

50,000 people vulnerable to landslide in Khagrachhari

No step yet to re-settle them

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

At least 50 thousand people of about 15 thousand families in eight upazilas in Khagrachhari hill district are vulnerable to hill slides as they built their houses, business centres and other structures cutting the natural hills and without any environment-friendly plan.

people in the district are passing sleepless nights fearing hill slides as last year's damage to life and properties due to the same cause is still fresh in their memory. Despite a government ban, illegal hill cutting continues unabated in different parts of Khagrachhari district posing serious threat to lives, natural environment and biodiversity, district Agriculture Extension Department (DAE) and Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) sources said.

Local environmental activists and journalists filed several general diaries with police stations in Khagrachhari regarding hill cutting but the administration is yet to take any effective steps to protect the hills. Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) in 2006

issued legal notice to secretaries of environment and forest, land, and public works ministries for taking immediate actions against the plunderers of hills, sources said. BELA also issued notice to divisional commissioner of Chittagong, deputy commissioner of Khagrachhari, environment departments in Dhaka and Chittagong, SP of Khagrachhari and UNO of Dighinala upazila in this regard.



ANGEROUS LIVING ON HILL SLOPES: Homestead built after trimming down hills at Sabujbagh in Sadar upazila in Khagrachhari district poses risk of landslide as the rains have set in.

Trial of the war criminals a demand of common people Ershad says in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, SYLHET

Jatiya Party chief former president HM Ershad yesterday said trial of the war criminals has become a demand of the common people and the caretaker government can at least start the process.

He was talking to newsmen at Sylhet Circuit House during a short visit to the divisional headquarters yesterday.

There is no problem in holding elections under the state of emergency, Ershad said, adding that any party or group claiming to be patriotic and peace-loving should join the elections to prove their popularity.

One/eleven had saved the country and the nation from going back to a black era and the caretaker government's drive against corruption should continue, he said.

The JP chief said the nation can expect a free and fair election as the present Election Commission is competent enough and has prepared a good voter list.

"As the judiciary has been made

independent, I am hopeful of getting fair trial now," he said. If allowed to contest in five seats, he would contest from Sylhet Sadar constituency, the JP chief said.

Fertiliser, fake Indian currency seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, MYMENSINGH

The joint forces yesterday seized 540 sacks of fertiliser from a godown at Haluaghat Madhya Bazar, a bordering area of the district and seized fake Indian rupee notes.

The law enforcers seized 540 sacks of fertiliser including 220 sacks of fake fertiliser from the godown of dealer Shahnewaz, sources said, adding that 320 sacks were kept for smuggling to India.

Later the team raided the house of Shahnewaz and recovered Indian currency worth 9780 rupees including some 9000 counterfeit ones.

The dealer could not be held as of filing this report at 7:30pm.

44 GRENADES RECOVERY FROM HUJI MEN PWs deposition ends, next hearing tomorrow

OUR CORRESPONDENT, SATKHIRA

Satkhira District and Sessions Judge's Court yesterday fixed June 11 for argument in the case for possessing 44 Argus grenades by two Harkatul Jihad al Islam (Huji) operatives Rab men recovered 44 grenades after completing recording of the statements of all the 16 prosecution witnesses of the case.

The court of Judge Ashish Ranjan Das yesterday recorded the statement of two prosecution witnesses -- complainant of the case Sub-inspector KM Tariquul Islam and Rab Assistant Deputy Director Rejaul Karim.

The two charge-sheeted accused -- Moin Uddin alias Abu Zandal, a close aide to Huji chief Mufti Hannan who directed August 21 blasts at an Awami League (AL) rally in Dhaka, and Huji operative Nazrul Islam Gharami of village Shimulia in Debhata upazila were on the dock during the procedure.

Earlier on May 29, the court framed charges against the two Huji operatives for possessing 44 grenades.

Upon information from Huji operative Zandal who was arrested from Gazipur on February 14, Rab men arrested Nazrul Islam Gharami from Nalta Bazar in Kaliganj upazila and after his confession Rab men recovered 44 grenades from village Shimulia in Debhata upazila on February 15.

The 41 grenades seized from Shimulia village were identical to the grenades exploded in the August 21 blasts at an Awami League rally in Dhaka in 2004, Rab said.

Police arrested a cadre of outlawed Biplobi Communist Party from his house at Paigram village under Phultala upazila in Khulna district early yesterday.

The arrestee, Arif Molla, 32, was wanted in several criminal cases for arson, murder and extortion, police said.

A pipe-gun and a live gun cartridge were also seized from his house.

Police arrested Kajol Rekha, 38, a woman known as 'drug baron' on Sunday midnight from Senpara at Daulatpur in Khulna city and seized seven grams of heroin from her purse.

The woman maintains several groups of women in the city to sell heroin, hemp and phensidyl, police said.

She is an accused in ten cases under Drug Control Act filed with Daulatpur Police Station during last one year, police said.

'Ensure enough juvenile courts, safe custody for child offenders'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, KHAGRACHHARI

Speakers at a meeting yesterday urged setting up sufficient number of juvenile courts and safe custody for child offenders to ensure justice and proper environment for their reformation.

There are different laws regarding child rights but those are not properly implemented, they said in a meeting held at the conference hall of Khagrachhari district administration chaired by Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Shahadat Hossen.

People should know about their duties and responsibilities, they said.

They suggested that the government build structural support including safe custody home for child offenders so that they would get all sorts of positive support to the way of their correction under the close assistance of probation officer.

For children, prison would be the last resort, not be the first, they said.

Assistant Director of district Social Welfare Department SM Anisur Rahman, Additional District Magistrate Monindra Kishore Majumder, Additional Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Khalilur Rahman, Khagrachhari Superintendent of Police Md Quaimuzzaman Khan, Khagrachhari district jail Superintendent Azizul Hoque also spoke on the occasion.

Outlaw, drug peddler held

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, KHULNA

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Rab Director General Hasan Mahmud Khandaker inaugurates the media campaign fair on the ground of Rajshahi Madrasa yesterday as the road show 'Let's build Bangladesh' reached the city on Sunday.

Tk 1.8cr heroin seized in C'nawabganj

A CORRESPONDENT, C'nawabganj

Bangladesh Rifles (BDR) recovered heroin worth Tk 1.8 crore from drug traffickers at Poladanga village in Alatalu union in Sadar upazila Sunday night.

Acting on a tip-off, a BDR team at Poladanga border out post (BOP) challenged three individuals at Poladanga village at around 8:00pm. At that time, the three were on way back to country from India,

said Major Syed Abu Hasan, Operation Officer of 39, Rifles Battalion.

The team seized heroin hidden in a bag. But the traffickers managed to flee.

In a separate drive conducted on Sunday night, the border guards recovered 3,000 bottles of abandoned Phensidyl from Hakimpur and Faridpur villages in Sadar upazila and Kansat in Shibganj upazila.

Tangail journo demand jail super Sagir Miah's removal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, TANGAIL

Journalists here have demanded immediate withdrawal of Tangail district jail superintendent Sagir Miah.

In a memorandum to the home ministry submitted through the district administration yesterday, they also demanded immediate removal of the jail superintendent from the probe body and a neutral investigation into the incident of torture on The Daily Star correspondent Mirza Shakil.

Advertisement for Titas Gas Distribution and Engineering Company Limited. It includes details about gas supply, prices, and contact information for various services.

Advertisement for Bangladesh Shipping Corporation. It details the chartering and tramp department services, including international freight tender for transportation of 12,500 Mt +/- 10% prilled urea in bags from Ruwais, UAE to Chittagong, Bangladesh.

Advertisement for Ashuganj Power Station Company Limited. It includes an invitation for tender for the supply of two brand new microbus with standard equipments, tools & other accessories for APSCCL.