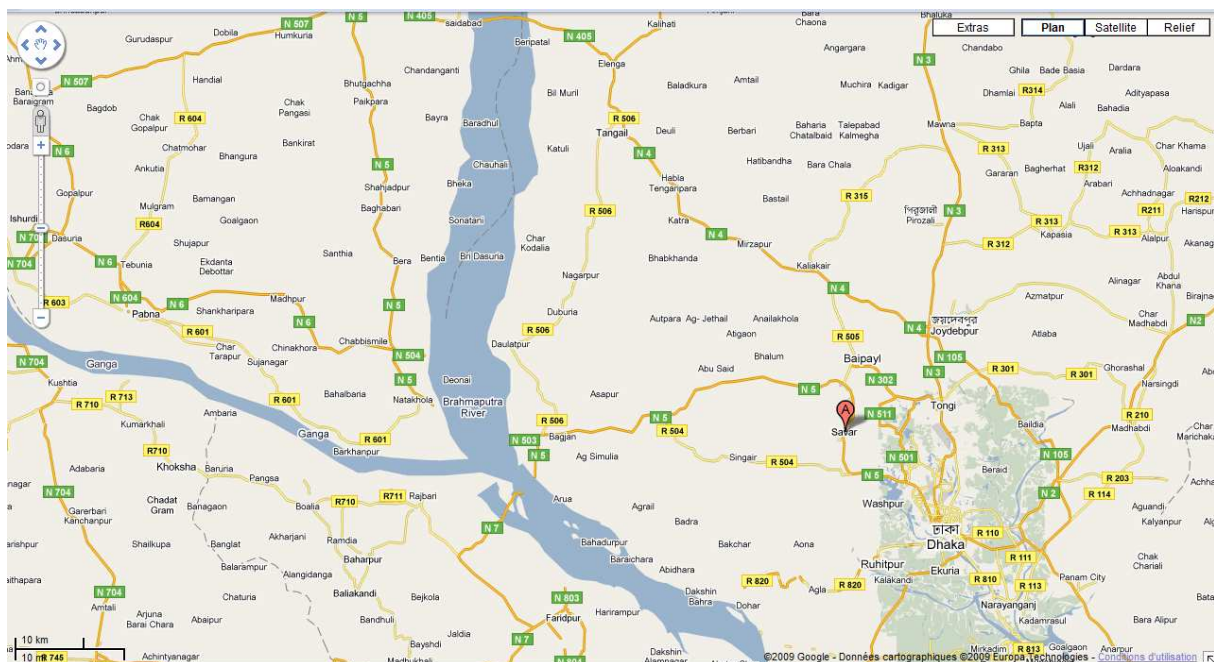


07 BAN 4 – 07-09-14 Savar

Laboratoire des frondeurs.org



The Daily Star

Committed to PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO KNOW

Published On: 2007-09-15

Front Page

100 hurt as RMG workers, police clash at DEPZ

Most factories remain shut after several units vandalised over rumoured killing of co-worker

Staff Correspondent



A garment factory vandalised yesterday by agitated workers (left) and an army van guards the entrance to the DEPZ. Most of the units remained shut following fierce clash between police and workers leaving around 100 people injured. Photo: STAR

Production in most parts of the Dhaka Export Processing Zone (DEPZ) in Savar remained suspended throughout the day yesterday as clashes between workers and police left at least 100 people injured.

The fighting broke out as police charged baton on the garment workers fuming over unconfirmed reports that one of them was killed Thursday over theft of a cellphone set.

Several hundred workers of Featherlite Ltd massed at the entrance to the DEPZ Extension at around 7:00am, clamouring for recovery of the co-worker's body.

As the law enforcers prevented them from entering, they marched towards the DEPZ (old). On the way, they were joined by a huge number of fellows from the other factories.

In the old DEPZ area, police clubbed them, leaving several workers injured.

In response, the demonstrators went on the rampage, damaging a number of factories in and outside the exclusive industrial block. Besides, they barricaded the nearby Nabinagar-Kaliakoir Road and vandalised seven to eight vehicles, emptying traffic out of there.

A-One, Hoplun, Lenny Fashions Ltd and Actor Ltd are among the factories damaged inside the DEPZ area.

Chase and counter-chase went on for hours. Police used baton again injuring 40 more. Some 10 cops were also wounded.

Police had to shoot around 35 teargas canisters to drive off the marauding crowd. They arrested two--Ilyas and Monir--during the clashes.

Due to blockade on the road and the fight, most of the garment workers could not join work, leading to suspension of production in most of the factories.

Only 17 out of 88 factories were operative during the time when RMG plants in the nearby areas too remained closed fearing backlash, said DEPZ sources.

Locals said workers at the Featherlite Ltd erupted in protests Thursday afternoon after 'rumours' spread that the factory authorities had killed Helal, a worker, for stealing a phone set and hidden his body.

Failing to know Helal's whereabouts till late in the evening, they started vandalising the factory building. Informed, Ashulia police got to the scene and had the situation under control. They sifted through the factory premises for the "body" or evidence, but to no effect.

The protesters, however, claimed that a bloodstained shirt had been recovered during the search.

Motiur Rahman, assistant superintendent of police, told reporters that the story of killing Helal and dumping his body has turned out to be false.

“Still, we are trying to trace him [Helal],” he added.

BEPZA Chairman Brig Ashraf Abdullah Yusuf, Savar camp commander Lt Col Mahbub-ur-Rahman, superintendent of police and other high officials have visited the DEPZ.

A huge contingent of police and the Rapid Action Battalion were deployed in the area while

the army personnel were patrolling the roads to avert further violence.

A case was filed with Ashulia Police Station against 100/150 unnamed garment workers on charge of vandalism and obstruction to the law enforcers on duty.

Police and intelligence men were raiding different places across Ashulia and Savar, police sources said at around 12:30am.

Rioting at RMG plants in and around Dhaka for eight weeks last year left nearly 400 factories damaged. Industry observers believe this has been one of the reasons for the growth in the readymade garment sector slowing down in recent months.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed on June 12, 2006 between the government, garment owners and worker leaders to ensure labour rights, and peaceful and improved working conditions.

<http://www.thedailystar.net/story.php?nid=4137>

The Daily Star

Committed to PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO KNOW

Published On: 2007-09-16

Front Page

Production in DEPZ factories getting normal

Staff Correspondent

Production in almost all factories in the Dhaka Export Processing Zone (DEPZ) resumed yesterday after remaining suspended for a whole day following Friday's clash between the police and workers.

Eighty-five out of the total 88 factories functioned yesterday, according to Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (BEPZA).

Law enforcers patrolled the DEPZ area to avert further violence.

The workers engaged in a clash with police on Friday following an unconfirmed report of killing of Helal, a worker of Featherlite Ltd.

Police yesterday detained three persons and said they would be implicated in the case filed by police with Ashulia Police Station on Friday night against around 100 unknown workers for attacking police and damaging government properties during the agitation.

The detainees are Ilyas, Monir and Adam Ali.

Police said they talked to Helal over cell phone yesterday evening when Helal told them that he had been kept confined at a place in Sylhet.

Helal also talked to his wife Farida Akhter yesterday evening, police sources said.

A police official wishing anonymity said, "It is now clear that a vested quarter including Helal tried to create workers' unrest in the DEPZ."

"It will be clear who were behind the demonstration, once Helal is caught," he added.

Police are also looking for Sumon, who spread the news of Helal's killing on Thursday over stealing of a cell phone set.

Meanwhile, Featherlite Ltd in a press release yesterday said the workers of the factory turned violent on September 13 and beat factory officials and destroyed documents, raw materials, readymade garments and equipment after Sewing Operator Helal Uddin went missing following a trifling matter of stealing a mobile phone.

It also said the personal information given by Helal is false and fabricated.

It has been known from the workers that Helal is hiding around the DEPZ area, the release added.

It said the incident has no link with the workers' salary, and the authorities are not involved in the incident at all.

The company provides salaries according to the latest Labour Law, 2006 and in line with directives of the BEPZA, the release claimed.

The BEPZA in a separate press release said workers became exited on September 13 following the stealing of a mobile phone set on the production floor of Featherlite Ltd.

At one stage, a few outsiders spread rumours that an official killed Helal and dumped his body.

A group of outsiders forcibly entered the DEPZ in the morning the following day and tried to attack the factories.

Bangladesh: 100 hurt as garment workers clash with police

Monday, September 17 2007 @ 04:07 AM PDT

Contributed by: WorkerFreedom

Views: 127

Production in most parts of the Dhaka Export Processing Zone (DEPZ) in Savar remained suspended throughout the day yesterday as clashes between workers and police left at least 100 people injured.

Bangladesh: 100 hurt as garment workers clash with police

September 16th, 2007 by Ed



Production in most parts of the Dhaka Export Processing Zone (DEPZ) in Savar remained suspended throughout the day yesterday as clashes between workers and police left at least 100 people injured.

The fighting broke out as police charged baton on the garment workers fuming over unconfirmed reports that one of them was killed Thursday over the theft of a cellphone set.

Several hundred workers of Featherlite Ltd massed at the entrance to the DEPZ Extension at around 7:00am, clamouring for recovery of the co-worker's body. As the law enforcers prevented them from entering, they marched towards the DEPZ (old). On the way, they were joined by a huge number of fellows from the other factories. In the old DEPZ area, police clubbed them, leaving several workers injured.

In response, the demonstrators went on the rampage, damaging a number of factories in and outside the exclusive industrial block. Besides, they barricaded the nearby Nabinagar-Kaliakoir Road and vandalised seven to eight vehicles, emptying traffic out of there. A-One, Hoplun, Lenny Fashions Ltd and Actor Ltd are among the factories damaged inside the DEPZ area.

Chase and counter-chase went on for hours. Police used baton again injuring 40 more. Some 10 cops were also wounded. Police had to shoot around 35 teargas canisters to drive off the marauding crowd. They arrested two--Iliyas and Monir--during the clashes.

Due to blockade on the road and the fight, most of the garment workers could not join work, leading to suspension of production in most of the factories. Only 17 out of 88 factories were operative during the time when RMG plants in the nearby areas too remained closed fearing backlash, said DEPZ sources.

Locals said workers at the Featherlite Ltd erupted in protests Thursday afternoon after 'rumours' spread that the factory authorities had killed Helal, a worker, for stealing a phone set and hidden his body.

Failing to know Helal's whereabouts till late in the evening, they started vandalising the factory building. Informed, Ashulia police got to the scene and had the situation under control. They sifted through the factory premises for the "body" or evidence, but to no effect. The protesters, however, claimed that a bloodstained shirt had been recovered during the search. Motiur Rahman, assistant superintendent of police, told reporters that the story of killing Helal and dumping his body has turned out to be false.

“Still, we are trying to trace him [Helal],” he added.

A huge contingent of police and the Rapid Action Battalion were deployed in the area while the army personnel were patrolling the roads to avert further violence. A case was filed with Ashulia Police Station against 100/150 unnamed garment workers on charge of vandalism and obstruction to the law enforcers on duty. Police and intelligence men were raiding different places across Ashulia and Savar, police sources said at around 12:30am.

Rioting at RMG plants in and around Dhaka for eight weeks last year left nearly 400 factories damaged. Industry observers believe this has been one of the reasons for the growth in the ready made garment sector slowing down in recent months.

A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed on June 12, 2006 between the government, garment owners and worker leaders to ensure labour rights, and peaceful and improved working conditions.