

National

Following massacre of 33 woodcutters

Tribals confine themselves in their homes fearing attack by Bangalees

From AKM Zahoorul Huq

RANGAMATI, Sept 17: Tense situation has been prevailing in Langadu and Baghaichhari thana of the district which developed following the abduction of 33 woodcutters on Monday, September 9 last by the tribal insurgents from Churakhal in Baghaichhari thana of the district.

It started intensifying and gripped the entire Chittagong Hill Tracts following the recovery of 28 bodies from the foot of the Churakhal hill in Baghaichhari thana of the district in search jointly conducted by the police, Bangladesh Rifles and Army on Wednesday, September 11.

All the of victims, non-tribals, were from the different hamlets in Langadu thana of the district.

The bodies were buried at Langadu thana parishad premises under a Krishnachura

tree on an assurance of four members of the cabinet as the burial was obstructed by the agitated mob there when the high officials of the administration including the Divisional Commissioner was trying bury the bodies.

The mob was demanding the solution of the longstanding CHT problem and protesting the brutal killing of the innocent woodcutters by the tribal insurgents. The ministers flew there, assured the agitated mob that early solution of the CHT problem and managed burial on September 12.

In the face of continuous mass protest on the recent atrocities, stepping up by the tribal insurgents, the government constituted a seven member parliamentary committee headed by the Chief Whip of the Jatiya Sangsad Abdul Hasnat Abdullah to probe into the

killing of woodcutters in Churakhal in Baghaichhari thana of the district. The committee is expected to start their work very shortly, a source from the committee said.

Meanwhile, different organisations in CHT have been going on protesting the atrocities of the tribal insurgents in the region.

An indefinite boycott programme started on September 14 in Baghaichhari thana of the district, which, according to the Parbatty Nagorik Parishad, will continue till solution of the Churakhal massacre.

Parbatty Nagorik Parishad, with the announcement of the programme has been refraining the Bangalees from any sorts of trade with the people living in hill or Paharis. Bangalees are not buying or

selling any commodities to or from the Paharis, it was reported.

The parishad, according to the programme, has stopped movement of any forest produces by boat or raft in the Kachalong valley.

Ninety per cent people — both tribals and non tribals — have been surviving on forest produces using the Kachalong valley.

Paharis are keeping themselves aloof from attending the offices in Langadu and Baghaichhari thana of the district, which, according to the Parbatty Nagorik Parishad, will continue till solution of the Churakhal massacre.

Tribe are absent apparently in travelling by boat in the riverine routes since September 10 last and thin the buses.

By this time, a dawn to dusk hartal was observed in Rangamati and Khagrachhari hill district on September 14, called jointly by All Party Unity Forum, Khagrachhari district unit of BNP and Parbatty Gono Parishad while a half-day hartal was observed in Bandarban on September 15 protesting the massacre of Churakhal, stepped up by the tribal insurgents on September 9, called by the Nagorik Adhikar Sangrakhyan Committee.

Processions were brought out and rallies were held in Kaukhali, Nanjarchor, Langadu and Baghaichhari thana as well as district headquarters of Rangamati hill district while simultaneously, the agitated mob in Khagrachhari and Bandarban districts protested the massacre stepped up by the tribal insurgents.

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