index.php/ct/9/cid/303b19022816233b/id/250376/cs/1/>

## **Bangladesh factory shuts after fresh unrest kills one**

Malaysia Sun  
Monday 21st May, 2007  
(ANI)

By Nazrul Islam

Dhaka, May 21 : A Bangladesh apparels factory downed its shutters on Monday, a day after a woman employee was killed in reported police firing in Gazipur, near Dhaka.

According to preliminary reports and investigations, Asma Begum, 20, died on the spot. Over 50, including seven policemen, were hurt in clashes that lasted for more than two hours on Sunday evening.

Contingents of police and the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) are guarding the Fortuna Apparels Limited factory against further vandalism, even as the government has asked an investigation committee headed by a deputy inspector general of police to probe the causes behind the fracas.

Fellow employees of Asma claimed that she died instantly in the police shootout on a workers' demonstration that was demanding a regularisation of their wages.

The incident, they said, took place in Gazipur's Targachh area late on Sunday.

However, District Superintendent of Police, Alamgir Alam, told ANI by telephone that his forces had opened fire to disperse the mob, but denied having killed anyone.

"The worker might have been run over by motor vehicles, we are investigating the matter," Alam said.

The incident took place a week after the government had decided to lodge cases against garment factory owners not complying with a tripartite agreement on the payment of wages signed among the government, factory owners and the workers, a few months ago.

The garment factory owners agreed to pay minimum wage of 1662 to an entry level worker and assured the government that they will comply with the other clauses of the agreement, including regularization of the workers salaries.

According to statistics revealed by the owners association, Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association, at a meeting last week that more than 30 per cent of the total 4100 factories were not complying with the agreement.

The government identified non-compliance of the agreement, including non-payment of workers wages, as having caused earlier unrests in the garment sector. The Bangladesh ready-made garment exports is worth over eight billion dollars.

Fortuna Apparels workers have been out in the streets since Saturday afternoon. On Sunday, they agreed to withdraw their road blockades after being assured of payment of back dues.

Further demonstrations, however, were staged late on Sunday when the authorities adopted dilly-dally tactics in forwarding the dues. Workers vandalized vehicles and shops on the busy Dhaka-Mymensingh Highway.

## **Garment worker killed in police firing in Gazipur**

*50 hurt during clash over payment of wages, overtime bills*

Staff Correspondent

A female garment worker was killed and more than 50 were injured reportedly in police firing during a clash with the police at Targachh in Gazipur on Sunday.

The workers of the Fortuna Garments have been going out on demonstrations for a few days demanding payment of the salary for April and overtime bills for March.

The incident took place a week after the government had decided to lodge cases against the garment factory owners who would not comply with a tripartite agreement on the payment of wages signed a few months ago.

Traffic remained snapped for about three hours on the Dhaka-Mymensingh Highway during the clash on Sunday. More than 50 vehicles and roadside shops were damaged as the area turned into a battlefield.

The workers took to the streets in the afternoon on Saturday and blocked the highway for about an hour. The workers withdrew the roadblock after a meeting with the factory authorities in the presence of the police and the army and Rapid Action Battalion personnel.

The workers went out on demonstrations again on Sunday when the authorities announced to pay dues only to the workers of two floors of the five-floor factory.

The workers went out of the factory at about 4:30pm and started vandalizing vehicles and shops.

Informed, the police and the Rapid Action Battalion reached the place and charged at the workers with truncheons to keep them out of the highway. The workers pelted stones at the police, who then fired gun shots and lobbed teargas canisters.

Hit with a bullet, a worker named Asma, 20, died on the spot. More than 50, including seven policemen, were hurt in the clash that lasted till 7:00pm.

The police, however, claimed Asma was critically wounded in a road accident when vehicle drivers tried to cross past the troubled spot amid demonstrations.

He died on her way to hospital, the police said.

The local people said they saw bullet injuries in the body of Asma.

The injured were taken to different hospitals and private medical facilities.

Tension, meanwhile, mounted when a rumour was rife that another died in the clash. The news of the other death could not, however, be established.

Police deployment was reinforced in the area to stave off further troubles. The battalion and army personnel continued patrolling the area. No arrest was reported in connection with the incident.

The government at a meeting in the past week said it was apparent that no payment of wages to the poor garment workers was one of the main reasons for the labour unrest in the readymade garment sector in 2006.

The unrest resulted in a 10-point agreement between the government, owners and the workers that focused on the implementation of the new minimum wages for the workers.

But the Bangladesh Garments Manufacturers and Exporters' Association found that about 30 per cent of more than 4,100 garment factories had not complied with the agreement in terms of implementation of the new minimum wage fixed at Tk 1,662.50. The association leaders disclosed the figure at the meeting.

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Mon. May 21, 2007  
Front Page

## **Demonstration for Arrears**

### **RMG worker killed as cops open fire; 16 hurt**

A Correspondent, Gazipur

A female garment worker was killed and 12 other workers were injured as police opened fire and charged baton on the workers demonstrating for overtime arrears and monthly salaries in front of their factory in Gazipur last night.

Four policemen were also hurt in the incident at Board Bazar.

Sources said the 25-year-old Asma Akhtar from Patuakhali, worker of Fortuna Apparels Ltd, received a bullet in the back during firing. She was rushed to a local hospital where doctors declared her dead.

Witnesses said the workers vandalised six vehicles on the Dhaka-Mymensingh Highway following the police action on them. According to the workers, the police fired 20-25 rounds of bullets.

But Superintendent of Police of Gazipur Alamgir Alam told The Daily Star last night that the law enforcers fired five shotgun shells to disperse the demonstrators.

Around 2,000 workers went to the factory yesterday to collect their overtime bills and salaries for the month of April and came to know that the management had curtailed their overtime work to 30 hours from 80 hours.

The workers thronged the factory following Saturday's deal that their outstanding overtime wages since March and salary of the last month will be paid by Tuesday.

Witnesses said the angry workers started agitation and at one stage came out of the factory and blockaded the Dhaka-Mymensingh Highway at 5:00pm for around two and a half hours.

The police tried to convince the demonstrators to leave the highway. They opened fire as the demonstrators did not pay heed to them and continued chanting slogans demanding their outstanding arrears.

Other joint forces agencies present on the spot charged baton to disperse the demonstrators.

Factory Chairman Engineer Taher, however, denied the allegation of cutting off the overtime arrears. "We have paid arrears to some workers today [Sunday] and all the bills will be paid by Tuesday. I do not know why the workers staged the demonstration," he said last night.

The workers of the garment factory also blockaded the highway on Saturday, demanding payment of the arrears. Later, the joint forces struck the deal between the workers and factory officials and the workers lifted the blockade.

A three-member committee was formed to probe the incident.

A team of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) last night went to Gazipur to assess the situation.

Joint forces were deployed in the area yesterday to check further untoward incident.

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<http://www.southasianmedia.net/cnn.cfm?id=390387&category=Human%20Rights&Country=BANGLADESH>

## **RMG worker's death to be probed**

Tuesday, May 22, 2007

DHAKA: The government has formed a three-member enquiry committee to investigate the killing of a garment factory worker in Gazipur on Sunday during the clash between unpaid workers and the police.

Sheikh Mohammed Sajjad Hossain, a deputy inspector-general of police, has been made chief of the committee which includes the district administrator (deputy commissioner) of Gazipur, Syed Mizanur Rahman, and superintendent of police, Mohammed Alamgir Alam.

Asma, 20, a female garment worker was killed and more than 50 were injured, reportedly in police firing, in Gazipur on Sunday.

Workers of Fortuna Garments had been going out on demonstrations for a few days, demanding payment of their wages for April and overtime bills for March.

On Sunday some workers received a part of their wages but by afternoon the workers began demonstrating again after learning that the factory authorities would delay the rest of their wages.

The unpaid workers went out of the factory at about 4:30pm on Sunday and vandalised some vehicles and shops and then clashed with police and the Rapid Action Battalion who charged them with truncheons, apparently to keep them from obstructing the highway.

During clashes the police lobbed teargas canisters and fired their guns. One of the bullets hit Asma. The local people said they saw bullet injuries in Asma's body, but the police claimed that she was critically wounded when she was hit by a vehicle and died on her way to the hospital.

Post-mortem of Asma's corpse was conducted at Gazipur Sadar Hospital on Sunday night, but the report was not available till date.

Asma's parents rushed from Putuakhali to the hospital at night and on Monday morning Asma's corpse, cordoned by the police, was sent to her village home.

Asma's family did not lodge any case but police filed a case of unnatural death.

The police also lodged a case against hundreds of workers who, they claim, disrupted government activities and obstructed the movement of people and vehicles.

Sunday's killing took place a week after the government decided to lodge cases against the garment factory owners who would not comply with a tripartite agreement on the payment of wages signed a few months ago.

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<http://www.thedailystar.net/2007/05/22/d70522060975.htm>

Vol. 5 Num 1056

Tue. May 22, 2007

Metropolitan

## **Police sue 2500 Gazipur RMG workers**

**Did not mention death of female worker in the case**

A Correspondent, Gazipur

Police filed a case yesterday against 2500 unnamed workers of Fortuna Apparels Ltd in Gazipur accusing them of vandalising factories and vehicles on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway and hindering the law enforcers in carrying out their duties.

Sub Inspector Naba Gopal of Gazipur Police Station filed the case in the early hours of yesterday. However, police did not mention anything regarding the death of the garment worker in the case.

A sewing section operator named Haider Ali was also arrested after filing of the case.

The factory looked deserted yesterday as neither the factory authorities nor the law enforcers went to the factory following the incident on Sunday that left one Asma Akhter, 20, a sewing operator of Fortuna Apparels Ltd, dead after police opened fire on agitating workers who demanded outstanding salary and arrears.

The three-member probe committee formed after the incident started investigating into the incident yesterday and visited the factory.

Security has been beefed up in the industrial area following the incident while Around 10 to 15 garment factories were announced closed yesterday fearing probable workers' unrest.

Most of the garment factories in the area, however, remained closed, as it was weekly holiday for them.

A three-member team of Gazipur Sadar Hospital led by Dr Abdul Halim Molla conducted autopsy of the body of Asma in the early morning yesterday. The committee members said that a bullet was found in the back of the deceased and she was shot dead.

The autopsy committee also added that the report would be submitted within three days. Earlier, another team led by Additional District Magistrate Mirza Tarique Hekmat made an inquest report of the body at 5:00am.

The body was handed over to Abdus Sattar, father of Asma, after the autopsy was conducted at 6:00am. Her body was sent to her village home in Patuakhali under police guard.

"The family of the victim will receive Tk one lakh as compensation and the money will be realised from the factory owners," said Assistant Superintendent of Police of Gazipur Saiful Al Mamun.

Meanwhile, several hundred workers of Winter Garment at Mouchak in Kaliakoir observed work abstention and staged hunger-strike in front of the factory demanding unpaid salaries of the month of April. They were agitating till filing of the report at 6:00pm.

Besides, Anupam Sweaters in Gazipur, which was closed in the wake of workers' demonstration for outstanding arrears a month ago, started disbursing salaries to the workers under police guard.

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<http://www.thedailystar.net/2007/05/22/d70522062384.htm>

Vol. 5 Num 1056  
Tue. May 22, 2007  
Metropolitan

**Killing of RMG worker condemned**

Different women rights organisations and garment workers' bodies yesterday condemned the atrocities of law enforcing agencies that claimed the life of a woman worker and injured of at least 50 workers during a clash at Gazipur on Sunday.

The organisations demanded proper investigation into the incident, punishment to the people responsible and immediate payment of salary and overtime allowances of the workers.

Karmojibi Nari (KN) President Shirin Akhter and General Secretary Sharmin Kabir in a joint statement expressed grave concern over the death of Asma Akter, 20, a worker of Fortuna Apparels in Gazipur during a clash between the factory workers and Rab, army and police members.

The statement also said that the incident is disappointing in the wake of a new wage law.

Bangladesh Sramajibi Nari Moitree Convener Bonnishikha Jamali in a statement said that the oppression on workers by the law enforcing agencies in support of garment owners still continues, even in the regime of a non-partisan caretaker government which is shameful.

She demanded arrest and punishment of the responsible persons, arrangement of treatment for the injured workers and compensation for the family of the murdered and injured.

Bangladesh Garment Sramik Mukti Andolon, Garment Sramik Sangram Parishad, Sramik Nirapatta Forum and Sramik Karmachari Sangram Parishad also condemned the incident in separate statements.