

MAY 11 BARAPUKURIA COAL MINE MISHAP

Production suspension for 47 days costs Tk 127cr

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Coal production of Barapukuria Coal Mine Company Ltd (BCMCL) in Parbatipur upazila of Dinajpur has remained suspended for 47 days since the May 11 accident that claimed life of a miner and injured 18 others.

The unusual production suspension following underground roof collapse at coal Phase 1108 has caused loss of about Tk 127 crore, BCMCL sources said, adding that Tk 2.7 crore is added to the loss daily due to the situation.

According to the suggestion of five Chinese experts who came to examine the accident spot on May 20, 15 to 20 days more will be needed to fix the underground problems, said a BCMCL official seeking anonymity.

Contacted, BCMCL Managing Director Md Quamruzzaman said restart of coal production from Phase 1108 depends on the experts' decision after examination of the plants and their risk factors and

precautionary measures.

Thirty-two miners including three Chinese people were in 1240-foot-deep underground when the accident occurred at 10:10am on May 11 at coal-mine Phase 1108, some 800metres off the entry point, BCMCL sources said.

One person was killed and 18 others were injured while 13 miners including a Chinese managed to escape unhurt.

As the roof of Phase 1108 collapsed, serious jolt was felt at Gigagari village, villagers said.

After examining the spot, the Chinese experts suggested that BCMCL authority take some safety measures including the roadway protection at Phase 1108, sources said.

Meanwhile, two German consultants hired by International Mining Consultants Group Consulting Ltd (IMCGCL), a consultant of company of BCMCL, arrived at the mine site on June 20.

They visited the accident spot and examined the suggestions of Chinese

experts. They will hold a meeting with BCMCL experts by Thursday and give guidelines.

The meeting will decide coal production from Phase 1108 after having the precautionary safety measures, sources said.

The Phase 1108 with 2.48 lakh tonnes of coal was developed last year. Of the amount, 1.29 lakh tonnes of coal was extracted from February this year to May 10 midnight, sources said.

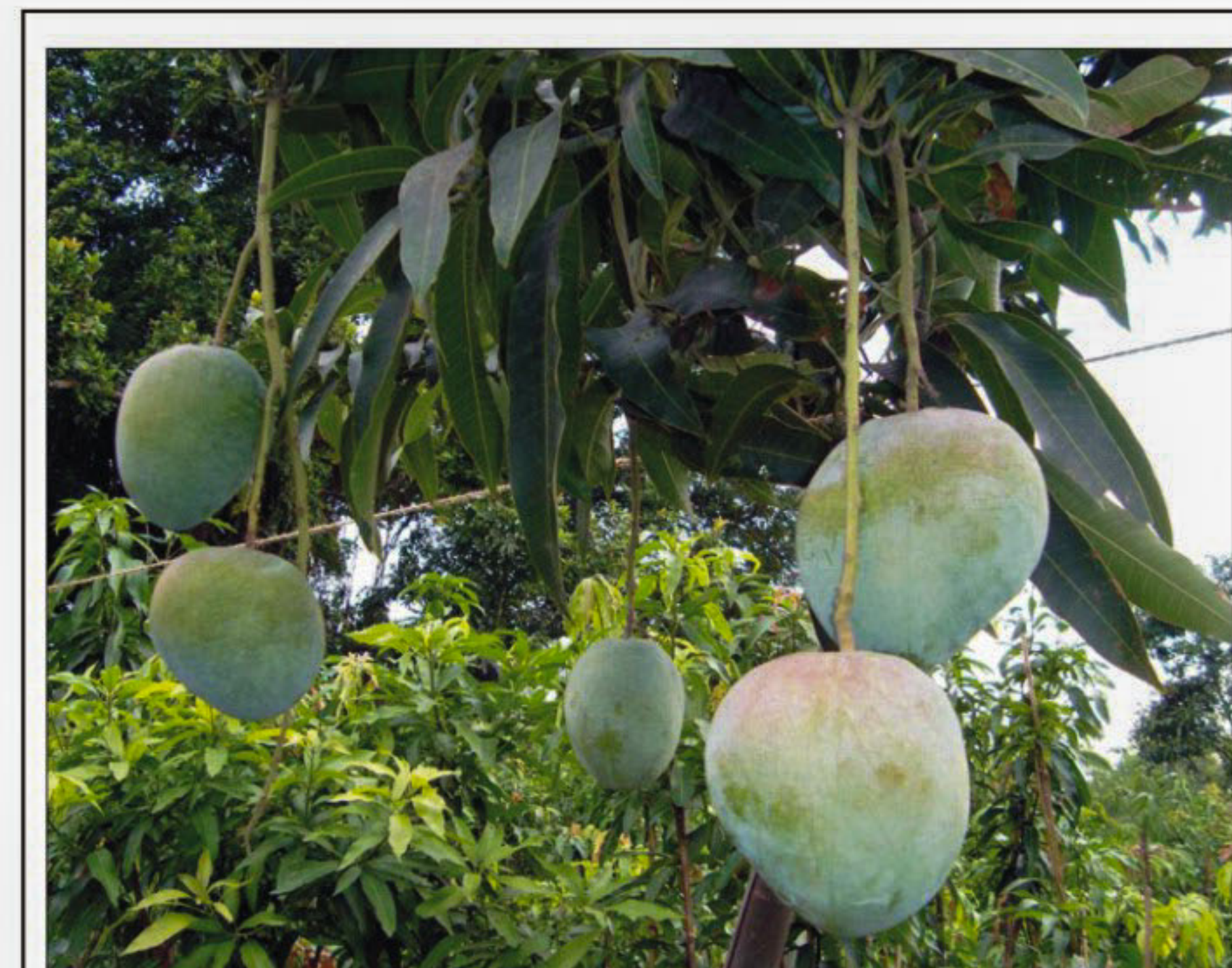
About 1.19 lakh tonnes of coal remained trapped inside since the accident took place on May 11, much to the concern for the BCMCL authorities.

"Mine exposed to air for long period can lead to more technical problems including gas leakage and fire incident in underground. Coal production from phase 1108 should restart as early as possible to avert accident," said a BCMCL official seeking anonymity.

Contacted, a few high officials of BCMCL declined to comment on the issue.



Indigenous girls dance while men display archery as they arrange a colourful programme at Kakonhat in Rajshahi yesterday marking Santal Rebellion Day. Local lawmaker Omar Faruq Chowdhury was present on the occasion.



3 BCL men held while collecting illegal toll

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Three Chhatra League (BCL) activists were arrested while collecting illegal toll at Babuchhara Bazar under Dighinala upazila yesterday noon.

The arrestees are members of Babuchhara union unit Chhatra League Zia Uddin 22, Selim, 23, and Mashuk, 25.

Dighinala police station sources said four BCL men went to Babuchhara Bazar with sharp knives to collect toll from the businessmen.

But the traders besieged them while they entered the shop of Ala Uddin and demanded Tk 20 thousand. Another member of the gang, Mohammad Harun managed to flee sensing the situation.

The gang had been collecting tolls from the traders for the last few months, Babuchhara traders said.

Dighinala police station in-charge Subash Chandra Pal said trader Ala Uddin filed a case accusing all 4 BCL men of extortion.

Bomb explodes inside police station, 1 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A day-labourer was injured as a bomb exploded inside the Sadar police station in Chuadanga yesterday.

Injured Serajul Islam, 34, of Hamurbaradi in Sadar upazila is now undergoing treatment at Chuadanga Sadar Hospital.

According to Chuadanga Sadar police, they engaged Serajul to clean weeds and dusts from different corners of the police station in the morning.

A bomb exploded when Serajul was mowing the weeds near the boundary wall of the police station.

He was rushed to Chuadanga Sadar Hospital where the doctors removed splinters from Serajul's face, hands and chest.

Low-lying areas in Netrakona flooded, diarrhoea in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

Diarrhoea has broken out in the flood-affected areas in the district with the recession of water.

Most of victims are from Zakiganj, Balaganj, Kanaighat and Gowainghat upazilas.

Contacted, Dr. Foyez Ahmed, Civil Surgeon of Sylhet told this correspondent yesterday afternoon that more than 350 patients took treatment at different government hospitals during the last 3 days while about a hundred more admitted to the hospitals.

A control room has started monitoring diarrhoea although the situation is yet to take a serious turn, he added.

At least 137 medical teams are working in the affected upazilas, the Civil Surgeon informed. There is no dearth of medicines and salines, he said.

Meanwhile, the flood situation in the region marked a little more improvement with less rainfall yesterday.

The Surma was flowing 24cm below danger level at Sylhet city at 3pm yesterday while it was 55cm above the mark at Kanaighat upazila.

The Kushiyra at its starting point at Amolshid was flowing 22cm above red mark while it was 44cm above at Sheolaghat in Beanibazar upazila yesterday afternoon.

Meanwhile, 14,000 people were still staying at 80 flood shelters in different upazilas of

the district, said an official at the district flood control room.

The flood has affected more than five lakh people, he said.

Away in Netrakona, flood situation slightly improved in the bordering Kalmakanda and Durgapur but deteriorated in low-lying areas of the two upazilas in the last two days.

The newly affected villages are Rudranagar, Montola,

Ricka, Bishorpara and Isapur village in Kalmakanda upazila and Nawapara, Kapasia, Haludhati, Rambari, Bhadua Shreepur and Ishorkhola in Durgapur upazila.

Flood also hit Badracher and Naniarchor villages in Khaliajuri upazila.

During the last few days flood hit at least 25 villages in Durgapur upazila, 35 villages in Kalmakanda upazila and 15 villages in Khaliajuri upazila

rendering about one lakh people marooned, Netrakona Water Development Board (WDB) sources said.

Kalmakanda upazila administration sources said, erosion by a river Mohishkhola took a serious turn devouring over 100 dwelling houses at Bharapara, Hajongpara, Sannashipara and Panggaw villages in Kalmakanda upazila in the last two days.



A boy tries to collect water from a nearly submerged tube-well at a village in Gaukandia union of Durgapur upazila where Netrakona district as rain-fed Someshwari River continues flooding large areas of the district.

High yielding BARI-4 is among the three recently released mangoes by the scientists at regional Horticulture Research Station in Chapainawabganj.

3 more new varieties of juicy mangoes

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

Regional Horticulture Research Station (RHRS) at Chapainawabganj has evolved three more new varieties of mangoes.

At a farmers' training programme the RHRS scientists formally released those among the mango growers on June 17.

The varieties are BARI Aam 6, 7 and 8. The speakers at the function said, Chapainawabganj being the largest mango growing district has more than 16 lakh mango trees on 2,300 hectares of land.

The mangoes produced in the district meeting yearly demand in the country also deserve export to other countries, they added.

The newly released mangoes are regularly bearing and tasty, they said.

According to authorities, BARI Aam 6, 7 and 8 were actually released in October last year. As that was not mango season, they formally released them this month.

With the latest three, the scientists of RHRS in the last 17 years of research have evolved seven new varieties of mangoes.

Among those, two varieties belong to kancha mitha (sweet and sour) varieties, two local varieties, one American colour variety and the rest two of hybrid varieties.

There are at least 350 local varieties in the country and most of them grow in Chapainawabganj district, scientists said.

An evaluation committee from Bangladesh Agriculture Research Institute (BARI) comprising breeders, horticulturists and entomologists and pathologists tested and evaluated the seven mango varieties before being formally released.

According to Dr Shafiqul Islam, Principal Scientific Officer of RHRS, the team in their evaluation counted different qualities of the

mangoes including regularity in bearing, shape, colour, size, taste, yield and resistance to disease and insects. He said that the station selected 22 varieties of mangoes from a national level mango fair held at the RHRS in 1993 and started research on them.

The seven varieties of mangoes released by RHRS are: BARI Aam 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8.

Of them, BARI Aam 2 (Laxmannbhog) and BARI Aam 7 (Apela) are colour varieties and BARI Aam 4 is a hybrid variety.

BARI Aam 1 was released in 1995, BARI Aam 2 in 1996, BARI Aam 3 in 1999, BARI Aam 4 was released in 2003 and at last BARI Aam 6, 7 and 8 were released in October 2009.

About BARI Aam 6, 7 and 8, Sorof Uddin, scientific officer of RHRS, said they are all regularly bearing fruits.

BARI Aam 6 is excellent in taste and each mango weighs 280 grams. A 12-years-old tree can yield 170 kg of mango, he said.

Although the BARI Aam 7 is of moderate taste, each mango weighs 290 grams and an eight-years-old tree can yield 160 of mangoes. BARI Aam 8 is also good in taste and its size is bigger than the other two varieties. Each mango weighs around 300 grams, he told this correspondent.

The station has already started distribution of the latest varieties, sources at RHRS said.

The Regional Horticulture Research Station was established on 100 bighas of land at Chapainawabganj town in 1985.

Its earlier name was Chapainawabganj Mango Research Centre which was supposed to conduct research only on mangoes.

The station now conducts research on variety development and protection of different plants, their cultural management and post-harvest management, said RHRS officials.



Homestead and betel leaf garden lie ravaged as tornado lashed areas at Dailpara in Teknaf upazila of Cox's Bazar district yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

RAJSHAHI MEDICAL INCIDENT

Another leader of interns arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Police yesterday arrested another leader of the Rajshahi Medical College interns doctors in connection with the case filed for assaulting a teacher and damaging office of the principal on June 21.

Arrestee Rezaul Karim Rocky is the president of a faction of the district unit of Bangladesh Dental Society (BDS) and also an FIR-named accused of the case filed by Dr Nawshed Ali, a RMC teacher.

Police arrested him at around 12:00 noon while under treatment at Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital. Rival interns left him unconscious by beating up mercilessly and injecting drug on June 21.

Police on June 21 arrested RMCH Intern Doctors Council

president Shah Alam Siddik Lalon and four other Bangladesh Chhatra League leaders including RMC unit president Sampad Kumar Dutta in connection with the case.

Earlier, pro-AL interns and RMC unit BCL leaders were split over formation of Rajshahi unit of BDS a couple of weeks ago. A faction is being led by Lalon while the other by Intern Doctors Council general secretary Ashok Roy.

Lalon group formed a BDS committee making Abidur Rahman its president on June 18 while Ashok group formed a counter-committee with Rocky as president two days later.

As a sequel to the dispute, the groups clashed on June 21. During the clash, Lalon group assaulted Dr Nawshed and vandalised the office of the RMC principal Dr Abdul Hannan.