

## Barapukuria

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tonnes of coal to cater the needs of PDB's power plant. This is not enough for the BCMCL to sell coal to the brick kilns and make enough money to pay damages to villagers.

Production in this first underground coalmine in Bangladesh is done in different parts and in different "Faces", each of which allows extraction of a few lakh tonnes of coal.

On February 18, the BCMCL finished coal extraction from Face-1104. It was preparing to begin coal production from Face-1114 from February 25.

Face-1114 is close to village Jhigadara.

As many parts of Kalupara and Moupukur villages have already subsided due to the mining, the villagers of Jhigadara resisted drilling of a borehole there for mining purpose. They said each time a borehole is drilled, the land around it subsides. This should not go on, they added.

The villagers want the BCMCL to pay damages to villagers of Kalupara and Moupukur first. If the payment is satisfactory, then they would allow mining under Jhigadara.

This situation developed after three minister-level leaders visited Barapukuria to discuss with locals how they want the compensation. They went there following reports of large-scale land subsidence. A committee was formed with representation from villages to determine the amount of damages.

The BCMCL, meanwhile, told villagers that since policymakers have already assured them of damages, it would be provided and the villagers should give the government a few months' time. They said the locals should not resist mining work.

"We told the villagers that if mining is resisted, the mine's Chinese operators will leave. The workers will be retrenched and it will cause unrest. The mine's structure will be damaged. The PDB will no longer be able to generate power. And eventually, the villagers will suffer tremendously during the irrigation period. The BCMCL's financial health will also suffer and may not be able to pay the compensations," said an official.

"But the villagers are sentimental and do not want to

## Carnage

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The efforts are on to know the number of missing firearms and grenades.

Asked about reports that some mutineers have managed to flee the country by air and through Comilla border, the investigators said they too have such information, but could not yet confirm if it is correct.

The law enforcement agencies and security forces will bring back the suspected rebels to the capital immediately after capture in the countrywide drive styled 'Operation Rebel Hunt'.

They have a helicopter all ready and waiting to fly the rebels back in the city.

Sources in the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) said over 200 suspected mutineers have already been held in custody.

Besides, they said, they have identified all 14 BDR personnel who participated in negotiations with the government.

Of the 14, five are deputy assistant directors (DAD), two havildars, two nayeks, one lance nayek and four soldiers. The sources, however, declined to divulge the names that are yet to be known like DAD Syed Touhidul Alami's.

Intelligence agencies and committees formed to probe the carnage are working in coordination to help CID come up with a strong charge sheet after investigation.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court yesterday granted a petition for permission to defuse 17 grenades seized from BDR headquarters.

Chief Metropolitan Magistrate AKM Enamul Haque passed the order following a prayer submitted by CID ASP Abdul Kader Akand, also investigation officer (IO) of the case filed with Labbagh Police Station in connection with the mass killings at Pilkhana.

In another development, 22 BDR jawans held in Tangail were shown arrested in the case yesterday.

Metropolitan Magistrate Abdul Rahim granted the prayer for the jawans to be shown arrested.

The court also ordered that they all be shifted to Dhaka Central jail.

listen to anything," he added.

General Manager (mining) of BCMCL Md Mir Abdul Motin told The Daily Star that they formed a technical committee to resume coal production from Face-1114 without sealing off existing boreholes.

They were optimistic about starting coal extraction from Sunday.

Sources said the BCMCL paid Tk 24.22 lakh as food-grain damages to owners of 60.76 acres of land that subsided since 2006.

BCMCL sources said a high-level meeting was held in Dhaka Tuesday. This meeting recommended paying villagers the damages and convincing them to cooperate with coal production. This decision has to be implemented quickly or it would become difficult to motivate locals to cooperate.

Besides, the payment of damages required huge capital.

The authorities are yet to make any assessment for damages but sources in the Barapukuria coalmine said whatever the damages are, at present the mine does not have enough money to pay the villagers without help from the government.

Source said Tuesday's meeting was headed by Adviser to the Prime Minister for Power, Energy and Mineral Resources Towfiq-e-Elahi Chowdhury. State Minister for Power and Energy Shamsul Haque, State Minister for Forest and Environment Mostafizur Rahman, Energy Secretary Mohammed Mohsin and senior officials of Barapukuria project were also present in the meeting to review the present crisis of BCMCL.

At the meeting, Towfiq-e-Elahi and Shamsul Haque directed the committee, which is preparing a list of the affected villagers, to submit its report immediately, sources said.

Mostafizur Rahman is scheduled to visit the coalmine site Saturday to talk with agitating villagers.

**Ctg arms haul**

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Earlier, accused Hafizur Rahman had made the confessional statement to Metropolitan Magistrate Md Osman Gani.

Responding to a time petition, a Chittagong court has already extended the time limit for investigation into the case up to May 13, said Investigation Officer (IO) Muniruzzaman Chowdhury, senior ASP of the CID, Chittagong zone.

The IO had made the time petition before expiry of the previous time limit - March 04.

Muniruzzaman said, in his confessional statement Hafiz quoted Ulfa leader (United Liberation Front of Assam) Paresh Barua as claiming to have permission and help from the CUFL, coast guard and the then chiefs of the Directorate General of Forces Intelligence (DGFI) and National Security Intelligence (NSI).

"We would be making appeal soon for allowing us to interrogate officials concerned of the organisations and agencies mentioned in the confessional statement," he said.

In reply to a question, the IO said, "The confessional statement (of Hafiz) did not specify any minister or government official."

Contacted, CID Chittagong zone Special Superintendent (S S) Mohammad Amzad Alim said, "We would first interrogate officials of the organisations concerned, who are directly responsible for taking care of the matter."

He said, "We visited Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Limited on the other bank of the Karnaphuli on Tuesday and came to know that the CUFL managing director enjoys the authority to permit use of the jetty by any vessel or vehicle."

So, the then CUFL managing director might be interrogated first. After that, we can say if those in the upper tier such as (the then) BCIC chairman, secretary or minister for industry had any involvement, or if they should be interrogated," said Alim.

The diplomats also assured the PM of providing all-out cooperation to the government for safeguarding the democracy.

The PM said the brutal incidents at Pilkhana stunned the nation and the deaths of efficient army officers are irreparable loss to the nation.

"We want to proceed step by step following appropriate procedure, and won't do anything in a haste that might hamper investigation and trial of the culprits," he said.

In this regard, he referred to submission of charge sheet twice, change of four previous IOs and further investigation and reinvestigation into the case over the last five years.

## BDR jawans

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video footages, photographs and through interrogation," Director General of BDR Md Mainul Islam told The Daily Star last night.

He said both the identified and suspected persons would be thoroughly interrogated about the mutiny in which a total of 74 people including 55 army officers were killed.

"BDR jawans are being asked about their positions during the mutiny, how and why they fled the headquarters and where they stayed," an army officer told reporters at the BDR Rifles Square Gate.

When asked about the conditions of BDR jawans who rejoined the service he said they are all well and doing their routine works.

The army officer said one jawan was held yesterday with the help of video footage. Another BDR jawan Abdur Rahman was rounded up on Wednesday from his village home in Bogra and gold ornaments and cash looted during the massacre were recovered from him.

Meanwhile, both the law enforcement agencies and the army officers continued their search inside Pilkhana to find missing arms and ammunition.

"We are also continuing our search to find if more bodies are left," said the officer.

A criminal investigation department (CID) officer said they were yet to complete collecting evidences of the bloody mutiny. "We will complete the process soon," he added.

Meanwhile, several hundred family members and relatives of jawans were seen crowding at the BDR Rifle Square Gate to know about the fates of those inside the BDR headquarters.

"I am not getting any information about my father who reported back three days ago," said Jasim Rana, son of a BDR jawan.

None excepting 56 nurses and female staff, who reported back after the mutiny, are allowed to come out of Pilkhana.

About border security, the BDR DG said, "All the borders are fully secure."

**PM consoles**

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Kabir, Maj Khalid and Capt Tanvir.

During the emotional meet, the prime minister said the loss suffered in the Feb 25-26 carnage is irreparable.

"As long as I live, I would stand beside the family members of the martyred army officers in their weal and woe," she said.

Hasina assured the children of the martyred families of providing educational expenses and other necessary expenses to be borne by the government.

The government has already announced financial assistance to the members of the martyred families," she said, adding that the government would also try to make arrangement of ensuring their livelihoods.

"Those who hold fake TINs can avail this opportunity by paying Tk 3,000 in advance income tax, or the entire amount of tax payable to the deputy tax commissioner of tax circle," Mazid said.

"Have patience... I will be with you at all times," the prime minister said emotionally embracing the family members.

Meanwhile, Hasina yesterday enquired about the welfare of the bereaved families of poor vegetable-vendor Hridoy Hossain andrickshaw-puller Amzad Ali who were killed amid a fusillade during the BDR mutiny.

On behalf of PM, Assistant Personal Secretary Saifuzzaman Shekher visited the shanties of Hridoy at Hazaribagh and Amzad at Jigatala and enquired about their family conditions.

Saifuzzaman assured them of all assistance from the prime minister and her government.

**BDR carnage**

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Asian Nations (Asean) countries called on her at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) in the morning.

The envoys are Vietnam's Nguyen Van That, Thailand's Chalempol Thanchit, Myanmar's U Phae Thann Oo, Philippines' Zenaida Tacorda-Rabago, Brunei Darussalam's Haji Abdul Razak bin Haji Mohd Hussaini, Singapore's Tan Kok Nam, Indonesia's Tri Surya and Malaysia's Hamizan bin Hashim.

"Primarily it is being thought that the BDR mutiny was staged to put the democratic government in danger and embarrass it," the PM was quoted as saying by her Press Secretary Abdul Kalam Azad at a press briefing after the meeting.

The envoys expressed deep shock at the death of the army officers and sympathies for the bereaved families.

Abul Kalam Azad said the envoys highly praised the PM's wisdom and farsightedness in resolving the recent BDR crisis peacefully.

The diplomats also assured the PM of providing all-out cooperation to the government for safeguarding the democracy.

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"We want to proceed step by step following appropriate procedure, and won't do anything in a haste that might hamper investigation and trial of the culprits," he said.

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## Janatar Mancha sedition case withdrawn

**COURT CORRESPONDENT**

The government yesterday withdrew the Janatar Mancha sedition case filed against Awami League (AL) lawmaker Shafiqur Rahman, former state minister for planning Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir and seven other bigwigs in April 2002.

After taking power, AL

government decided to withdraw several cases filed by the BNP-led four party alliance government to harass them politically.

Earlier, the home ministry

sent a letter to Dhaka metropolitan public prosecutor asking for taking steps for withdrawal of the case. But the case was not withdrawn as the High Court (HC) had earlier stayed the proceedings of the case.

Judge Fazila Begum of the Second Additional Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court of Dhaka passed the order following a petition submitted by Public Prosecutor Abdullah Abu.

The court also discharged all the eight accused from the charges.

In the letter of January 27, Deputy Secretary (Law) of Home Ministry Mohammad Sujayet Ullah said the government has decided not to proceed with the case.

The then public prosecutor Ehsanul Haq Samaij after receiving the letter informed the home ministry that the HC had earlier stayed the proceedings of the case following separate writ petitions filed by Dr Alamgir and others.

Stay order on the case was vacated following the prosecution had submitted a non-prosecution petition with the

HC.

The seven others who were made accused in the case are former home secretary and election commissioner Shafiqur Rahman, former students relationship officer of education ministry Abu Alam Shahid Khan, former joint secretary of the women

affairs ministry Sirajuddin Ahmed, former assistant secretary of establishment ministry Rabul Alam Mohammad Obaidul Muktadir Chowdhury, former director of narcotics control department Syed Bazlul Karim, former DIG of police Prokrti Ranjan Chanda and former president of the Secretariat Karmachari Sanjukta Parishad Syed Mohiuddin.

Seven accused, including Dr Alamgir, were granted bail from different courts while Prokrti Ranjan Chanda went into hiding.

Mohammad Saifur Rahman, the then officer-in-charge of Ramma police station filed the case with the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court in Dhaka on April 8, 2002 accusing Dr

Alamgir and six others.

The CID on December 26, 2002 pressed charges against Alamgir and seven others. Prokrti Chanda was first time included in the charge sheet.

The complainant in the case says the accused had set up the Janatar Mancha (people's dais) in front of the National Press Club in March 1996 and instigated government officials and employees to join the agitation to dislodge the then BNP government.

Mazid said those who used fake TINs to avail benefits from different government organisations or commercial houses would be stripped of their benefits when found.

"In many cases it has been found that dishonest persons or firms have submitted fake TIN certificates obtained with the help of dishonest people," Mazid said.

Recent NBR surveys have identified 826 TINs out of the 4996 filed from BRTA personnel as fake. Also, 179 TINs out of the 648 from the Jewelry Association were found to be fakes.

The NBR is also investigating TINs from other business associations. It has already asked all banks to submit the list of TINs of their clients.

Holding a fake TIN is a fraudulent activity and a punishable offence under the existing CrPC in the country.

Quoting different reviews of the NBR, the chairman also said that the high rate of fraud in registration of land or flats by the Land Registration Authority, motor vehicle registration and fitness issuance and renewals by Bangladesh Road Transport Authority (BRTA), renewal of trade license by the city corporation and issuance of credit cards by commercial banks is very alarming.

Those who do not have taxable incomes can still legalise their TINs by paying Tk 3,000 in advance tax, which would be refundable.

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Rules of different organisations also allow punitive actions against anybody resorting to such activity.

As per the income tax ordinance, there is provision of jail sentences, ranging from three months to three years, for such offences.

## Ensure power

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Shamsul Haque Tuku however assured the lawmakers of taking necessary steps to