

SNAPS

Aborigine Day observed

POUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Indigenous men and women from 13 ethnic groups in the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) observed the Aborigine Day this year with the slogan: Ensure constitutional recognition and security of indigenous women.

On the occasion, they brought out a colourful procession and held a rally at Rangamati town on Saturday.

The procession was led by their leader Nirmalendu Tripura. Shudhasindu Khisha presided over the rally.

The speakers demanded full implementation of the CHT Peace Accord signed with the then government in 1997 and constitutional rights for all indigenous people in the country.

Ferry capsizes in Dakatia near Chandpur town

UNB, Chandpur

A ferry with a truck loaded with molasses capsized in the Dakatia river near Chowdhury Ghat terminal in the town on Sunday.

The 12-ton capacity ferry 'Sumra' of the Roads and Highways Department capsized under the weight of the truck loaded with more than 15 tons of molasses. The ferry capsized soon after the truck boarded it and went 25 feet down the river at about 7am.

Seven staff of the truck and the ferry were unhurt, but they fled the scene.

Joydev Shaha, a businessman of Puranbazar, Chandpur was the owner of molasses.

One killed, 6 hurt in road mishap in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

A woman was killed and six others were injured in two road accidents in the district yesterday.

Joy Banu, 75, of Aruail village was fatally injured when an autotempo knocked her down as she was crossing the Nasimogor-Fandwak road Benepara Madrasa. She died while being taken to hospital.

In the other accident, six persons were injured when another autotempo dashed a rickshaw on the Nasrinagor-Sarial road near Muslendupur bridge.

The injured were passengers of the autotempo, police said. Two of them -- Yayera Begum and AEIF Mia - - were admitted to Nasrinagor Upazila Health Complex and the four others were given first aid.

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Reception to artistes students at RU

A RU CORRESPONDENT

The Teachers Students Culture Centre (TSCC) at Rajshahi University (RU) accorded a freshers' reception to artistes students of the university on Sunday.

RU Vice Chancellor Prof Fisul Islam attended the function as chief guest.

Pro VC Prof KHM Shahada Hossain Mondol, TSCE Director Prof Sadequul Islam and other teachers also attended the function, held at the Kazi Nazrul Islam Auditorium.

There are about 40 artistes students at the university in the 2002-03 academic session.

One dies in road mishap

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

A woman was killed and two others were injured when an autotrickshaw turned upside down in front of the Radio centre at Manikchhori on Saturday.

Fatally injured Kalindi Chakma died while being taken to Rangamati General Hospital.

The injured driver and a male commuter were admitted to the hospital. Their names could not be known.

The body was handed over to the victim's family without autopsy, sources said. No case was filed.

Acid thrown on couple in B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

A couple suffered severe burn injuries when some miscreants threw acid on them while they were asleep at their house at Nasirnagar village on Saturday night.

The victims-- Jonu Mia, 35, and his wife Guljan Bibi, 30 have been admitted to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital. The miscreants fled away after the incident. Any case is yet to be filed in connection with the incident.

Telephone lines snapped in Manikganj

A CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Fifty telephone lines were snapped at Manikganj town on Saturday for non-payment of bills, T&T authorities said. They said the connections were snapped for accumulated arrears running up to six years.

But many of the subscribers alleged that their lines were snapped without any notice.

They also alleged that their telephones were inoperative for the last several years. Hose were snapped as work was going on for their conversion to digital system from analogue system, they claimed.

Pirates rule Meghna

20 trawlers looted, 20 fishermen abducted for not having 'pre-paid security card'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

Gangs of pirates looted 20 trawlers, abducted 20 fishermen and threw another five into the Meghna.

The horror befell the fishermen in Char Gazaria and Boyer Char areas near Tazumuddin as they had no 'pre-paid security card' and 'identification flag' after toll payment to pirates' syndicates.

The Swoop continued from Thursday noon till Friday night.

It came to light when eleven of the fishermen thrown into water were rescued from shorewaters in Mehendiganj on Saturday.

The survivors said the four fishermen and a trawler owner Faruk Majhi thrown into water are still missing.

They said they did not purchase the 'clearance documents', asked by the pirates earlier.

The pirates were in three gangs allegedly led by Joyanal Speaker, Faruk Ahmed Bagerhati and Jahangir, they claimed.

During the swoop, the pirates checked trawlers to see if those had purchased 'pre paid security card' and 'identification flag' issued by the pirates' syndicate.

Those having no 'clearance documents' were looted and fishermen on board thrown into water at will, the survivors said.

The twenty trawlers looted were owned by Abdur Rob Khan, Shahabuddin Mawlana, Salauddin Sikder, Abdul Hye, Faruk Majhi and Siraj Majhi.

During the swoop, the pirates also issued 'demand notes' to trawler owners to pay Tk 50,000 for a big trawler and Tk 20,000 for a small one. Any trawler owner delaying in purchasing the 'clearance documents, have to apologise to the syndicate, they said.

The mass piracy has scared the fishing community in Barisal region and angered people.

Some local Union Parishad chairmen and members talking to this correspondent demanded an anti-crime operation by joint forces in Daulatkhan, Tazumuddin, Hatia, Laxmipur areas.

Hazipur UP Chairman Abdul Mannan said fishermen are reluctant to go for fishing in the river due to frequent such incidents.

Bhola Police Superintendent Mallick Fakhruul Islam when contacted said he has information that four trawlers were looted and their fishermen abducted.

Police are trying to rescue them, he said.

In another incident, eight shops were looted in a mass dacoity at Peari Mohan Taltala under Sakuchia union in Bhola district in the early hours of Saturday.



PHOTO: STAR
This is government registered Madda Dhankhali Primary School in Kalapara upazila in Patuakhali. The photo was taken during school hours recently. Is the area not covered under the government's 'education for all' programme?

Memo to Rangamati DC again

'Stop extortion, killings by PCJSS and UPDF'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The people of Naniarchar submitted another memorandum to the Rangamati Deputy Commissioner demanding immediate steps to stop rampant extortion, kidnapping and killings allegedly by armed activists of PCJSS and its rival UPDF.

The memo said about 20,000 people in the upazila are hostage to PCJSS (Parbatay Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity and UPDF (United Peoples Democratic Front).

The people of three unions in Naniarchar upazila will build a movement if their demand do not met, the memorandum submitted on Saturday said.

A team comprising Union Parishad chairmen and members, village headmen and local traders submitted the memo.

"If the administration fails to ensuring security to people, they will be compelled to resist the toll collectors and the government will be responsible for any untoward incident," the memo said.

Normal life in the area is being affected due to crimes by activists of the two organisations, it said.

Schools and colleges are affected. Three important markets at Gilachhori, Kutukchhori and T&T Bazar is virtually dosed for one month now, it said.

The people had submitted another memo on July 17 demanding administrative action against crimes.

They also blocked the Rangamati-Mahalchhori-Khagrachhori road on July 16 to press their demand.

Meantime, three UPDF activists were killed in an exchange of fire with those of PCJSS at a village in Naniarchar on July 26.

On August 6, Additional Deputy Commissioner (general) Karim Gazi held a meeting with leaders of PCJSS and UPDF at Kutukchhori and urged them to stop fighting.

As night fell, armed activists of the two parties traded fire though no casualty was reported, said a source in the army.

Eviction of 32 families from 'leased' khas lands

Victims protest withdrawal of case by govt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Leaders of the Satkhira Landless Association have protested withdrawal of the case filed by them following eviction of 32 landless families of minority community from khas lands at Gava village in the Sadar upazila, allegedly at the behest of land grabbers.

At a press conference at Satkhira Press Club recently, they claimed that the families were evicted after they lived there for over 30 years by leasing the lands from government.

The press conference was addressed by Md Kawsar Ali, president of the association.

He urged the prime minister, home minister, land minister, deputy commissioner and the police superintendent to help the evicted landless people to get back their lands.

He said they were evicted on the night of March 17 by hoodlums allegedly hired by land grabbers led by a local political leader and the chairman of Fingri Union Parishad, Habibur Rahman.

The attackers damaged their houses and physically assaulted many people, they alleged. Twelve people including women and children were injured in the attack. Since then the landless families are living under the sky.

Following the eviction, a case (no 2413-29/7/03) was filed with a magistrate court in Satkhira, accusing seven people.

The case was withdrawn following filing of a petition by the Assistant Commissioner (land) court, he told journalists.

He alleged that a local lawmaker influenced the administration and the Assistant Commissioner to withdraw the case.

After withdrawal of the case, the hoodlums are now threatening the landless people to leave the area or to face dire consequences, he said. They are now passing days in insecurity.

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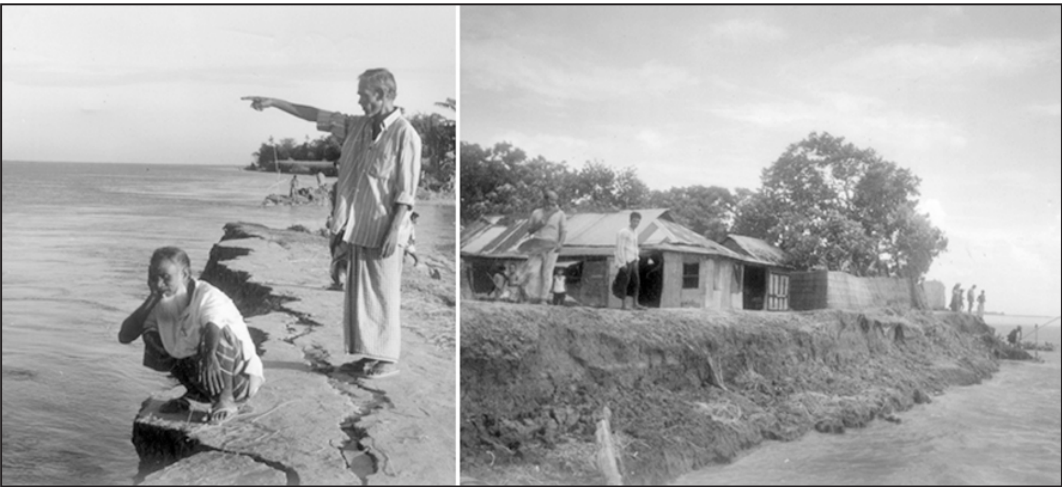


PHOTO: STAR
Betrayed by river: An erosion-affected elderly farmer casting a vacant look on the furious Brahmaputra (right) and a family watching the approaching river which will devour their homestead soon in Komolganj in Gaibandha.

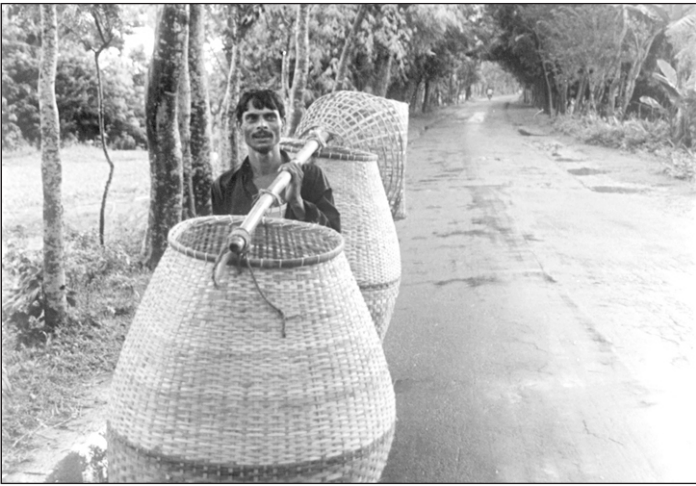


PHOTO: AKM MOHSIN
Cottage industry needs support: Chandpur was once famous for cottage industries. But those are on the wane now due to lack of assistance. But the craftsmen are surviving anyhow. The picture shows a villager at Kachua carrying bamboo-made basket to a market for sale.

BCL procession attacked at Bhola

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

A procession of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) came under attack allegedly by activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) on the Sadar Road at Bhola town on Sunday.

The BCL procession was brought out protesting the arrest of its Bhola district convener Mostak Ahmed Shahin on Saturday night.

Police said Shahin is an accused in some cases.

The BCL procession was brought out from NatunBazar area at about 8 pm. It was led by town BCL President Kawsar Hossain Tuel.

BCL claimed that ten of its activists were injured in the attack.

Bhola district JCD President Abdul Kader refused the allegation of attack on BCL and said JCD was holding a meeting on the street at that time.

Loans to acid burn victims stopped in C'nawabganj

A CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Distribution of government loans for rehabilitation of acid-burn and handicapped women in the district has been suspended.

When contacted, Luthfar Rahman Khan, Deputy Director, Social Welfare Department, said the disbursement has been suspended following orders from higher authorities due to some 'legal problems'.

Chapainawabganj district received Tk 14.1 lakh for disbursement of loans. Of this, Tk 2.82 lakh was distributed on July 30 among 28 handicapped people in the Sadar upazila.

Disbursement of the rest amount in four other upazilas were suspended when the order reached his office on July 31, Lutfor said.

The department has enlisted 7000 handicapped people in the district.

The Ministry of Social Welfare launched the countrywide programme last year with an initial allocation of Tk 15 crore.