

Hungry, they wait

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Choddoroshi, have sought shelter on the 12 km long embankment stretch.

Some help has arrived for the villagers in the form of food but the lack of safe drinking water in this heat, and sanitation facilities have led to worse crises. On top of this, robbers come in boats at night to snatch away their few remaining belongings.

"We work the whole day, trying to keep up this makeshift shacks and get food and water for our families. Then at night we cannot sleep in fear of robbers, what will become of us?" asked Kalipada Mondol.

Robbers have already looted on Chittaranjan Mridha's house on Saturday night and taken away his last possessions. They also looted the houses of Bikash Chandra Mridha in Jhapa village and Nurul Islam in Patakhali a day ago.

Anju Rani Mridha, 16, said she hasn't slept in days from fear of the robbers.

"The fear sets in as soon as the sun goes down," the young girl said in quiet voice. "Where can we go?"

The men have taken to guarding the embankment in turns at night.

"We would be grateful if the law enforcing agencies patrol the river at night," they said.

Swapna Rani Mondol has little time to worry as she has young ones to feed. She showed this correspondent the rotten rice she was trying to dry on the embankment for her children.

"The rotten rice stinks. Tell me brother, can anyone eat this rotten lot? And with just salt to go with it?" she asked.

She forced her younger child to eat this rice, though he

False case

FROM PAGE 1
released here yesterday after keeping him in different jails for 14 years.

District and Sessions Judge Hrishikesh Saha ordered the authorities concern to release U Thoai Hla Marma from the district jail.

Naikongchhara thana police on May 3, 1995 arrested U Thoai from his house at Sonaichhara and he was produced before the court on the following day showing him as a Myanmar citizen.

On July 20, 1995 Bandarban first class magistrate court sentenced him to two months RI on charge of intrusion. The court also fined him Tk 1,000, in default, to suffer one month more RI.

Later, he had to suffer imprisonment in different jails of the country.

In the meantime, he was taken to Myanmar border to hand over him to Myanmar authorities but they denied to accept him as their citizen.

When he was in Cox's Bazar jail, his relatives came to know about his plight.

On a request from U Thoai's wife, senior lawyer of Bandarban Judge's Court advocate Muhammad Jainul Abedin and advocate Ba Thoai Ching fought the legal battle for the victim on humanitarian ground.

The judge took the matter into cognizance and ordered his quick release after examining documents of his citizenship.

After his release U Thoai told The Daily Star that this (judgment) is the result of an independent judiciary.

He said without hearing him, the then first class magistrate of Bandarban on July 20, 1995 gave the verdict, which has been proved false now under an independent judiciary.

U Thoai raised a question, "Who will try those for whose mistake he lost 14 valuable years of his life without committing any crime."

Advocate Muhammad Jainul Abedin said, such inhumane incident has been taken place due to whimsical behaviour of the prosecution authority and submission of charge sheet without carrying out-depth investigation.

The foreign minister went to Singapore on Friday to attend a security summit, Shangri-La Dialogue, and met several world leaders.

She also met US Secretary of Defence Robert Gates who assured her of providing co-operation in defence sector.

The foreign minister met her Sri Lankan counterpart Roshitha Bogollagama and sought cooperation from her in trying war criminals.

The Sri Lankan foreign minister said that Bangladesh has every right to do so.

Dipu Moni also talked to Singapore Foreign Minister George Yoon-Boon Yeo. She, in the process of discourse, urged the Singaporean educational institutions to give recognition to Bangladeshi degrees so Bangladeshi students can pursue higher education in Singapore.

She also proposed her counterpart to ease the process of obtaining visa for the Bangladeshis especially for patients and students.

Prime ministers, deputy prime ministers, foreign ministers, defence ministers and chiefs of armed forces of different countries are attending the summit.

Dipu Moni delivered the keynote paper on 'Contribution to Peace Support Operations', saying that ensuring peace and security at home and abroad is a constitutional obligation of Bangladesh and in this respect Bangladesh is an active partner of the UN.

The returning officers, however, accepted their applications and on their verbal promise to submit copies of the certificates of their educational qualification "as early as possible", the EC allowed them to contest the polls.

Talking to journalists on April 13, Chief Election Commissioner ATM Shamsul Huda said, "We will write to the speaker informing him that both the lawmakers were disqualified for contesting the election and will be ineligible to continue as members of parliament if they fail to submit copies of their educational certificates within the time [May 31]."

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Talking to reporters yesterday at Shahid's office, Saifuzzaman Chowdhury Jewel, joint secretary of the club, said the club can usually donate up to Tk 1 lakh to an individual.

"But the abnormal amount of donations have tarnished the image of the club," Saifuzzaman said referring to the money taken by Delwar and Wahidul.

Chief Whip Shahid said he applied to the members' club for Tk 5 lakh in December of 2002 for his medical treatment. The club, however, sanctioned him Tk 1 lakh, he added.

Talking to reporters on the Parliament building premises, Opposition Chief Whip Farroque at first denied taking any money from the members' club during the tenure of the last parliament.

When his attention was drawn to the list that shows that he also took money, Farroque then gave in and said he took Tk 50,000.

Meanwhile, the all-party

parliamentary probe body formed to look into alleged corruption in the parliament secretariat in the last seven years. He got married only 10 months ago.

One of Sharif's friends, seeking anonymity, said that another cable operator in the area known as DB Kamal, and local criminal Pichchi Hannan's men had been trying to extort money from Sharif.

The probe body yesterday at its meeting deferred the date of appearance of Jamiruddin, Akhtar Hamid and Delwar before the committee to defend themselves.

Earlier the committee fixed June 10 for their appearance but now it has deferred the date, as the national budget would be placed in parliament the following day.

They will be summoned after we fix a new date, he added.

It is the House who will determine fates of the trio once they are found guilty in the investigation," advocate Fazle Rabbi Mia told reporters after the meeting at the parliament building.

Meanwhile, the sub-committee to investigate alleged anomalies in procurement at the parliament secretariat during the last seven years yesterday submitted its report to the main committee.

The committee chief Fazle Rabbi Mia denied disclosing the recommendations and findings of the sub-committee.

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WB unhappy

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Minister AMA Muhib, Planning Minister AK Khandker and Prime Minister's Adviser for Finance and planning Dr Mashirul Rahman.

In the letter Zhu said, "Following our quick conversations this week on the above-mentioned topic, I would like to stress again that we are really concerned to hear that the Bangladesh Government is planning to introduce some important changes in the Public Procurement Act and related Public Procurement Rules (PPA/PPR).

"You are aware that this matter is important for all your Development Partners," the WB country director said.

"We would suggest that you organise some consultations at your early convenience. If agreed, we would also suggest that you consider inviting some of the Development Partners to the requested discussions. This would allow us to get an understanding of the Bangladesh Government's needs as well as an opportunity to review any available documentations on the subject," he added.

Challenging the legality of the governing body's decision, Qazi Faruque filed a civil suit on May 25 seeking permanent injunction.

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