



NGOs and rights activists form a human chain in Panchagarh town yesterday demanding proper investigation into the death of a pregnant woman due to alleged negligence of a doctor and punishment to the person responsible.

BDR MUTINY CASE

Charge framing against 14 in Sunamganj June 28

Hearing resumes in Thakurgaon today

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Charges against 14 alleged BDR mutineers will be framed in Sunamganj on June 28 while hearing of charges against 29 others will take place in Thakurgaon today.

The special court-3 of Bangladesh Rifles yesterday fixed June 28 for framing charges against 14 alleged mutineers of 8 Rifles Battalion of Sunamganj, according to UNB.

The trial process of the special court began at 8:00 am for the second day yesterday with BDR Director General Maj Gen Mainul Islam in the chair.

The court adjourned the trial proceedings till the date. The 14 BDR men were produced in the special court at Akhalia.

BDR sector headquarters amid tight security.

Of the accused, 10 were arrested earlier while four

others were arrested on Friday as per court order.

The accused are Subedar Maj Gouranga Chandra Das, Nayek

Subedar Abul Hossain, havildars Md Abdul Jalil, Md Badiul Alam and Md Maniruzzaman, nayeks Md Harun Ur Rashid, Md Abdul Wahid and Md Hiru Ullah Khan, lance nayeks Abdur Rahim, Biplob Kumar Pandit and Umar Faruque Hossain and sepoy Maniruzzaman Sheikh, Sumon Marma and Toriql Islam.

Our correspondent in Thakurgaon reports: The Special Court-2 will resume hearing of charges against 29 BDR men of 25 Rifles Battalion today.

BDR sources said the three-member court headed by BDR DG Maj Gen Mainul Islam will sit at Panchagarh Battalion Headquarters at 10:30am.

After the hearing charges would be framed against the mutineers of 25 Rifles Battalion.

Earlier on February 3, trial of the 29 alleged mutineers began as complainant Subedar Major of 25 Rifles Battalion Aminul Haque Sheikh read out the allegations against them before the same court.

Of the 29 accused, 21 were in jail after mutiny while eight other BDR men were arrested on February 3 from the battalion ground following a court order.

The other members of the court are Lt Col Mahfuzur Rahman and Maj Didar Al Latif.

Deputy Attorney General Biswajit Roy will be present at the court as a representative of the Attorney General's Office.

Mosharaf Hossain Kajol and Baharul Islam will be present as public prosecutors.

LAND SURVEY

Team to visit CHT soon

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

CHT Land Commission Chairman Justice Khademul Islam Chowdhury yesterday said a government team will talk with local political leaders, civil society representatives, circle chiefs and headmen to get first hand information on how it will conduct CHT land survey.

The team will start visiting CHT very soon to make the initiative taken at an inter-ministerial meeting on March 11 a success, the chairmen said while exchanging views with local journalists at Khagrachhari Circuit House.

He said the commission cannot play its due role unless the government completes CHT land survey. "The Land Commission gives priority on traditional land rights and Chittagong Hill Tracts Regulation 1900 to resolve the land disputes, he said.

He further said, "We have already invited applications from those who took refuge in India during CHT unrest and internally displaced people to resolve their land disputes as per CHT Land Commission Act, 2001".

AL leaders now aspirants for KHDC posts

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

The government is going to bring changes in Khagrachhari Hill District Council (KHDC) following resignation of its chairman and three councillors in the face of agitation by ruling party men.

Four senior AL leaders including district Awami League Vice President Rono Bikrom Tripura, Kujendra Lal Tripura, Kongjori Marma and Press Secretary Samir Datta Chakma are aspirants for the chairman post, district Awami League sources said.

Law maker from Khagrachhari constituency Zindra Lal Tripura told this correspondent that the newly set chairman and councillors of Khagrachhari hill district councils may take over within a couple of days.

However, the Khagrachhari district council did not receive any official letters as of yesterday, KHDC officials said.

The last elections in three hill districts were held on June 25, 1989.

As per the 1989 act, permanent residents are supposed to elect a chairman (indigenous) and 30 members (indigenous and Bangalee) for KHDC.

There is also a provision for three reserved seats for women (two indigenous and one Bangalee) in KHDC.

After signing of the historical peace accord in December

1997, the local government councils of the hill districts were renamed as hill district councils (HDC).

The then Awami League (AL) government in 1996 first set interim KHDC. Each five-member council consisted of a chairman (indigenous) and four members, one of them being Bangalee, KHDC sources said.

The four-party alliance government also selected their own men for the interim KHDC after assuming power in 2001. The former caretaker government also set new interim KHDC.

"There is no alternative to full-pledged HDCs if the government wants to implement the CHT peace accord," Senior Vice President of district Awami League Rono Bikrom Tripura said.

Appreciating the latest move for reconstructing the KHDC by the present government, Samiron Dewan, the first elected chairman of the then local government in Khagrachhari, urged the government to take steps for holding KHDC elections immediately to ensure participation of all indigenous people for sustainable development of the region.

Monindra Lal Tripura, former chairman of KHDC, also urged the government to give election and ensure the participation of people from all the communities as per CHT peace accord.

Spices becoming moneyspinner in southern region

UNB, Magura

Cultivation of spices in 10 districts of the country's southern region is gaining popularity as it has become a moneyspinner for the farmers.

Farmers have brought vast tracts of land under spices cultivation in the region as the production cost is lower this season due to low price of seeds, fertiliser, insecticide and other agri-inputs.

On the other hand, the market prices of the produces are higher than other years.

It was found in different areas of Magura, Jessore, Narail, Kushtia, Meherpur, Khulna, Satkhira and Bagerhat districts that the farmers cultivated various high-yielding varieties of spices such as onion, chilli, coriander, garlic, turmeric and cumin in their fields.

Magura Regional Spices Research Centre (RSRC) invented new hybrid species of spices including Bari onion-2, Bari onion-3, Bari garlic-1, Bari turmeric-3, Bari fenu-greek-1 and Bari cumin-1.

Farmers have cultivated these newly invented species in Hajipur, Alaipur, Atharakhada, Chandanpratap, Baskutha, Paranandual, Barai, Alokdia, Ramnagar, Rautda, Aduakandi, Chhobinagar, Gayespur, Chandikhali and Nakol villages of Magura and in many villages in other

districts of the region.

Subrata Kumar Chakrabarty, official of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE) of Magura said farmers cultivated onion on 5,210 hectares of land while garlic on 478 hectares, coriander on 1,463 hectares, chilli on 1,615 hectares, turmeric on 530 hectares and ginger on 5 hectares of land in the current session in the district.

RSRC official Maniruzzaman said the research center has given training to 200 agriculture officials, 100 volunteer-representatives and 700 farmers on modern methods of spices cultivation.

Some spices cultivators said they are more interested in high-yielding spices cultivation as the prices of those varieties are much higher.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS

10 held for catching 'jatka'

UNB, Chandpur

Ten fishermen were arrested along with huge illegal current net while catching 'jatka, (hilsa fry smaller than 9 inches) in the Meghna River early Friday. The arrestees are Moron Ali, 38, Sabuj Miah, 23, Abdus Sattar, 28, Abdul Awal Rubel, 17, Hazrat Ali, 34, Rafiqul Mizi, 25, Rubel, 26, Moron Ali, 32, M Siraj Miah, 38, and M Yasin Ali, 23. Acting on a tip-off, a joint team of district administration and coast guards conducted a drive in the river under Haimchar upazila in the early hours of the day and arrested the fishermen while catching hilsa fry violating the government ban.

20 injured in Ukhia clash

UNB, Cox's Bazar

At least 20 members of a bridal party were injured in an attack by the bride's men at Maddhya Inani village in Ukhia upazila on Friday. Witnesses said an altercation erupted between the two sides during the marriage ceremony of Mahbulul Alam, son of Kabir Ahmed of Rumkha Chowdhurypara and Asma-ul-Hosna, daughter of late Ekramul Haque of Inani village, over gold ornaments. At one stage, the bride's men attacked the bridal party with sticks leaving 20 injured. Badly injured three -- bridegroom's brother Ferdous, 22, cousin M Elias, 26, and uncle Nurul Islam, 52 -- were rushed to Sadar Hospital from where they were shifted to Chittagong Medical College and Hospital as their condition deteriorated.

Couple dies in blast

UNB, Jamalpur

A couple, who suffered burn injuries in a diesel drum explosion at Bagalergar village in Madarganj upazila on Thursday night, died on Friday. The deceased were identified as Rabiul, 40, and his wife Fatema, 34. Locals said the diesel drum exploded at about 10:00pm on Thursday night as it came in touch with fire when the couple were pouring diesel from it. Rabiul succumbed to his injuries at 10:00am on Friday while his wife at 4:00pm at Sadar Hospital.

5 injured as mob, police clash

UNB, Faridpur

Five people were injured in a clash between power-hungry people and police in Alfadanga upazila headquarters on Friday night. Local sources said over a thousand aggrieved people demonstrated in the headquarters in the evening demanding smooth power supply. At one stage, they attacked and ransacked the Palli Bidyut Samity office at about 8:00pm. On information, police rushed in and tried to pacify the angry people. But, the mob pelted brickbats at the law-enforcers, triggering the clash. A chase and counter chase took place during the melee that left five people injured.



Police arrests Abdur Rahman from Dhap in Rangpur town on charge of illegally possessing a huge quantity of medicine meant for Rangpur Medical College Hospital yesterday.

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