

Logang massacre

Festival turns mourning

Abdul Jalil Bhuyian back from CHT

Mystery still shrouds the recent massacre at Logang in Panchhari upazila in Khagrachhari.

About 200 of the victims were tribal people and lone one a settler-cowboy. The local people believe that the cowboy was a casualty of Shantibahini operation. The remaining deaths of at least 200 tribals are a mystery about which the locals would rather not make any guesses.

Tension still hangs in the air and permeates the hamlets, hills and the bushes full nine days after the incident.

Hill people in Khagrachhari on April 13 demonstrated protesting the Logang incident and demanded judicial inquiry into the slaughter and punishment to the killers.

Action has been taken against some VDP men in this connection, an official source said.

Meanwhile: A 28-member team led by Deputy Attorney General Hasan Arif had recently been to Khagrachhari and Rangamati for a five-day visit at the invitation of the Chaitra Sangkranti (Bai-Sa-Bee) Udjapan Committee.

The visitors were to take part in the celebrations Bai-Sa-Bee (festivals of hill people) and see for themselves the situation prevailing in the hill districts. Bai means Baishuk; festival of the Tripura, Sa means Sangrai; festival of the Marma and Bee means Biju; festival of the Chakma.

The team included lawyers, university teachers, politicians, student leaders, human rights activists and journalists. Prominent, among others, were DUJ President M Shahjahan Mia, Dr Anu Mohammed, Pankaj Bhattacharya, Dilip Barua, Nasruddoza, Mostafa Faruq, Sarwar Alam Chowdhury, Akhtar Ahmed Khan, Barrister Sara Hossain and Advocate Adilur Rahman Khan.

The festivities turned into mourning following the April 10 mass killing of Logang at Panchhari upazila under Khagrachhari hill district.

The Bai-Sa-Bee Udjapan Committee postponed all its programmes and held two condolence meetings — one in Khagrachhari Govt College premises and another in Rangamati Shilpakala Academy premises.

The Dhaka team, however, decided to visit Logang. But the security forces stopped the visit of the team saying Logang was not a safe place to go.

The team reluctantly returned to Khagrachhari and attended the condolence meeting in the afternoon on April 12 in Khagrachhari Govt College premises.

The meeting was addressed, among others, by Deputy Attorney General Hasan Arif, DUJ President Shahjahan Mia, PDF leader Pankaj Bhattacharya, Five-party leader Mostafa Faruq, Student leader Nasruddoza and some local leaders with Ananta Bihari Khisa in the chair.

Hasan Arif described the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) crisis as a humanitarian problem. He called for an early solution to the issue.

Other speakers demanded

judicial inquiry into the Logang killing headed by a Supreme Court judge, publication of a whitepaper on CHT, formation of a parliamentary committee on CHT and release of nine hill student leaders.

They said an immediate political initiative was necessary to solve the CHT problems because it was still within reach and solvable. Some vested quarters are busy to keep the issue alive and taking advantage, they commented. They expressed solidarity with the demands for dissolution of Local Govt Parishads.

A similar condolence meeting was also held in Rangamati Shilpakala Academy premises with Bijaya Ketan Chakma in the chair.

Dipankar Talukdar MP of Awami League in his speech said democracy had been established in the country except in hill districts. He said government had not changed the policy of autocratic Ershad regime. It is a political problem and it could be solved through the establishment of democracy here.

We want consideration not confrontation and Speaker of the Parliament has given hope in this regard, he added. He demanded immediate formation of a Parliamentary Committee on CHT problems.

The meeting was also addressed by Barrister Sara Hossain and Moni Swapan Dewan, a local leader.

Women from the audience were sobbing as the speakers narrated the events happening in the hill districts.

Brig Sharif Aziz psc, commander, Khagrachhari region, briefed the newsmen visiting

Khagrachhari, about the atrocities by Shantibahini and development works done by Bangladesh armed forces for the hill people. Brig Sharif Aziz blamed the Shantibahini for Logang massacre.

Brig Sharif in honour of the Dhaka team also arranged a tea party where local elite, tribals and non-tribals, attended. The team also visited the Natun Kuri Junior High School built by armed forces.

Brig Sharif helped the team to visit different areas of the district to see for themselves the situation prevailing there.

A local non-tribal politician on condition of anonymity told The Daily Star that civil administration is necessary to solve the problems. Many opined that it should be solved politically. They termed it as a political problem. The crisis deepened in 1979 with the beginning of Bengali settlement, they added.

Bashista Muni Chakma, 37, whose wife was learnt to have been killed by VDP men at Logang, alleged that administration did not return the body of his wife but allowed to see. He said there he counted 147 bodies. He appealed to the government for justice.

Many tribals came to us to say the harrowing tales of distress. They believed that as if we could solve the problem.

In Rangamati tribal students, many of them female, requested the Dhaka-based journalists to portray the true picture of the hill districts in their respective newspapers.

They alleged that the news which were being published in the national dailies on CHT were not based on facts



vehicular traffic movement came to a halt in the New Market area of the city as agitating HSC examinees went on rampage demanding shifting of the exams date. — Star photo

HSC examinees demand shift in exam dates

By Staff Correspondent

Hundreds of HSC Examinees demonstrated Monday in Dhaka, Gazipur, Savar and Dhamrai demanding the shifting of the HSC examinations date.

The agitating students set up barricades on roads, in the city and highways, damaged at least a dozen vehicles and injured several people. Police said they arrested ten agitators from the Dhaka College and Dhaka City College area.

Nirmul committee

From Page 1 Col 5 during the war of liberation in 1971.

Jahanara Imam criticised the ruling party role in parliament on the question of Golam Azam and said people would not sit idle if they were offended.

"The people of this country love peace, but they are not coward. The struggle will start if they are obstructed," said Jahanara Imam.

She asked the freedom-loving people to go ahead with the movement for "elimination of killers and collaborators".

Kazi Aref urged the ruling BNP leadership to prove their organisation as a party of freedom fighters by holding trial of "war criminal" Golam Azam.

The National Coordination Committee for Implementation of the Spirit of Liberation War and Elimination of Killers-Collaborators of 1971 is neither a political platform, nor has it any aim to dislodge the government, he said.

"But people will not spare the government, if it does not accept their verdict."

Hassan Imam said the BNP government was making futile efforts to protect Golam Azam. It has arrested him only to "bluff" the people as it has not filed any case against him.

On the contrary, the anti-liberation Jamaat filed two cases against the government, he said and criticised the filing of case against prominent citizens of the country.

"We have no way to go back home until killers are eliminated.... pro-liberation elements will be finished if the anti-liberation killers are not eliminated," Imam said.

Human chain

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obedience, posters, distribution of leaflets, meetings, processions and bundh in Coochbihar and Jalpaiguri on May 28.

These will be observed in phases upto June 25. On June 26, the day scheduled for transferring the corridor to Bangladesh, an eleven kilometre long human chain from Mekligonj to Dhaprahat, passing through Tinbigha is to be formed, blocking all kinds of traffic in this route.

L K Advani, the BJP chief, is likely to visit Dhubri in Assam on April 25 to meet with the workers and members of the public to gear up the anti-Tinbigha transfer movement.

The West Bengal leaders of BJP including Monmohan Roy and Dr Debobrata Sinha, are monitoring the key points to organise massive anti-Tinbigha transfer agitations.

Kafil Uddin, a member of Dahagram Union and Rezaur Rahman, the organising secretary of the Corridor Transfer Implementation Sangram Committee, narrating harrowing tales of the 15 thousand besieged inhabitants of the enclaves told this correspondent at Patgram that there was acute scarcity of daily necessities and medicine. Hundreds of day labourers have become jobless, diarrhoea and other diseases have broken out, leaving at least 50 people including children struggling with death.

Five-party

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Azam issue passed in Parliament Sunday was silent about steps to be taken against him.

They were very critical about the ruling party's claim that to take any step against Golam Azam would be subjudice.

The Five Party leaders believed that such a stance of the government was virtually serving the interests of the Jamaat.

It was not the government that went to court against Golam Azam rather it was the Jamaat that took the issue to the court, said the Five Party leaders adding that government had arrested Golam Azam under the Foreigners Act in the face of people's pressure.

Although the government was talking about dealing with the issue according to constitutionally accepted legal measures, the ruling party's practical attitude showed that the government was not serious about taking measures against the Jamaat and its foreigner chief.

Five Party leaders present at the press conference included Rashed Khan Menon MP, Sharif Nurul Ambia of the JSD, Khalequzzaman of the BSD, Nirmal Sen of the SKSD, A F M Mahbul Hoque of the OSD and Naim Jahangir of the Oikya Prakira.

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The Midnight File

Ceausescu's 21 closest advisers sentenced

BUCHAREST, Apr 20: The Supreme Court on Monday sentenced Nicolae Ceausescu's 21 closest advisors to lengthy jail terms for supporting the former dictator's bloody attempts to suppress the 1989 anti-Communist revolution. The decision, announced by Supreme Court Vice President Valeriu Bogdanescu in a crowded Bucharest courtroom, overturns an earlier acquittal. No reason was given, reports AP.

Arabs fear tougher US move against Libya

TUNIS, Apr 20: Arab states fear Washington will soon seek tougher sanctions against Libya — probably a freeze on foreign assets — if Tripoli fails to surrender suspects in the Lockerbie airliner bombing, Arab diplomats said today. Unfortunately is a time limit. I think within weeks and not months America will ask the UN for increasing the sanctions, said an Arab ambassador close to the crisis, reports Reuter.

Khaleda: Democracy

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behaviour that they still have autocratic attitude and one-party system in their frame of mind, she said. She pointed out that these attitudes had been repeatedly reflected through their actions.

She said it was regrettable that when time had come to rebuild the nation from the destruction created by autocratic rule a quarter was involved in hatching evil designs to destroy the stability in society.

Begum Zia warned that nobody would be allowed to hatch any evil design to destabilise the society and foil the process of development.

BNP, she said is a party of the people and belongs to the soil. It had always upheld the spirit of the War of Independence.

The Prime Minister said the present government wanted to extend all cooperation to the forces which wanted to increase production and lead the nation toward prosperity. She said, "we believe that all shall have to work unitedly to give democracy a permanent shape".

She said the quarters which would indulge in terrorism to create indiscipline in society would face a miserable consequence in the next elections.

Begum Zia expressed her belief that the on-going development programmes implemented properly would change the look of the country. She said those who wanted to make the country dependent on others were creating hindrance in the process of implementation of the development programme.

Salam Talukdar said BNP had come to power through people's mandate and would remain in power so long as the people want.

Oli Ahmed said those who had always spoken in favour of democracy killed it soon after coming to power. He said when the trial of autocrat Ershad began they resorted to violence.

13 more die of diarrhoea in Khulna

KHULNA, Apr 20: At least 13 people in four upazilas have died of diarrhoea during the last 15 days, district control rooms said here, today, reports UNB.

The outbreak of the water borne disease, which has now taken a serious turn, has affected more than 1,500 people during the period in nine upazilas.

Mujahideen govt

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scheduled and could not be cancelled as a similar cancellation of a scheduled visit to Japan some time ago had caused great embarrassment to the government.

However due to the rapidly-changing situation the visit's duration has been reduced from five to two days. The Prime Minister who will be reaching Vienna today will return on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the guerrilla commander whose forces are in the vicinity of Kabul and is suspected by rival groups of having struck a deal with the post-Najibullah regime in the Afghan capital has denied these allegations.

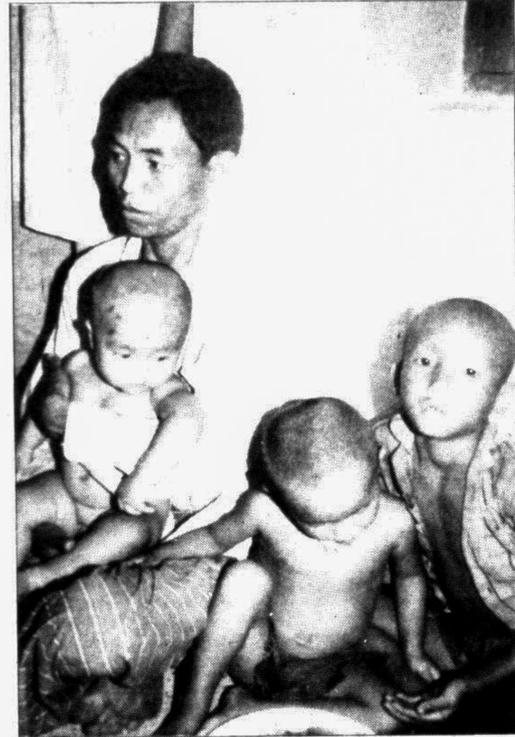
The commander, 39-year-old Ahmad Shah Masood, has sent word to Peshawar warning against Mujahideen in-fighting and particularly asking the Commanders' Council to speak to Gulbadin Hekmatyar whose forces are also converging on Kabul, not to fight him. Masood's message asked them to convince Hekmatyar that he is not in coalition with the government in Kabul. "I am not selling my 14 years of effort," the message said.

Hekmatyar is unhappy because he feels an attempt is being made to install a coalition in Kabul based on linguistic and ethnic lines. Masood, who has made big advances after seemingly reaching accommodation with dissident government commanders in Kabul, belongs to the country's minority Tajik community while Hekmatyar is a member of the dominant ethnic group.

According to the F O spokesman, each of the Mujahideen groups (variously said to number from 10 to 15) will nominate two representatives, one military commander and one political personality.

He also said that the consensus formula had not been suggested by the UN special envoy, Benon Sevan, although it had his approval. Some parties had already given the names while the others would do after consulting their respective Shouras (advisory councils).

The spokesman was optimistic that the transfer of power would take place, under UN auspices and thought it might happen even today or tomorrow.



Bashista Chakma along with his children telling tales of horrors. — Star photo

Pahari Chhatra Parishad meets Hasina, submits memorandum

Pahari Chhatra Parishad Monday submitted a memorandum to Opposition Leader Sheikh Hasina demanding neutral investigation into the Logang massacre in Panchari upazila on April 10, reports UNB.

Najibullah

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deen chiefs, while acknowledging 'ups and downs' in the negotiations.

At least two factions, the Shi'ite Hezb-i-Wahdat, based in Iran, and the radical Hezb-i-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar, based in Pakistan, have thrown up obstacles to a resolution to the 13-year-old Afghan war, according to Ayub.

"Hekmatyar is the biggest problem. He accepts nothing," Ayub said.

Another report says, the cities and towns of Afghanistan are falling out of Kabul's hands like ripe fruit, with the second city, Kandahar, the most recent to fall.

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Advani sees no contradiction between BJP objective, Gandhi's philosophy

By Aasha Mehreen Amin

Meeting LK Advani, leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha was the last thing I (imagined) could happen on a holiday in Shillong. A dinner was being held in his honour at the Pine Wood hotel on April 4. The first thing that struck me was that there was hardly any security except one or two uniformed guards. I slipped in quite unobtrusively, with a few children who wanted Advani's autograph. The banquet hall was packed with party members, MPs, reporters and Advani supporters and the 'star' himself was sitting at the far end corner chatting with an MP.

Watching Advani as he casually spoke to people was a fascinating experience. Here was the champion of Hindu fundamentalism, a person whose face conjures up menacing 'Trishuls', battered mosques and a lot of 'safron' hatred, smiling affectionately at two Muslim Bangladeshi children

who were on a visit. He asked aloud if anyone knew the meaning of one of their obviously Muslim names. Speaking in soft tones, with his almost benign expression, he seemed as approachable as Santa Clause.

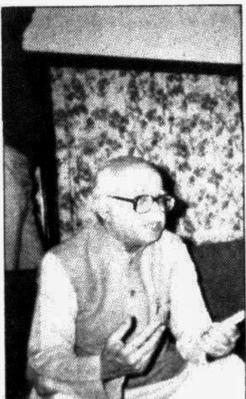
Before I could ask him anything he shot me the same question he had asked the Bangladeshi children: What the Bangladeshi commonman thought of India. He was curious to know whether Bangladeshis were hostile towards Indians because of religious differences, making me wonder as to who was interviewing whom.

When the same question was reversed on him, said the smooth talking Advani, "During the launching of Bangladesh in 1971, we were very friendly but over the years the friendship seems to have become less strong. We would definitely like to have stronger ties with Bangladesh, especially in terms of trade. We would like to buy your fish, gas, jute etc. And as you said, culturally we are very close." When asked whether he had come to Shillong for campaigning purposes, he promptly answered, "No, I came here because there is no parliament session on Saturdays and Sundays, I just had a meeting with state party leaders and members."

Advani then asked about how Bangladesh was coping with the Rohingya problem whether international help was

adequate. He did not seem to be impressed to hear that apart from UNHCR, Islamic countries had made significant donations.

By this time the room was



L K Advani — Star photo

filling up and Advani seemed to get a little restless, perhaps because he had not been able to touch his plate of food. A small crowd had formed, faces shining with admiration and awe as the BJP leader spoke to journalists and party members. It was easy to see why Advani had gained so much popularity. Not only is he very polished and dignified, but also

quite a charmer with his casual, friendly manner and easy smile. It is only those eyes that betray the shrewdness of this savvy BJP stalwart who has studied both law and journalism before entering politics.

When I realized my chance meeting with this powerful politician was about to come to a close, I quickly asked my last question keeping in mind his barely concealed anti-Muslim stand in the past: If BJP advocates an economic order that is based on the teachings of Gandhiji, what about his philosophy on secularism? Does this not contradict BJP's ideology and aim for a Hindu state?

Instantly a curtain seemed to be drawn over Advani's countenance but his voice was as unfruffled as ever when he answered, "Not at all. I totally agree with him. There is no contradiction as far as ideology is concerned." His dismissal was as gracious as his first greeting fifteen minutes ago. "Hope you enjoy your stay in Shillong. It was very nice meeting you."

Shibir, BCL clash

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was injured when a group of people exploded cocktails in front of district Awami League office at Shatmatha this evening.

Awami League blamed Shibir for the attack.