

Frequent power outage protested in Gaibandha

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

People from all walks of life formed a two-kilometer long human chain and held a rally at Dariyapur on the outskirts of Gaibandha town protesting frequent power outage in six upazilas of the district.

The programmes were organised by Palli Bidyut Grahak Sangram Samity, a newly formed civic body. The upazilas are under the command area of Gaibandha Rural Electrification Association.

The protest meeting held at Dariyapur Bazar was addressed by, among others, Sangram Committee Convener Hasan Mahmud Siddique, Ahsanul Habib Sayeed, Kabir Mondal, Mihir Ghosh, Aminuzzaman Rinku, Sultan Ahmed, Sontosh Barman and Ali Ahsan.

They said, apart from creating sufferings to people, the frequent power outage is affecting operation of small mills and factories, household units like poultry farms and agriculture in rural areas.

According to sources in the Rural Electrification Association, there are about 41,900 consumers in six upazilas in Gaibandha district. Every day, it needs 15 MW power electricity but only 6 MW during day time and 2 MW at night.

Consumers in rural areas alleged that on an average, they get power supply hardly for 3-4 hours a day. Power goes several times in a day, and they have to spend most of the nights without electricity, they said.



People formed a two-kilometre human chain in Gaibandha protesting frequent power outage.

PHOTO: STAR

TEN DAYS LEFT FOR VOTER UPDATING

Only 8pc work done in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

People in Rangpur town are doubtful about getting enrolled in the new voter list as most of the houses are yet to be visited by enumerators to update the voter list while only 10 days are left for the job.

This correspondent talked to many people in the town who said enumerators did not visit their house till yesterday.

District Election Officer Subhash

Chandra Sarker said 2,586 registration officials have been appointed at field level in the district to update the voter list.

About 6000 people were engaged to prepare the draft voter list a few months back, he said.

"Though it is a tough job to complete the work in 10 days, I hope they will be able to do it", he said.

The voter updating must be completed by August 10, as fixed by the Election Commission.

The district election officer said 7.8 per cent of the new voters out of 3,15,000 (listed a few months back) were enrolled in last 10 days.

The work will be hastened in next 10 days as the enumerators will be relieved of their work at schools, he said.

Most of the enumerators (assisting officers) have been recruited from among schoolteachers.

UPDF activists kill son of PCJSS man 9 killed in 15 days

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Armed activists of the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) Sunday night shot dead son of an activist of rival Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) at a remote village in Chaillatali Donga Para in Laxmichhari upazila.

The dead is Milon Kumar Chakma, 18, son of Rashik Kumar Chakma, 40, an active member of PCJSS, sources said.

Local people and security sources said, a group of UPDF activists attacked the rice mill of Rashik Kumar. In his absence, they caught his son Milon and killed him in a brush fire.

Police recovered the body and sent it to Khagrachhari Sadar Hospital for autopsy.

Local people and security sources said the attackers demanded Tk 1 lakh as ransom from Rashik. As he refused to pay the ransom, the raiders killed his son, security sources said.

However, the UPDF district coordinator Samari Chakma denied involvement of UPDF men in the killing.

Our Rangamati Correspondent said: At least nine persons were killed and 10 others injured in clashes between the PCJSS and the UPDF over establishing supremacy in different areas of Chittagong Hill Tracts in last 15 days.

The clashes restarted on July 9 after a pause for a few months. Three UPDF activists including an elderly woman were killed and two others were injured as a group of PCJSS activists attacked their stronghold at dead of night at New Karetchhari of Kutukchhari union in Sadar upazila.

The dead are Tulumoni Chakma, Sushil Chakma and Premolata Chakma while the injured are Sontosh Chakma and Sidhe Chakma.

The July 9 incident infuriated the UPDF activists who launched attacks on the PCJSS activists. One person, Parban Chakma was killed while two others were injured in a clash at Dhudukchhari of Panchhari upazila in Khagrachhari on July 19.

The next day, PCJSS activist Kalpa Chakma succumbed to his severe bullet injuries following attack by the UPDF at Logang village in the same upazila in Khagrachhari.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

A mobile court during a raid yesterday detected unhygienic conditions in a bakery at Halishahar in Chittagong and sealed it.

Ratan Sen murder case still limps as documents missing

CPB pays tribute at rally

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Documents of communist leader Ratan Sen murder case is missing from Khulna thana and Detective Branch of Khulna Metropolitan Police (KMP). As a result, reinvestigation of the case, ordered by home ministry in 2000, is uncertain.

Ratan Sen, who was president of Khulna district unit of Communist Party of Bangladesh (CPB), was stabbed to death on July 31, 1992 in front of Khulna police superintendent's office.

Khulna CPB leader Ashim Ananda Das lodged an FIR with Khulna thana as complainant, without naming any accused. The case was later transferred to CID for investigation.

CID submitted charge sheet accusing 15 persons including Shaharuzzaman Martuza, now president of Khulna Chamber of Commerce and Industry and a prominent member of a faction of Khulna city BNP led by Ali Asgar Lobi MP and the city Mayor.

All the chargesheeted accused were earlier acquitted by court due to lack of evidence and weak charge sheet.

In 2000, the home ministry issued an order for reinvestigation of the case following a petition submitted on behalf of Khulna CPB.

The Khulna thana Officer-in-Charge Abdul Hamid told this correspondent that he is not aware of the officer who investigated the case as the case docket is missing.

August 14 is the date for hearing on progress of reinvestigation in the case in the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate.

Meanwhile, Khulna CPB observed the 14th death anniversary of Ratan Sen yesterday through holding a rally in the morning and a public meeting at Shahid Maharaj square in the afternoon.

Khulna CPB leaders yesterday today submitted a memorandum to the state minister for home through the deputy commissioner demanding re-arrest of the chargesheeted accused.

Indigenous people resist community afforestation bid

Locals in Bhaluka demand partnership; case against 31

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A case has been filed against 31 indigenous people for allegedly 'foiling an afforestation programme' in government forests in Dakatia union in Bhaluka upazila of Mymensingh district.

Forest Officer Saidul Islam of Angargara bit filed the case with Bhaluka police station Saturday night. The accused people are from Dumneeghat and Chhitnipara villages in Bhaluka.

On Saturday, hundreds of indigenous people from Dumneeghat and Chhitnipara villages resisted forest officials and employees when they went there to plant saplings under a 'community afforestation programme' covering 75 acres in Dakatia and Angargara villages. Bhaluka police rescued them.

Leaders of local indigenous people told journalists on Sunday that forest officials were pressing them for about three months to participate in the programme without any partnership deeds. They will not allow the afforestation without

deeds, they said. Forest officials claimed that they want partnership and also trained 30 people but deeds will be made later.

Upazila Assistant Forest Keeper Ariful Haque Belal said, "We want to do community afforestation based on partnership with villagers and the programme will be implemented after exchanging opinion with the villagers". He blamed the local bit officer for attempting tree plantation on Saturday without any agreement or understanding with locals.

When contacted yesterday, Sub-Inspector (SI) Ruhul Kaddus of Bhaluka police station and investigation officer (IO) of the case said none was arrested in connection with the case.

Filing of the case created a panic in the area and most males left home to escape arrest, local elders said.

They said they will resist the forest department's community afforestation without partnership deeds.



PHOTO: STAR

Workers and employees of Mubarakganj Sugar Mill in Jhenidah holding a rally in front of the mill yesterday as part of SKOP's countrywide programme to press its 8-point demand.

JCD-SHIBIR CLASH Dinajpur Medical College closed sine die

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Dinajpur Medical College was closed sine die Sunday following JCD-Shibir clashes in which about 60 students were injured.

The students were leaving their dormitories till filing of this report yesterday. Sporadic clashes took place between JCD and Shibir on Saturday and Sunday over control of a hall room.

Of the injured, 11 ICS activists were admitted to Rangpur Medical College Hospital (RMCH) in a critical condition while others were shifted to other hospitals and clinics.

The Dinajpur Medical College academic committee, at a joint meeting yesterday, formed a five-member probe committee led by Dr Mosaddeque Hossain to investigate the matter. The committee was asked to submit its report within three days of its formation.

Campus sources said, JCD activists ousted ICS cadres from the room Saturday afternoon triggering violence. Both the clashing groups used lethal weapons including Chinese axe, hammer, iron rod and bi-cycle chain during the clash.

Intensify agitation to realise reforms

AL leaders tell Satkhira meet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Awami League (AL) leaders yesterday called upon the people to intensify agitation for the opposition-proposed reforms of the caretaker system and the Election Commission to ensure a free and fair election.

There will not be any election without reforms, they said at a reunion of former leaders of Bangladesh Chhatra League, student wing of AL, held at Satkhira municipal auditorium.

Central AL Joint Secretary Mukul Bose and front ranking party leaders in the district addressed the function.

Mukul Bose said the government is reluctant to accept the proposals knowing that they would not be able to retain power without rigging as people have already rejected them for their misrule and widespread corruption.

The voter list being prepared by the present EC will not be accepted by people as they lost confidence in the present EC, he said.

The government is hatching conspiracy to hold a farcical elec-

tion. "We, taking the people along, will resist the evil move", he said.

Chaired by Mahidul Haque, the meeting was addressed by, among others, Engineer Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, Nazrul Islam, Mamtaz Ahmed, former lawmakers Dr Mokhlesur Rahman and BM Nazrul Islam and Prof Abu Ahmed.

Woman's body exhumed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Body of a widow was exhumed yesterday after 55 days of burial at Khordo Kasundi village in Magura Sadar upazila as her eldest son Hafizur Rahman Badshah filed a petition with a court alleging that her mother was beaten to death by his younger brother.

Body of Halima Khatun, wife of late Ishaq Mridha, was buried on June 6 after she was allegedly murdered by her son Asaduzzaman alias Peshkar in a dispute over family property.