

WATER, POWER CRISES IN KHULNA

Nagorik Committee warns of Kansat style agitation

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Khulna Nagorik Committee (citizens committee) leaders yesterday said a Kansat-style movement is not unlikely in the city if the government fails to ensure adequate water and power supply to the people.

Kansat can be a model for launching a movement for allocation of more funds in the next national budget for implementation of development projects including that for pipeline supply of gas.

They demanded laying of pipeline from Ishwardi to Khulna and installation of a 210 mw power plant in Khulna to meet the power crisis.

"We will convince the people to boycott next parliamentary elections, if necessary, as part of our movement in case of government's

failure to fulfil people's aspirations in the south-western region", said Dr Kudrat-e-Khuda, member-secretary of Khulna Nagorik committee (KNC) at the press conference held at Khulna Press Club.

The KNC leader said smooth supply of electricity, fuel and water are basic needs of people. "We are deprived of these basic needs", he said sounding a note of warning to the government to face agitation as was in Kansat and at Shanir Akhra in Dhaka city.

President of Khulna Press Club and convener of Khulna Divisional Press Club Federation (KDPCF) Liaquat Ali, KNC convener Engineer Azadul Huq, chairperson of Khulna Citizens' Forum Shaikh Abdul Kayyum and secretary general of Greater Khulna Development

Action Committee Shaikh Ashrafuzzaman were present at the press conference.

Engineer Azadul Huq termed Khulna a 'gate of economy of south-western region' and said corruption, nepotism and non-allocation of fund for development projects has thrown thousands of workers and employees out of jobs and made the entire Khulna-Jessore industrial belt a barren land now.

"We will be forced to launch a movement to stop payment of electricity bills, if load shedding continues at the present rate", he warned.

Poverty and unemployment are other factors for creating social unrest, giving rise to murders, terrorism, extortion and women repression, he said.

THREAT TO MUNDA PEOPLE

Jamaat MP's son among 5 sued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Five people including a Jamaat lawmaker's son were sued for assaulting and threatening the members of an indigenous community.

The accused included Monzur Islam Bulbul, son of Jamaat lawmaker Gazi Nazrul Islam, G M Kamruzzaman, son of Mohammad Ali, Monzur Elahi and two others of Iswaripur village in the same upazila.

Nimai Munda of Kashipur village in Shyamnagar upazila filed the case yesterday on behalf of his community with the Cognigence Court No 'GA' here, court sources said.

Court sources said, the accused attacked the indigenous family members on April 11 aiming at evicting the Munda community members from their ancestral homes.

Earlier, they lodged an 'ejahar' with Shyamnagar Police Station but police declined to record it, Nimai Munda said. Later, they were compelled to file the case with the court.

While talking to this correspondent, Nimai complained that the accused are threatening them to face the dire consequence if they do not withdraw the case.

Take common stance against India's river inter-linking plan

Speakers tell Bhuapur rally on 30th anniversary of Farakka Long March

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Tangail*

Speakers at a big rally held at a Jamuna shoal in Bhuapur yesterday called upon all political parties to take a common stance against India's river inter-linking project.

If implemented, the project will create a havoc in Bangladesh by destroying the ecology and hastening the desertification process, which started after unilateral withdrawal of Ganges waters by India at Farakka.

The rally held at Govindasi was part of a programme organised by the Bangladesh chapter of International Farakka Committee (IFC) marking the 30th anniversary of the Farakka Long March in 1976, led by veteran political leader Maulana Abdul hamid Khan Bhasani. The programme included a token 'long march' and a discussion meeting.

It was presided over by environment scientist Prof Jasim Uddin Ahmad, president of Bangladesh chapter of IFC and former vice-chancellor of Jahangirnagar University.

The Speakers included State Minister for NGO Affairs Lutfar Rahman Khan, Vice-Chancellor (VC) of Maulana Bhasani University of Science and Technology Dr Mohammad Khalilur Rahman, former UN water resources specialist and also senior vice-president of IFC Dr SI Khan, IFC secretary Syed Irfanul Bari, president of Tangail IFC Bulbul Khaqn Mahbub and Bhuapur pourasabha chairman Abdul Khalek Mondol.

They said India's withdrawal of water at Farakka and river inter-linking project are national issues. All political parties should unite on the issues, they said.

India is either withdrawing or obstructing flow of almost all the rivers by constructing dams or spars at the upstream, creating water crisis in dry season and floods in the monsoon, affecting the ecology and



PHOTO: STAR

IFC held a big rally at Govindasi shoal on the Jamuna in Bhuapur yesterday marking the 30th anniversary of Farakka Long March.

environment, they said.

Now they have planned a river inter-linking project, which will create a havoc in Bangladesh.

They said India is defying the Helsinki Convention and urged donors like World Bank and Asian Development Bank not to fund

any project on common rivers that will obstruct the flow.

Thousands of local people and delegates from different districts joined the rally with slogans like Bacho Nadi (save rivers), Bacho Bangladesh (save Bangladesh).

The rally adopted a 21-point declaration.

Earlier, a token 'long march' was organised from Ibrahim Khan College in Bhuapur to Govindeshi shoal.

Implement peace accord, PCJSS demands

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Khagrachhari*

Speakers at the third council of Khagrachhari district unit of Prbattya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) called for full implementation of the Chittagong Hill Tracts peace agreement signed in 1997 to establish peace in the hills and ensure rights of indigenous people.

They alleged that the present government is not sincere to implement the agreement signed between PCJSS and the then Awami League government.

They also criticised the United Peoples Democratic Front (UPDF), a body of indigenous people in the hills for opposing the peace agreement.

The council was inaugurated by PCJSS Secretary Satya Bir Chakma.

The speakers included PCJSS leaders Shaktipada Tripura, Shaktipada Tripura and Brozo Sarker Chakma; CHT Regional Council (RC) member Suda Shindhu Khisha and Pahari Chhatra Parishad (PCP) president Milon Bikash Tripura. The council continued when the report was filed.

AUG 17 SERIAL BLASTS

Supplementary charge sheet against 2 JMB men

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Gaibandha*

A supplementary charge sheet was submitted against two Ehser members of banned Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) for their involvement in August 17 serial bomb blasts here.

The Detective Branch (DB) of police submitted the charge sheet before the Court of Sessions Judge on Monday.

The accused are Ziaur Rahman alias Reaz Ahmed alias Fuad Hasan alias Badal, 22, son of Islam Ali of Kodakikathi village in Chapai Nawabganj and Abdul Qaiyum alias Kamal, 17, son of Shamsul Huq of Hasilkandi village under Shaghata upazila in Gaibandha.

A Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) team in Bogra raided the Ayub Ali Ansari Mosque near the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) Office on January 22. They arrested Ziaur Rahman from there and recovered

two live bombs and five copies of Islamic revolutionary books from his possession.

Later, Rab handed over him to Gaibandha police who produced him before the court the next day. The court granted his seven days' remand. During interrogation, Ziaur Rahman confessed to his involvement in the serial blasts.

In another drive conducted two days later, Rab arrested Qaiyum from Gaibandha Bus Terminal as per confessional statement of Ziaur Rahman. The court granted his seven days' remand.

The confessional statements of both the accused were recorded before a magistrate under Section 164. They confessed to their involvement in the serial blasts.

DB Inspector Julfikar Ali who is also the Investigating Officer of the case submitted the supplementary charge sheet after a long investigation.

5 UPDF men held with arms

A CORRESPONDENT, *Rangamati*

Army arrested five activists of anti-peace treaty United People Democratic Front (UPDF) from Amchhari areas in Kawkhali upazila in the early hours yesterday and recovered firearms and other materials from their possession.

Acting on a tip-off, the operation was led by Maj Iyasin, army sources said.

The recovered firearms include one LG (Light Gun), two guns. The army also recovered VCD sets, cassettes, four cell phones, a tape recorder and receipt books used for collecting toll, they said.

The arrestees are Novel Chakma, 20, Sumonta Chakma, 21, Barun Chakma, 36, Nirmol Chakma, 22 and Sushil Chakma, 17. They were involved in extortion in the area, army sources said.

4X3

6X3

10X2

5X3

8X3