

Affected villagers besiege hard rock mine for job

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Several hundred people of surrounding villages of Madhyapara Granite Mining Company Ltd (MGMCL) yesterday besieged the company offices for about two hours demanding jobs by introducing two more pro-

duction shifts. The villagers submitted a memorandum to the MGMCL authorities. In the memo, they also demanded withdrawal of Ansar deployed by the company. Villagers severely affected by water logging launched the agitation programme yesterday under the banner of

'Madhyapara Adhikar Rakkha Committee'. From early morning they started gathering in MGMCL area and besieged the rock mine at around 11:00am. At a rally in front of the mine the speakers urged the mine authorities to start rock production in two more shifts which was scheduled to begin

about 4 years ago. Sources said at present the mine produces around 1100 to 1500 tonnes of hard rock a day with the help of 292 miners. "If the mine authorities open two more production shifts, then they will require more manpower. And these workers have to be recruited from the surrounding villages as they are worst affected by the mine" said Md Mujahid Islam, convener of the committee.



Affected villagers under the banner of Madhyapara Adhikar Rakkha Committee bring out a procession at Madhyapara in Dinajpur yesterday and then besiege the offices of Granite Mining Company Ltd demanding employment at the mine.

The villagers alleged that the mine authorities often recruited outsiders to operate the mine. Md Khairul Islam, general secretary of the committee said while the villagers sacrificed their land for the sake of mine, they remain deprived of jobs at the mine.

He said the committee several times iterated the matters to the mine authorities but to no effect. "If our demands are not met this time, we will go for greater movement to realise those", he added. Abdul Basar, managing director (Admin) said, the mine has a plan to start two more shifts in near future and surrounding villagers will get priority.

Charges against 23 BDR men read out in Rangamati

Trial of 24 others starts in Lalmonirhat

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The complainant of the mutiny case filed against 23 BDR men of 18 Rifles Battalion of Chhotoharina zone under Barkal upazila yesterday read out the allegations against the rebels at special court-15 at Rangamati sector headquarters while trial proceedings against 24 mutineers of 31 Lalmonirhat Rifles Battalion under Rangpur sector began at the battalion headquarters the same day.

Golam Mowla. After hearing, court chief Col Zahedur Rahman asked prosecutor Lt Col Mehedi Hassan, commanding officer of 18 Rifles Battalion, to produced all the accused in the court at 10:00am today. Deputy Attorney General Ejaharul Haque and special public prosecutors advocate Gazi Zillur Rahman and advocate Aminur Rahman Khan were present. Our Lalmonirhat correspondent reported that trial of 24 mutineers of Lalmonirhat 31 Rifles Battalion started at special court-13, set up at the Battalion headquarters, at 9:00am yesterday.

All the 24 mutineers were produced in the court and 16 of them admitted to their involvement in the mutiny at the battalion headquarters on February 26 last year while the rest claimed innocence. Of the 23 witnesses, only two yesterday gave their deposition before the special court headed by Dinajpur Sector Commander Col Muhammad Saleh Ahmad. Two other members are Lt Col Mahfuz Alam and Major Didar Al-Latif. Commanding officer of 31 Rifles Battalion Lt Col Aslam Hossain is the prosecutor. Deputy Attorney General Biswajit Roy,

advocates Rezaul Karim and Rafiqul Islam Mithu were present during the trial. The then officer-in-charge of Lalmonirhat Sadar Police Station Foyezur Rahman filed two separate cases with the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court against 24 mutineers of 31 Rifles Battalion. According to the case statement, the BDR men revolted against their officers and took control of the battalion headquarters on February 26, 2009. They also vandalised doors, windows of the battalion headquarters and fired at least 150 blank shots. The mutineers were later arrested and produced before the Chief Judicial Magistrate's Court that sent them to jail. The accused are Havilder Nazim Uddin, Dulal Hossain, Abu Bakkar, Shahadat Hossain, Parvez Alam, Amir Hossain, Tarekul Islam, Abdur Rahman, Lance Nayek Toslur Rahman, Asaduzzaman, Motiur Rahman, Nayek Subedar Yusuf Ali and Sirajul Haque.

In Rangamati, the three-member special court headed by Chittagong Sector Commander Col Zahedur Rahman started trial proceedings against the accused at 10:00am and continued until 11:40am. Two other members are Lt Col Md Abdun Nur and Maj Golam Mostafa Al-Mamun. At the beginning, Nayek Subedar Sahadat Lohani, read out the allegations against 23 mutineers. He alleged that 23 BDR men of the battalion revolted against their officers on February 26, 2009, looted firearms from the armoury and fired blank shots. They also cordoned off the residence of the then commanding officer Lt Col Md



Farmers expose to sunlight newly harvested half ripe hybrid tomato at Sarmongla in Godagari upazila of Rajshahi district a couple of days ago. But the early variety of the popular winter vegetable, allegedly treated with artificial ripeners, poses serious health hazard for consumers.

10 injured as rival ruling party men clash in Rajshahi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

At least 10 people were injured as leaders and activists of Jubo League and Sainik League clashed following a feud over president post of a school governing committee at Katakhal in the city yesterday.

Of the injured, Abu Sama, president of the district unit of Bangabandhu Sainik League and his aide Babu were admitted to Rajshahi Medical College and Hospital. Their rival Jubo League leader Abbas Ali, his cousins Ariful Islam Manik, Aser Ali and Mizanur Rahman received minor injuries. Witnesses said, at around 1:00pm Abbas group equipped with machetes, sticks and rods swooped on Sama group near Maskatadighi Bahumukhi High School gate.

Sylhet BNP faction's 'no' to Ilyas Ali's committee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

A large section of the leaders and activists of Sylhet city BNP have demanded cancellation of the newly announced city BNP committee within seven days. After announcement of committee by the central secretary general of the party on Friday, followers of central organising secretary and former lawmaker M Ilyas Ali, while Sylhet district BNP president, welcomed it while their rivals, known as followers of late finance minister M Saifur Rahman, opposed.

Sylhet mayoral polls has been awarded with the position of city BNP convener while another person, who became fourth and lost security money in the ward councillorship election, had been made city BNP general secretary. Besides, they worked against the BNP candidate in the last parliament polls," goes the statement. "In line with the directions from the central committee and constitutional provisions, we formed the city committee through a council in presence of representatives from the 27 ward committees on December 27 of 2009 and sent it to the central committee for approval. But ignoring all those a different committee has been announced," Shahriar said.

At a press conference held at Sylhet Press Club on Saturday afternoon, BNP central committee member Dr Shahriar Hossain Chowdhury, also former convener of Sylhet city BNP, read out a written statement, announcing that agitation programme would be launched if the new committee is not cancelled within seven days. "BNP Vice chairman and former foreign Secretary Shamsheer Mobin Chowdhury and central organising secretary and former lawmaker M Ilyas Ali, also district BNP president, had influenced some of the central leaders to form the so-called new city committee with the people who had played against party interest in the recent past," said Dr Shahriar, who has been a member of the five-men advisory body of the new city BNP. "The man [MA Haque] who had lost the

City ward councillor Rezaul Hasan Lodi and Abdul Washed Chowdhury Zuber, who have been made organising secretary and office secretary respectively in the new committee, said at the press conference that they would resign from the committee if the new committee, which includes 'unwanted people', is not cancelled. The BNP central committee on June 9 this year formed a 13-men convening committee with Dr Shahriar Hossain Chowdhury as convener and asked them to form the full committee through a conference. Although they sat unitedly at first, soon division developed and the two factions formed separate committees on June 25 and June 29.

SNIPPETS

Protest rally at CU

Indigenous students of Chittagong University (CU) yesterday formed a human chain and held a rally demanding exemplary punishment to the culprits that raped a teenage girl on Thursday. Speakers said all the rapists of the 13-year-old indigenous girl were Bengali settlers. Sources said, four people raped the girl from Godatoli village of Khagrachhari. The students demanded implementation of Chitagon Hill Tracts peace agreement and constitutional recognition of indigenous people without further delay.

Defamation suit

A case was filed against Ekushey Television (ETV) Chairman Abdus Salam and five others yesterday with a court here, accusing them of false reporting. Mayor Khan Habibur Rahman filed the case. The other accused include news editor Selim Khan, cameraman SI Sumon, staff correspondent Zia Khan, district correspondent Sunil Das and Shahajan Fakir of Khardar area. The court set November 11 for the hearing of the case. In the case, the city mayor mentioned that they (ETV) intentionally ran a report from 1-3 November on an evocation to depict him (the city mayor) as 'godfather'. But the report was false, fabricated and concocted and it was run to defame him in the society as well as in the political arena, said the complainant.

Bombs recovered

Police recovered two bombs from a field at Baliaghat in Ganganj upazila in Meherpur on Saturday night. Police said two farmers--Asgor Ali and Saidur Rahman went to their crop field. There they found two bombs wrapped with red tape at a corner of the field at about 6:00 pm. They informed police at Bamandi camp. In-charge of the camp Sub-Inspector Osman Gani rushed to the spot and recovered the bombs.

Student found dead

Body of a madrasa student was recovered from a pond at Dumki village in South Surma upazila Friday night. The deceased was identified as Khaled Hossain, 20, student of Gazipara Hafiza Madrasa of the upazila and son of Nizam Uddin of Hazipur village in Golapganj upazila. Police said Khaled was a student of Tahfizul Quran department and used to continue his study living at the house of Alauddin Tula Miah of the area. Khaled went missing since Friday morning. Later, after long search, locals found the body floating on Tula Miah's pond at 7:30 pm and informed the police.

Ruling party man held for snatching

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

A Swetchhasebok League leader was yesterday arrested at Patgram upazila headquarters on charge of snatching Tk 5.5 lakh from a cattle trader on Saturday. The arrestee is Nazmul Huda alias Russel, 35, president of Swetchhasebok League Patgram upazila unit. Police said Russel along with four others snatched Tk 5.5 lakh from cattle trader Abu Bakkar Siddique in Patgram upazila town at around 11:00am on Saturday. Siddique, a resident of

Dahagram enclave, filed a case against Russel and four others with Patgram Police Station the same day. Police arrested the Swetchhasebok League leader at the upazila headquarters yesterday morning while the rest four--Rubel, Sujon, Shahin and Liton--have gone into hiding soon after filing of the case. Contacted, the officer-in-charge of Patgram Police Station said they arrested the main accused in the case. Police are raiding different areas to arrest the four other accused, he added.

4 illegal loggers held, 7 alleged poachers sued

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Four illegal loggers have been arrested from Kaliganj Bazar under Rampal upazila of Bagerhat district with 192 sacks of charcoal made from sundari wood while a case has been filed with Shyamnagar police station in Sathkhira district against seven people on charge of poaching deer in the Sundarbans. On Saturday evening, police arrested four loggers from Kaliganj Bazar under Rampal upazila of Bagerhat district and recovered from their possession 192 sacks of coal made by charring sundari wood, reports our staff correspondent from Khulna.

The arrested are Shahadat Hossain Howlader, 40, Sultan Howlader, 55, Badsha Mia, 29, and Kabir Hossain, 23. Shahadat is a notorious ringleader of an organised gang of tree cutters in the Sundarbans, who make charcoal by charring them in ovens and sell it to different brickfields, said Rampal police station Officer in Charge Md Nizamuddin. The criminals make charcoal by charring sundari, garan and dhundul trees and earn

huge money by selling it with the connivance of a section of forest officials, police said. Logs of felled trees are transported out of the forest by boats for charring into coal in ovens made in different villages. The charcoals are thereafter transported to different destinations by trucks, police said. An oven can burn 800 to 3000 kilograms of logs a day. Authorities concerned including the Sundarbans Forest Division or district administration never gave any permission for opening ovens to make coal by charring wood. Felling of trees right from the Sundarbans is banned and a punishable offence, Divisional Forest Officer Mihir Kumar said. The smoke caused by ovens made for making charcoals poses serious threat to environment and public health as these ovens do not have any chimney, said advocate Feroze Ahmed, an adviser of Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers' Association. Our Sathkhira Correspondent adds: Officer in Charge Toufiqul Islam of Chunkari Naval outpost in Shyamnagar upazila has

filed a case with Shyamnagar police station against seven people including two arrested ones on charge of poaching deer in the Sundarbans. Md Farid Khan, 35, of village Kalbari and Rafiqul Islam, 30, of village Munshiganj, Abdul Hamid, Nur Islam and Ansar Sheikh of village Kalinchi and Sheikh Mahfuzur Rahman Ujjal of village Dhumghat in Shyamnagar upazila and Abdus Sattar Moral of village Bandokati in Kaliganj upazila have been made accused in the case filed on Saturday night. Forest guards arrested Farid Khan and Rafiqul Islam. As a group of forest guards chased two trawlers carrying poached deer, the poachers fled away with a trawler leaving the other one at about 12:30pm on Saturday, said forest officials. The guards seized the trawler and found a poached deer there. Arrested trawler driver Farid Khan told local journalists that Abdus Sattar of village Bandakati in Kaliganj upazila along with the other accused went to the Sundarbans three days ago and hunted several deer.



People of two sides of India-Bangladesh border observe traditional 'bhafota' festival at Zero Point of Hilli border yesterday, showing the Bangla speaking people's ardent desire to maintain friendly relations despite separate territorial identities.



PHOTO: STAR