

'POOR SHOW' BY CHT LAND DISPUTE BODY

Only 2,178 applications submitted in 48 days

Most petitioners are Bangalee settlers

JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari

The CHT Land Dispute Resolution Commission, formed to resolve land disputes in Rangamati, Bandarban and Khagrachhari hill districts, has received only 2,178 applications in 48 working days till Tuesday.

Most of the petitioners, who submitted applications to settle land disputes, are Bangalee settlers, said sources of the commission office.

The commission issued public notice seeking applications within 60 working days from March 13 to resolve land disputes in the three districts of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT).

When contacted, Acting Chairman of Khagrachhari Hill District Council Kujendra Lal Tripura, also a member of the CHT Affairs Land Commission, said the number of applications is poor and the ethnic people are totally ignoring the

invitation.

"The commission will have to make people, particularly the ethnic groups, aware about the notice. Otherwise, the CHT land disputes will remain unresolved," the chairman said, adding that the commission must fulfill the quorum for its meeting to make its decision fruitful.

The commission has so far received applications from Dighinala, Bagaichhari, Langudu, Manikchhari, Laxmichhari, Kaptai, Mohalchhari, Matiranga, Lama, Ali Kadom, Naniyarchar, Ramgarh, Panchhari, Rajasthali, Khagrachhari Sadar and Bandarban Sadar upazilas, sources said.

No application has been submitted from nine other upazilas of the three hill districts.

Shanti Bikash Tripura, an indigenous man from Azodda village in Matiranga upazila of Khagrachhari, went to the

commission office on Tuesday to submit application, alleging that one Mohammad Mizanur Rahman occupied his three acres of land in 1981.

"Most of the ethnic people in my area do not know about the process of application or last date of submission" he said.

Joynal Abedin of Shalbagan in Khagrachhari Sadar upazila said he went to the commission office to settle a land dispute after hearing about the public notice from his neighbours.

Contacted over cell phone, Land Dispute Resolution Commission Secretary Md Abdul Hamid admitted that the number of applications submitted to the commission was very poor.

He, however, said, "The number will increase as the commission has already decided to give additional 60 working days to the petitioners to submit their applications on competition of the first phase of submission."



A farmer carries nearly ripe paddy harvested from his submerged cropland in Aditdari upazila of Lalmonirhat district yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

HEAVY RAIN FOR TWO DAYS IN LALMONIRHAT

Huge boro crops in three upazilas go under water

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

About one-third of boro crop in the low-lying areas of Aditdari, Hatibandha and Lalmonirhat Sadar upazilas has gone under water due to heavy rain for the last two days and onrush of water from hills across the border.

The affected areas are Mosur Doulor, Sarpukur, Vadai, Gobordhan, Mohishkocha, Bala Para, and Kadomtola villages under Aditdari upazila; South Goddimari, Goddimari, Sindurna, and Paruliya villages under Hatibandha upazila; and Kalmati, Khuniya Gachh,

Rajpur, Kurul, and Itapota villages under Sadar upazila.

Some farmers in the affected areas are cutting nearly ripe boro while others cannot do so because of lack of labourers. They said if water level in the affected areas does not recede within a day or two, the extent of damage to boro paddy will increase.

While visiting the Masur Doulor village under Aditdari upazila yesterday, farmers told this correspondent if water level continues to rise, boro paddy will get damaged and they will face heavy losses.

The deputy director of the Department of Agriculture Extension (DAE), Lalmonirhat, said boro on about 2,500 acres of land in the low-lying areas of Sadar, Aditdari and Hatibandha upazilas has gone under water.

He said the DAE officials of the affected upazila have been asked to prepare loss assessment reports and send them to the district office.

After getting the reports, we will estimate the total loss and make necessary recommendations for farmers' help, he added.

BCL factions in Thakurgaon, Pabna clash: Six injured

STAR NATIONAL DESK

BCL factions in Pabna and Thakurgaon clashed yesterday and the day before leaving six activists injured.

In Pabna, rivals attacked a former BCL leader yesterday, reports our correspondent.

Victim Mostak Ahmed Azad is former secretary of Pabna district unit BCL.

Azad said he was attacked by rival cadres at about 1:30 pm when he was going to Pabna town by motorbike. The attackers beat him up and tried to stab him but he managed to escape. The incident took place in front of Vanga Kalibari Mondir of Shalgaria village in the municipality area, he said.

He was admitted to Pabna General Hospital.

Sources said, an internal feud in BCL were brewing in Pabna since the district unit BCL council on May 2.

Attack on Azad was a sequel to party rivalry, they said.

In Thakurgaon, at least five BCL activists were injured in a clash on Wednesday between two rival groups of the AL-backed student front, according to our correspondent.

Of the injured, Shuvo, 23, Siam, 22, and Monti, 21, were admitted to Thakurgaon Sadar Hospital in a critical condition. Later, police arrested activists Anwar and Sifat from different places in the town.

Police and BCL sources said in 12 May district conference of BCL Fakhrul Islam Jewel and Faisal Ahmed Polash were made president and secretary though they were not regular students.

On Wednesday morning, the newly made president and secretary entered Thakurgaon Government College for first time after the conference.

But the activists of BCL, who are the regular students of the college, protested their visit triggering an altercation.

At this the supporters of Jewel and Polash attacked the supporters of Pulok, president of BCL Thakurgaon Government College unit, leaving five people injured.



This memorial, built in honour of the massacre victims at Chuknagar in Dumuria upazila of Khulna district, shows signs of utter neglect. PHOTO: STAR

Chuknagar 'genocide day' observed

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Thirty-ninth Chuknagar 'genocide day' was observed here yesterday.

On this day in 1971, a few thousand men, women and children mostly belonging to minority community were slain by the Pakistan occupation forces. The forces sprayed bullets on them from light machine guns and semi-automatic rifles killing them on the spot within hours.

The victims of the massacre hailed from Khulna, Bagerhat, Satkhira, Jessore and Gopalganj districts. They had assembled at Chuknagar under Dumuria upazila of Khulna district to flee to India through any available border route.

The Principal of Chuknagar College and President of Ganohatya '71 Smriti Raksha Parishad ABM Shafiqul Islam yesterday told the chief prosecutor of the International War Crimes Tribunal (IWCT) that he had witnessed the massacre committed by Pakistan occupation forces on May 20 in 1971.

"That must be the biggest genocide in world history as Pakistan forces killed thousands in a few minutes on that day".

"Only 1500 people died in the Mai Lai massacre in Vietnam. But during Chuknagar massacre over 10,000 peo-

ple were killed in the twinkling of an eye", he said.

To observe the day, Ganohatya '71 Smriti Raksha Parishad organized a commemorative

meeting yesterday at Chuknagar College ground with principal ABM Shafiqul Islam in the chair.

State minister for Labour and Employment Begum Mannujan Sufian was present at the function as chief guest. Lawmaker Noor Afroze Ali, Dumuria upazila chairman Sheikh Abdul Hadi and UNO Sakhawat Hossain addressed the meeting as special guests.

The state minister said in her speech that government is determined to try war criminals at any cost.

Speakers at the meeting urged the government to declare May 20 as National Mourning Day to show respect to the victims of Chuknagar massacre.

Meanwhile, the members of war crime tribunal visited three major spots of massacre in Khulna yesterday.

The chief prosecutor of the IWCT, Golam Arif Tipu, said his team had recorded statement of 24 eye-witnesses to massacre at Chuknagar and other places in the district.

Malaria kills 167 in Khagrachhari in last 4 years

Roundtable told

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Malaria killed at least 167 people and attacked 55984 in eight upazilas of Khagrachhari hill district in the last four years.

It was revealed at a roundtable discussion jointly organised by civil surgeon's office, Khagrachhari press club and non-government organisation Brac.

Held at the conference hall of Khagrachhari Hill District Council (KHDC) it was chaired by civil surgeon Dr Uday Shankar Chakma while acting KHDC chairman Kujendra Lal Tripura attended as chief guest.

Speakers said the actual figure of malarial death or attack might be two to three times higher as the figure has been compiled from various sources. They said, number of death and infection has declined in the recent years as Global Fund for AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) in collaboration with the Health Department started awareness campaign from early 2007 in Khagrachhari.

The international organi-

sation is carrying out the programme through various activities to control malaria in the hill district.

Citing example they said only one person was killed and 2738 were affected in the last four months of the current year while 12 killed and 15811 affected in 2009, 55 killed and 19673 affected in 2008 and 99 killed and 17762 affected in 2007.

Several organisations are working to control malaria in the hill district in collaboration with government including 14 NGOs led by Brac.

They have distributed 1,94,448 long lasting mosquito-net (LLMN) besides blood tests, supplying medicines and arranging awareness campaign, the speakers said.

Among others, Deputy Commissioner Anis-Ul-Haque Bhuiyan, Chief Executive Officer Tarun Kanti Gosh, KHDC member Bir Kishore Chakma, Khagrachhari press club president Zizen Barua, its secretary Azim ul Haq, Brac district manager Rupok Chakma and Brac Sadar upazila manager Fazlul Haque addressed the roundtable.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS



Rajshahi unit of children's organisation Khelaghar takes out a colourful procession in the city marking its 58th founding anniversary yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Three held, gun seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Rab personnel arrested three people with a shooter gun from a shrimp enclosure at village Basirampur in Assassuni upazila on Wednesday. The arrestees are Bakul, 35, son of Golam Rahman and Abdur Razzak, 45, son of Golam Rabbani of village Basirampur in Assassuni upazila and Milton, 25, son of Abdul Moteleb of village Sreepur in Debhata upazila. Acting on a tip-off, the members of Rab-6 of Khulna raided the shrimp enclosure and recovered a shooter gun and arrested the owner of the enclosure Bakul and his staff Abdur Razzak from the spot. Later, the team arrested Milton from Kadamtala area in the same upazila.

Indian criminal held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A 'top criminal' of West Bengal in India was arrested on Wednesday at Amra border under Phulbari upazila by BDR who also seized a stolen motorbike from his possession. The arrestee was identified as Bakul Barman alias Batta. BDR officials of Phulbari 40 Battalion quoting Indian sources said the arrestee is wanted in 20 murder cases in West Bengal. A BDR team, acting on a tip-off, raided Mirpur village under Kazihal union in the morning and arrested him soon after crossing into Bangladesh territory, BDR sources said.

BNCC workshop begins

UNB, Panchagarh

A 10-day workshop of the Bangladesh National Cadet Corps (BNCC) began at Makabular Rahman Government College on Wednesday. The workshop will continue till May 28. Organised by Rangpur-4 Mahastan Battalion, the camp was inaugurated by Prof Md Giasuddin as chief guest. About one thousand cadets of 26 schools and colleges from Panchagarh, Thakurgaon, Nilphamari and Dinajpur are participating in the workshop.



Hunger Project, Bangladesh forms a human chain in front of Rangpur press club yesterday demanding punishment to the criminals who raped a female trainee medical assistant in the town on May 15. PHOTO: STAR



Trucks lie idle at Hili landport in Hakimpur upazila of Dinajpur district yesterday after municipality authorities locked the main gate of the port as punitive action against the port's private operator for the latter's non-payment of Tk 7 lakh arrear tax. PHOTO: STAR