



PHOTO: STAR

Demonstrators protesting eviction from government forestland in Shakhipur yesterday demanding withdrawal of the UNO and the Assistant Commissioner for Land.

PROTEST AGAINST EVICTION FROM GOVT FORESTLAND IN SHAKHIPUR

## Magistrate, 5 cops among 30 injured in clashes

100 rubber bullets, tear gas fired

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

At least 30 people including a magistrate, five police men and some local political leaders were injured as demonstrators protesting eviction from government forestlands clashed with police at Shakhipur upazala headquarters yesterday.

Police fired at least 100 rubber bullets and tear gas shells to disperse the demonstrators who besieged the Upazila Nirbahi Officer's office demanding removal of the UNO and the Assistant Commissioner of land revenue department, who started the eviction drive about a month ago.

After launch of the eviction drive, an all-party body styled Shakhipur Bachao Sangram Committee (committee to save

Shakhipur) was formed to resist the eviction.

After yesterday's clashes, the Sangram Committee announced hartal in Shakhipur for an indefinite period from yesterday.

Tangail Deputy Commissioner Saifuddin Ahmed Majumder and Police Superintendent Mirza Abdullah Baki rushed to Shakhipur.

They were holding a meeting with the Sangram Committee leaders when the report was filed at about 9 last night.

Magistrate Ziauddin Ahmed and SI Abdur Razzak were injured by brickbats hurled by the demonstrators.

Ten of the injured people including Sangram Committee leader Shakhipur JCD (Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal) president Sabur Reza and Saiful Islam

were admitted to the Sakhipur Upazila Health Complex.

The injured also included Sangram Committee convener Mir Shamsul Alam, who sustained beating by police, sources said.

The clashes ensued at noon when the demonstrators marched with sticks and tried to besiege the UNO office. Police resisted the procession at the Upazila Parishad office gate. The protesters hurled brickbats at police.

The upazila administration said they launched the drive to evict encroachers from government forestlands. But the protesters claimed that the administration was also evicting lessees.

As the violence was quelled, the Sangram Committee held a rally at Taltala in the upazila headquarters.

With Shakhipur BNP president

Mostafizur Rahman in the chair, the rally was addressed by, among others, BNP secretary Shajahan Saju, general secretary of local traders association Khalilur Rahman, Awami League (AL) general secretary Sawkat Sikdar and Jatiya Party leader Kazi Ashraf Siddiki.

Speakers at the rally said the hartal will continue till the UNO and the Assistant Commissioner for Land are removed.

After the rally, BNP central leader Ahmed Azam, who was a candidate in Sakhipur in last parliament election, told newsmen, "Our movement is not against the government. Our movement is against autocracy of the Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) and the Assistant Commissioner (Land)".

## Transfer journo Goutam murder case to STT

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Faridpur

Journalists at a meeting at Faridpur Press Club yesterday reiterated their demand for trial of the killers of Goutam Das, Faridpur bureau chief of Bangla national daily Samakal.

Goutam was killed by some unidentified assailants at Samakal office in the town on May 17 last year.

Yesterday's meeting, chaired by Observer correspondent Jogadish Chandra Ghosh, was held in observance of the first death anniversary of Goutam.

The meeting expressed dissatisfaction at the slow progress of investigation and urged the authorities to transfer the case to Speedy Trial Tribunal (STT).

## Bus strike in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Plying of buses and mini-buses in all the routes of the district was suspended yesterday following enforcement of an indefinite strike by transport owners and workers.

Coaches and luxury buses also did not ply to Dhaka, Chittagong and other cities.

The strike was called following a long-standing dispute among different groups of transport workers on Sylhet-Moulvibazar-Srimongal route.

Sylhet Deputy Commissioner sat with the transport leaders to withdraw the strike, but to no effect. Another meeting will be held at the Divisional Commissioner's office today.

## Sit-in at three Moulvibazar upazila hqs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

Sylhet Division Development Council (SDDC) yesterday organised sit-in demonstrations at Baralekha, Kulaura and Juri upazila headquarters and held a rally to press its demands.

The demands include reopening of Kulaura-Shahbajpur railway line and the recently closed Rutna Tea Garden in Moulvibazar, construction of a permanent embankment in Monu river for flood protection and development of Hakhaliki Haor.

The demonstrations were staged in front of UNO offices in the three upazilas.

After the sit-in programmes, demonstrators from nearby Baralekha and Juri came to Kulaura, where a big rally was held.

Presided over by Mukim Uddin, the rally was addressed by, among others Gias Uddin, Moinul Islam, Khondakar Lutfur Rahman and Abdul Malik. Another rally will be held at Kulaura on May 26.

## MURDER OF EXPATRIATE IN RANGPUR

# Procession with body for punishment to killers

CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Hundreds of locals in Dhap area in Rangpur brought out a procession with the body of London expatriate Khondoker Iffat Elahi Mahbub yesterday demanding punishment to his killers.

Adid-Bin Mahbub, brother of slain Mahbub lodged a case with Kotwali police station accusing Khondoker Mahbub Elahi Biplob, Captain Iffekhar Elahi Shanto, Ershad Elahi Shuvo, Laila Monjur and Pavel for the murder.

Police arrested only Captain Iffekhar who was caught by locals in Mahiganj on his way to Rangpur town from Rathbari, allegedly after dumping the body of Iffat.

Police said the rest of the accused are fleeing homes.

Police produced Iffekhar before a magistrate court and sought seven days' demand. The court granted five days' remand.

Iffekhar is being quizzed at Kotwali police station.

Police said, according to primary investigation, the accused had long been planning to kill Iffat who came to Bangladesh on April 30 from London.

Quoting from the FIR, police sources told The Daily Star that Iffekhar on Tuesday asked Iffat over cell phone over cell phone to come to his (Iffekhar) Dhap residence. Iffat is Iffekhar's cousin.

When Iffat came, Iffekhar proposed to his cousin to go to Kholahati cantonment for on visit.

Adid said, "Khondker Mahbub Elahi Biplob, his brother Captain Iffekhar Elahi Shanto

and Pavel of Kamalkatchna in left the house in the evening for Kholahati. We could not think of the murder of Iffat till police informed us at night."

Meanwhile, a bomb went off on the yard of Pavel's Kamalkatchna residence yesterday morning, injuring a domestic help critically.

Locals in Kamalkatchna told this correspondent that inmates of the house immediately fled away with the injured domestic help.

Police is haunting for the injured domestic help and other inmates of the house.

Officer-in-Charge of Kotwali thana Bazlur Rashid said, they are investigating whether there is any link between the blast and the murder.

He said, captain Iffekhar might engaged Pavel to help him kill his cousin Iffat.

8X3

## Magura BNP falls apart

Rival factions hold separate programmes

HOSSAIN SERAJ, Magura

Dogged by internal feud, Magura district BNP has finally fallen apart. The two factions held separate programmes on Monday. Leaders of one faction at its meeting called the party general an 'outlaw', demanded his removal from the post and vowed to resist political activities by him.

The rift became public on Monday when the two rival factions led by general secretary Ali Ahmed Biswas and vice-president Nazimuddin Ahmed brought out separate processions and held meetings as part of the party's countrywide programme to protest frequent hartal calls by 14-party opposition alliance.

The faction led by Nazimuddin held its meeting at Kadamtala in the town with Nurul Hasan Baku in the chair.

Speakers there termed Ali Ahmed Biswas an 'outlaw leader' and claimed that he is still involved in underground politics with Sarbohara Party.

They also alleged that Ali Ahmed is accused in at least 19 criminal cases including four for murder, one for looting Madhukhali police station

of Faridpur, three for robbery.

The speakers also accused him for sheltering anti-social elements and criminals.

Talking to this correspondent, Ali Ahmed denied his involvement with outlawed parties and tender manipulation. "My opponents are trying to tarnish my image", he said.

He however admitted some criminal cases against him and claimed that those were filed during Awami League rule to harass him. When asked about a separate party procession by his rivals, he said followers of some expelled leaders did that to damage the party.

Talking to this correspondent, former organising secretary of district Jubo Dal Khan Aminur Rahman Pikul however claimed that Ali Ahmed was involved with outlawed parties and that he along with his associates kidnapped businessman Sanatan Pal and realised Tk 8 lakh ransom last year.

The BNP faction led by Ali Ahmed held its meeting at Shegun Bagicha in the town where senior vice-president Aminul Islam Chandu, organising secretary Akter Hossain and municipal chairman Abdul Gofur spoke.



PHOTO: STAR

Primary school teachers brought out a procession in Mymensingh town yesterday to press their demands.

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