

Tengratila victims start 15-day agitation

Rallies, processions from today to Aug 2, hunger strike on Aug 4 to realise 8-point demand

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Tengratila Dabi Aday sangram Parishad, a non-political forum of affected people of Tengratila gas filed area, has announced a fortnight long agitation programme to realise their 8-point demand. The programme began yesterday.

The demands include compensation from Canadian oil company Niko for all the affected people after inquiry and for the gas burnt out and environmental damage, supply of drinking water in the area, rehabilitation of the affected families and business establishments, shifting of Tengratila High School and Tengratila Primary School to safer places and assurance that such incidents will not take place any more.

at a press conference held at Sylhet Press Club Saturday evening.

The agitation programme includes view exchange meetings with professional groups and political leaders in Doarabazar upazila from today, processions and protest rallies in Doarabazar and Chhatak, Sunamaganj district town and in Sylhet city from July 25 to August 2, human chain and mass hunger strike at Tengratila on August 4, and laying a siege to Niko's local office on August 7. A podium will be built at Tengratila on August 5 to hold protest programmes.

Nurul Amin, Joint Convener of the committee, read out a written statement at the press conference, also addressed by freedom fighter Azimuddin Master, Ruhul Amian and Hadi Ahmed Fuad.

They said several thousand

families in the five villages have been affected by the fire from blow-outs in the gas field on January 7 and June 24. Their croplands are now uncultivable, fruit trees burnt out and other businesses stopped. They were given Tk 5000 per family as 'disturbance allowance with an assurance that proper compensation would be paid after inquiry.

But as there were flaws in the probe, they informed the matter to the Environment Secretary, but to no effect, they said.

Moreover, arsenic has contaminated the tubewell water after the blowouts, which has been admitted by officials.

Waterbodies in the area which were earlier full of fishes, are now depleted, they claimed. Education of children is being greatly affected. The pass percentage in this year's

SSC examination in Tengratila High School was 58 against 86 last year due to the fallout effect, they said. The high school and the primary school have been shifted to temporary locations.

Sixty-six shops at Tengratila bazaar near the gas field have been close down.

During agitation, the Sunamganj Deputy Commissioner at a meeting assured them of preparing a fair list of the affected people. But he forgot everything when we stopped agitation, they said.

The authorities are now trying to use force against them in the name of controlling the situation, they also alleged.

Police charged batons on protesters when the Sunamganj Bachao Andolon, a citizens' body, called a hartal, they further alleged.

Illegal clinics, labs defy order to shut down business

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sathkira

Illegal clinics and pathological laboratories in Shyamnagar upazila are doing a brisk business defying Sathkira civil surgeon's order to shut those down.

Sathkira civil surgeon (CS) Dr Abu Aziz Al Monsur, issued the order on June 22, after an investigation found that some clinics and pathological laboratories run them without legal documents and qualified doctors.

The clinics are Shyamnagar Modern Clinic, Parents Nursing Home, Janani Nursing Home, Janaseba Clinic, Sirima Nursing Home, Sundarban Nursing Home, Danta Seba Clinic, Sagar Dental and Barisal Dental and the pathological centers are Bismillah Pathology, Shyamnagar Pathology, Shanti Diagnostic Centre and Popular Diagnostic Centre.

People are being cheated as the clinics and pathological centres lack registered physicians and trained laboratory technicians. Patients get wrong pathological reports from the clinics and pathological centres, according to sources in the CS office.

Patients are also being cheated by so-called doctors who pretend themselves as qualified ones. Although they have no academic qualification, yet they mention on their pads MBBS, MRCP, MCPS or MD.

When contacted, the civil surgeon said he has already requested police to take action against the cheats but they are yet to respond to it. He further said he has nothing to do in this regard adding he already sent letters to the higher authorities to take measures against the culprits.

College girl found dead

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Juthika Rani Gain, 22, a student of first year honours class of Daulatpur Govt BL University College was found dead inside the toilet of a mess in Nirala residential area here on Friday.

Police recovered the body at night.

According to police, Juthika fell in love with a student of first year class of BBA in Khulna University. She went to his mess there at about noon.

The college girl entered the toilet of the mess when her fiance went out to buy food from a hotel in the afternoon.

On his return to the mess after an hour, he reportedly found Juthika lying on the floor of the toilet.

Being informed by her fiance, police recovered the body. But he escaped before arrival of police.

Road barricade for UNO's removal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Local people, joined by leaders of political parties, barricaded roads to the Rajosthali upazila headquarter yesterday demanding removal of Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Zahurul Huque.

On Saturday, they staged a demonstration at the upazila headquarters and chanted slogans against the UNO. Earlier, they also lodged a complaint to the Rangamati Deputy Commissioner against the UNO.

Local people said there are so many allegations against the UNO. These include misappropriation of money for development funds, improper behaviour with political leaders and two college girls.

A committee was formed earlier by the Rangamati Deputy Commissioner to probe the allegations.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Farid Ahmad Bhuiyan told The Daily Star that the probe report was sent to higher authorities. "The Divisional Commissioner was also was informed. We are waiting for a decision", he said.

MPOs of 10 high schools cancelled

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

The monthly pay order (MPO) of 10 high schools of the district has been cancelled due to bad performance in the SSC examination this year.

The schools are ABN High School, Faridganj High School and ASM Feroj High School under Bauphal upazila, Lamna High School, Guabaria High School and Kalyan Kalas High School under Galachipa upazila, Bashbaria High School, Bibi Aysa High School, West Bara Gopaldi High School and Fulbari Gias Memorial High School under Dashmina upazila.

The decision was taken recently by the Directorate of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education and letters were sent to the concerned schools, according to sources in the District Education Office.

Employees of the schools will not get their salaries from June onward.



After a rally on Chittagong Press Club premises, journalists in the port city parading streets yesterday protesting physical torture on Naya Diganta Staff Reporter Jahed Al-Amin by some JCD activists while he was on professional work at Chittagong Medical College Hospital on Thursday.

CMUJ PROTESTS JOURNALIST TORTURE

Free CMCH from ruling party goons

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Journalists in Chittagong yesterday held a big rally and brought out a procession in the port city demanding immediate arrest and punishment of the persons involved in the physical torture on a journalist at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH) on Thursday.

Jahed Al-Amin, Staff Reporter of daily Naya Diganta, was critically injured when tortured allegedly by some activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhakra Dal (JCD) and interns at the CMCH when he was interviewing an acid-burnt house-wife from Chandnaish. He is now being treated at a private clinic.

At the protest meeting jointly organized by Chittagong Union of Journalists (CUJ) and Chittagong Metropolitan Union of Journalists (CMUJ), journalists vowed to continue the agitation until CMCH was freed from vandalism by a handful of 'so-called' internee doctors and employees' having links with the ruling BNP and its student front JCD.

The protest meeting held on Chittagong Press Club premises was followed by a big procession that paraded different streets of the city. It terminated at the Central Shaheed Minar in the city.

Addressing the rally, journalist leaders alleged that a few internee doctors misbehave with patients

and visitors almost everyday. They, in connivance with a vested quarter have imposed an undeclared ban on entry of journalists there. They harassed and manhandled at least ten journalists who dared to go there on professional work in the last one year and set up a bad instance of torturing journalists at a place where patients go for treatment, the journalist leaders said.

A case was filed with Panchlaih thana accusing ten internee doctors and a ward boy on Thursday night. However, none of the accused could be arrested so far. Protesting filing of the case, internee doctors threatened to enforce a strike at CMCH.

Presided over by CUJ President Mostaque Ahmed, the rally was addressed, by, among others, CMUJ President Shamsul Haidary, General Secretary Md. Shahnawaz, CUJ General Secretary Shahid Ul Alam, Nazim Uddin Shymal and Mahabur Rahman.

Meanwhile, Hosne Ara succumbed to her acid burn injury at the CMCH Saturday night. She died before giving any statement, which may hinder trial of the gruesome incident.

Hosne Ara's brother Ramzan Ali, with the legal support of Bangladesh Society for Enforcement of Human Rights, filed the case with Chandnaish thana. None was arrested in this connection till filing of the report yesterday evening.

8 criminals held in Tangail: Two pistols, knives recovered

A CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Police in a drive on Saturday morning arrested eight criminals from an auto-rickshaw stand here. Two foreign-made pistols with bullets, five mechs and three knives were recovered from their possession.

Acting on a secret information, a police team led by Sadar Police Station officer-in-charge (OC) S Alam raided a hideout of a gang of armed criminals. At one stage, police opened fire when the criminals tried to flee and arrested eight of them while two others escaped from the spot.

The arrested criminals are Abu Zobaer, 18, of Mandalpara village, Mohammad Babu, 20, of Hazi Para village and Shaju Miah, 20, of Poria village under Panchbibi upazila in Joypurhat district, Solieman, 25, of Bhukta Betor village and Abdur Kader Sumon, 20, of Bilbatujani village under Tangail Poursabha. Abdul Berek, 26, of Putajani village under Ghatail upazila, Shaheed Khan, 30, of Boalee and Julhash Miah, 20, of College Para under Tangail Poursabha.

Police conducted several raids to nab the other culprits and their godfather.



Ferry service on the Dhalesway at Elashin in Tangail district is suspended for about a month due to flood, disrupting the Tangail-Nagarpur-Aricha road link.

NILPHAMARI JUBO LEAGUE BODY FORMED

AL won't join polls without caretaker reform, says Jalil

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

Awami League General Secretary Abdul Jalil MP has said his party will not join the next parliamentary polls without caretaker reform.

He said AL and other opposition parties are demanding reforms in electoral and caretaker systems to ensure a free, fair and peaceful election.

The present systems must be reformed, he said while addressing a council of Nilphamari Jubo League, youth front of Awami League, held at the Shilpakala Academy in the town on Saturday.

Jalil said the government should show respect to the opposition demand and its proposals to ensure a fair election. "This would prove its (government) respect for democracy", he said.

The AL leader said the opposition parties had a bitter experience in 1996. "If they (ruling parties) recall the events (in 1996), they can not ignore the opposition demand now", he said.

Addressing the council, AL central publicity secretary

Asaduzzaman Noor MP said corruption and incidents of crime and violence increased in the last four years though they made electoral pledges to curb those.

Fundamentalist forces have raised their heads again in the name of religion under the protection of ruling parties, Noor alleged. It sounds a mockery when the government says Bangla Bhai can not be nabbed, he added. AL central leader Col (rt'd) maruf Saqline, Mosaraf Hossain, Dr. hamida banu Shova MP, Nilphamari Municipal Chairman Dewan kamal Ahmed, Saidpur Municipal Chairman Akhter Hossain Badal, and central Jubo League secretary Mirza Azam also addressed the council, inaugurated by its central president Jahangir kabir Nanok. It was presided over by Nilphamari district Jubo League President Romendra Nath Bardhan.

The council formed a new district Jubo League committee with Romendra Nath Bardhan as its president and Shaheed mahmud as secretary.

8 cops acquitted of robbery charge in Meherpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

The Speedy Trail Tribunal, Meherpur on Saturday dismissed the case lodged against eight policemen for their alleged robbery in a house at Bamundi village in Gangni upazila in Meherpur district on June 14.

First Class Magistrate Amena Begum passed the order at a crowded courtroom while all the accused policemen including a Sub-Inspector (SI) were on the dock.

After the verdict, complainant Idris Ali told newsmen he would move higher court.

The eight acquitted policemen are ASI Altaf Hossain, constables Mahfuz, Abul Bashar, Yunus Ali, Bijoy Kumar Babu, Helal uddin, Habibur Rahman and Coukidar Susanta Kumar Paul.

According to the case filed by Idris, the eight policemen from Bamundi outpost entered his house at midnight on June 14 on a plea that there were smuggled goods inside. They searched the

house and took away Tk Tk 26000 and ornaments and valuables worth about Tk 30,000.

While leaving the cops threatened cow trader Idrish not to disclose the incident.

As the cops left the house, Idrish cried for help. This drew neighbours who encircled caught the policemen and confined them into Bamundi Primary School. Policemen from Meherpur rescued and arrested the eight.

After interrogation on June 15, the cops were produced before a Magistrate's court, which sent them to jail. A departmental investigation was done under the supervision of Deputy Inspector General (DIG) of Khulna Range Sohorab Hossain. The investigation report submitted on July 4 said there was no evidence of involvement of the policemen in the incident.

The Speedy Trail Tribunal gave the verdict after examining records and witnesses.

TIMBER SMUGGLING 3 forest officials suspende

BDNEWS, Cox's Bazar

Cox's Bazar forest office has suspended three staff following detection of their involvement in timber smuggling two months ago.

The officials are Emdadul Haq, loading point inspector of Kosturaghat check station in Cox's Bazar town, Khorshed Alam, an officer of Nolibila forest check post of Ramu Rubber Forest and Akbar Hossain, an employee of the same check post.

Abdul Mottaleb, Conservator of Forest, Chittagong range, took the action after an investigation confirmed their involvement.

Coastguards arrested timber trader Jafar Soudagar along with a truck laden with smuggled timber on May 26. Later, it was found that the truck had been carrying 100 cft additional timber which is beyond the permissible limit under transport pass (TP).



GPA-5 achievers in Rangamati pose for a photo during a reception accorded to them by the Rangamati District Council in the hill town on Saturday.

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