

BCL grabs sand quarry at Parshuram in Feni

A CORRESPONDENT, Feni

Local leaders and workers of Chhatra League allegedly drove out the men of legal lessee and occupied a sand quarry in Muhuri River at Barukhuna village under Parshuram upazila of Feni district yesterday.

Taking lease of the sand quarry from the Ministry of Mineral Resources, contracting firm Nabarun Builders was lifting sand using 10 dredger machines for the last several months, police and locals said.

"Although I took lease from the ministry I had to give half of the profit to Parshuram upazila Chairman Kamal Uddin Majumder and Fulgazi upazila Chairman Ekramul Haque," said Apu Chowdhury, owner of Nabarun Builders.

Majumder and Ekram also frequently demanded extra money in the name of different functions and there were several events of altercations

over it, he said.

As Apu Chowdhury stopped paying them any money from the profit for sometime, the two upazila chairmen got furious.

Fulgazi upazila Chairman Ekramul Haque accompanied by local Chhatra League leaders and workers came to the sand quarry at around 5:00am yesterday. They beat the lessee's clerks Imtiaz, 27, and Zafar Ahmed, 32, and snatched account books from the employees.

At one stage, the sand quarry workers and local people chased the Chhatra League activists, held four of them and ransacked a motorcycle.

On information, Parshuram police went to the spot and took the four people and the motorcycle to the police station.

At around 10:00am, about 60 to 70 Chhatra League leaders and workers went to the sand quarry, drove away employees of the lessee and took control of the quarry.

They started lifting and selling sand from there.

They sold about 50 truck-loads of sand at Tk 1,600 per truck yesterday, witnesses said.

Parshuram upazila Chhatra League general secretary Shafiqul Islam alias Mahim admitted the incident and said, "As workers of Chhatra League, we took possession of the sand quarry following orders from the local Awami League leaders."

When contacted, Parshuram upazila Chairman Kamal Uddin Majumder, also general secretary of upazila Awami League, said, "We exercise a little influence as leaders of the ruling party." He, however, declined to explain the nature of influence.

"After people held four people police took them to the police station but they were released in the afternoon," Parshuram Police Station sub-inspector Rafiqul Islam said.



A farmer at Goureshwar village in Ghatail upazila reaping kalomegh from his field, left, the medicinal plant being readied for loading onto trucks at Sandhanpur in the same upazila of Tangail district.



PHOTO: STAR

Kalomegh farming brings them solvency

The medicinal plant being cultivated on 700 acres of land in 2 Tangail upazilas

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

Medicinal plant kalomegh is being cultivated in two hilly upazilas of Tangail on commercial basis as local farmers are earning high profit from it.

The plant is used for preparing ayurvedic, unani, allopathic and homeopathic medicines while herbal practitioners claim that kalomegh can help cure various complicated diseases like liver cirrhosis, jaundice, dysentery, loss of appetite, constipation, vomiting, worm, insomnia, heart complications, blood pressure and cancer.

This year, kalomegh has been cultivated on 700 acres of land at different villages in Ghatail and Madhupur upazilas. Farmers have just started harvesting the plants,

sources in local agriculture offices said.

Hurmuz Ali of Gourishwar village in Ghatail upazila introduced the cultivation in the district in 1985 and achieved success in the cultivation within two years.

Following Hurmuz Ali, other local farmers started cultivating kalomegh on their lands and earning satisfactory profits.

Hurmuz Ali said Mazibor Rahman, Haider Ali, Abdul Mazid, Rustam Ali, Moslemuddin and Wahed Ali of adjacent villages are now earning Tk 40,000 to Tk 50,000 as net profit per year by selling kalomegh.

Farmers can easily cultivate the plants with others crops or in any orchards as fellow crop and it needs no special care, told Iman Ali, a successful kalomegh cultivator at

Sandhanpur in Ghatail upazila.

"I have cultivated kalomegh with turmeric on the same field," he added.

Local kalomegh growers said they spread seeds of kalomegh on the lands during the Bangla months of Chaitra and Baishakh and harvest during Poush.

Farmers can produce about 35 to 40 maunds of kalomegh from per acre of land and sell those at Tk 1000 to Tk 1500 per maund, they said.

Wholesalers come in Ghatail and Madhupur from different parts of the country, including Karwan Bazar of the capital, to buy kalomegh.

Several kalomegh growers in Madhupur and Ghatail upazila while talking to this correspondent emphasised on the overall cooperation of local agriculture and forest departments for a revolution of the

medical plant in the garh region.

Kalomegh plant can grow up to three feet and both the leaves and seeds of the plant are used to produce medicines, told Ghatail upazila agriculture officer Abul Kalam.

"Kalomegh cultivation in hilly areas is a good initiative and we are providing supports to the local growers from the very beginning of the cultivation," he added.

Homeopath Sukumar Sarkar said kalomegh is a real friend of human as the plant has medicinal qualities, which can cure many complicated diseases.

"In one side, kalomegh cultivation can meet the demand of medicines and on the other side, farmers can be solvent financially from the cultivation," he added.



PHOTO: STAR

Students of Pabna Textile Engineering College demonstrate on Pabna-Dhaka highway demanding re-evaluation of the results of two semester examinations.

Students ransack Pabna textile college, block road

They demand re-evaluating results of 2 semesters, principal's removal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

A group of students of Pabna Textile Engineering College yesterday put up a barricade on Dhaka-Pabna highway for one and a half hours and ransacked college rooms demanding re-evaluation of their 4th and 6th semesters results.

Police and witnesses said the students who failed the examinations this academic year staged demonstration on the campus and blocked the highway at Salgaria point in the district town around 12:30pm, disrupting traffic movement.

On information, police rushed to the spot and charged baton on the students to disperse them.

At least three students were injured in the baton charge. They are Abdullah Al Mahmud, Humayun Kabir and Moniruzzaman Mintu.

The agitating students then came to the college campus from the highway and ransacked the college building.

College sources said 46 examinees out of 87 failed in 4th semester final examination while 53 examinees out of 110 in 6th semester final. The agitating students blamed their teachers and college authorities for failure of over 50 percent students. The results were published recently.

They demanded re-evaluation of their answer sheets and alleged that some students who did not sit for the examination were shown

passed in the result sheet. The students also demanded removal of college principal. Shib Shankar Chakrabarti, acting principal of the college, said he asked the students to apply in a proper way but they went on rampage.

"It is a matter of sorrow for the college as over 50 percent students could not pass. I asked the students to challenge the published result in a proper way but they barricaded the road and damaged college building. It's totally unexpected," the principal said.

Md Motiur Rahman, officer-in-charge (OC) of Pabna Sadar police station, said, "They tried to control the situation peacefully but the students became agitated and hurled bricks at police."

8 hurt as BCL, JCD clash at Rangamati

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

Eight activists of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) were injured in a clash at Rangamati Government College yesterday.

The injured are Panchanan Bhattacharya, president of BCL college unit, its General Secretary Shahjahan Rion, Organising Secretary Roni and activist Rashed. The injured JCD activists are Sujan, Morshed, Nazrul and Mishu.

Sujan, Nazrul and Morshed were admitted to Rangamati General Hospital while the rest given first aid at the hospital.

Police said the trouble began at around 2:00pm when some JCD men assaulted a BCL activist named Arif who refused to join a procession they brought out on the college campus.

Hearing the news, BCL college unit President Panchanon Bhattacharya along with some other BCL activists rushed to the campus and had an altercation with JCD men, resulting in a clash between the two rival student bodies.

Both sides used lethal weapons during the clash that continued for half an hour.

On information, police went the spot and dispersed the clashing groups.

"Situation is under control and additional police have been deployed on the campus to avert any further incident," said Babul Uddin Sarder, officer in-charge (OC) of Kotwali Police Station.



PHOTO: STAR

Stick wielding activists of Islami Chhatra Shibir march streets in Jessore town yesterday. They also vandalised MM College and several shops.

9 AL, Jubo League men sued for 'assaulting' WDB engr

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira.

Nine local leaders and activists of Awami League (AL) and Jubo League (JL) have been sued for allegedly assaulting a sub-assistant engineer of the Water Development Board (WDB) at Shyamnagar.

Sub-Assistant Engineer Md Khalilur Rahman filed the case with Shyamnagar Police Station yesterday.

The accused are Shyamnagar upazila AL Joint Secretary Shafiqul Azam Lenin upazila AL leaders Akbar, Khatir and Maruf Hossain, district Jubo League Organising Secretary Abdus Sattar, Shyamnagar upazila Jubo League President Abdul Kader and activists Atiar Rahman, Abdus Sabur, Rakhi and Nantu.

In the case statement, the complainant said the accused Shafiqul Azam Lenin, also the chairman of Gaburia Union Parishad

(UP), was re-constructing an embankment damaged by Cyclone Aila at Khalshibunia point changing the alignment.

"As I asked Lenin to stop the work, he along with the other accused came to my office at Shyamnagar upazila headquarters at about 3:30pm on January 4 and swooped on me," Khalilur Rahman alleged.

Contacted, Lenin denied the allegation, saying that the engineer filed the case to harass him and AL and Jubo League men.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Rifles seize three engine boats loaded with smuggled Indian coal from Patlai River near Baliaghat border outpost in Tahirpur under Sunamganj district yesterday.

Biting cold claims 8 more lives in Aila-hit Dakope

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Biting cold claimed nine more lives in Aila-hit Dakope upazila of Khulna district in the last three days.

They deceased are Shubhashi Mandol, 75, wife of late Madar Mandol, Subodh Mandol, son of Jagabandhu Mandol, Shushila, 78, wife of Harendra Nath, Srimati Barman, 85, wife of Dharendra Nath Barman, Panu Mistry, 87, wife of Bhola Nath Mistry, Sudhir Mandol, 101, son of late Ayodhya Mandol, Sudhir Sarder, 78, son of Rishi Sarder, Kashem Sarder, 78, son of late Sultan Sarder and Irfan Ali

Sana, 68, son of late Azim Sana.

Seven of them died in Sadar union while the remaining two in Banishanta and Kamarkhola unions under the same upazila as confirmed by Medical Officer of Apzila Health Complex Dr Akbar Hossain.

With the nine, the number of people died from biting cold in Dakope upazila since December 30 last year stands at 23. Apart from the death toll, over 200 children have been suffering from cold-related diseases since Tuesday last.

Present situation may take an alarming turn as there is no medical team and medicines required to provide necessary

treatment to growing number of patients in the Aila-hit upazila.

The death toll and the number of patients of cold-related diseases may further rise if sufficient medicines and warm clothes are not supplied urgently, said Dakope Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Kazi Atiur Rahman.

Meanwhile, biting cold also claimed four lives at different places of Sharankhola upazila of Bagerhat district.

The dead are Lal Mia, 75, of Malia village, Hajera Begum, 78, of Khuriakhali village and Kulsum Begum, 68, and Salam Akand, 62, of Rajapur village under the upazila.

Young man found dead

UNB, Goalanda (Rajbari)

Police have recovered the body of an unidentified young man from a canal at Boirang Dop in Goalanda Ghat.

Locals found the body floating in the canal on Tuesday and informed the matter to police.

Later, police recovered the body and sent it to Sadar hospital morgue for autopsy.

Police suspected that criminals might have strangled the victim elsewhere due to previous enmity and later threw the body in the canal.