

PCJSS-UPDF clashes turn CHT volatile

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The recent incidents of killing and abduction, especially in the wake of violent clashes between pro-peace treaty Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) and anti-peace treaty United People's Democratic Front (UPDF), has made Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region tense again.

"Armed groups of both PCJSS and UPDF have become desperate to control hill areas and collect tolls from commoners. Involved in killing, abduction and extortion, they are trying to overthrow each other," Rangamati Superintendent of Police Masood-ul-Hasan

told this correspondent yesterday.

Six PCJSS men and one from UPDF were killed in a gunfight between the armed members of the two rival organisations at remote Fakirachhara Bastipara in Moidang union under Jurachharai upazila of Rangamati district on Friday.

On the same day, an activist of PCJSS was gunned down allegedly by the armed men of UPDF at Gaborchhara village in Rikhali union under Rajsthalhi upazila of the district.

As signatory to CHT peace deal in 1997, PCJSS wants its full implementation. PCJSS leaders are blaming the government for

'dilly-dallying' in implementation of peace accord.

UPDF, on the other hand, termed the peace treaty 'not sufficient for the jumbo people'. They are demanding full autonomy in CHT for 'lasting peace' there.

PCJSS leaders at protest rallies on different occasions said armed activists of UPDF are killing PCJSS leaders and activists and extorting common people, particularly indigenous people.

They urged the government to ban UPDF to 'remove the main barrier in the way to implementing the peace deal'.

UPDF also blamed PCJSS for killing and kidnapping their leaders and activists and collecting tolls from common people.



The office building of Satkhira Forest Range and the forest staffs' hostel in Shyamnagar upazila in the Sundarbans were abandoned after rushing water from the Kholpetua River inundated the houses on Friday evening. The photo was taken during the ebb tide yesterday.

River erodes forest office, staff hostel in Sundarbans

Two more buildings under threat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

The Kholpetua River in Shyamnagar upazila of Satkhira district devoured the office building of Satkhira Forest Range and the forest staffs' hostel in the Sundarbans on Friday evening.

At least 18 family members of the forest guards and boatmen have already been shifted to safer places as two residential buildings built for the forest guards and boatmen in the Sundarbans are threatened due to continuous erosion by the river.

As the heavy pressure of the river water threatens nearby embank-

ment, the headquarters of 7 Bangladesh Border Guards (BGB) at Nildumur adjacent to the Sundarbans and at least ten villages including Bhamia, Porakatra, Burigoalini and Durgabati in Shyamnagar upazila are under risk.

The forest range office, a hostel and two residential buildings were built for the forest officials, forest guards and boatmen about 1000 yards off of the river Kholpetua in 1975-76 financial year, said forest guard Golam Sarwar and boatman Abdur Razzak.

But due to continuous river erosion over the years, the embankment of the river reached near the office and residential areas and the office, a hostel and two residential buildings in the Sundarbans went into the river under heavy pressure of water at about 7:30pm on Friday.

Lt Col Anisur Rahman, commanding officer of 7 BGB Battalion, who visited the spot, told this correspondent that he has informed the concerned authorities including Water Development Board (WDB) officials of the matter to take mea-

asures as soon as possible.

Contacted, Assistant Conservator of Forest Toufiqul Islam of the Sundarbans Forest Range (Western Zone) said they informed the WDB officials of the matter earlier but no steps were taken to save the buildings.

Local WDB officials did not visit the spot as of writing this report.

Even after repeated attempts, WDB Executive Engineer Mujibur Rahman could not be contacted as this correspondent's cell phone call was received.

Beaten by teacher, hospitalised

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Seriously injured due to beating by a teacher on Thursday noon, a class ten student of Keshobpur High School in Baufal upazila under the district is undergoing treatment at Baufal upazila health complex.

The victim is Mamun, 14.

On Thursday, teacher Billal Hossain was scheduled to take the geography class of class X but he sent Taslima, another teacher of the school, to the class although he was present at the school, said Mamun's family members and locals.

As students of the class informed the headmaster of the matter, Billal Hossain became very angry. He came to the class and made Mamun keep his head under the table. At the same time he beat him on the backbone with a duster, sources said.

At one stage Mamun became senseless and fell on the ground. The teacher also beat up Mamun's classmate Jahirul when he tried to save Mamun.

When Mamun regained his sense, he was brought to



Mamun in the bed of Baufal upazila health complex.

the office room and kept confined for some time.

At about 9:00pm on the day, Mamun's guardians admitted him to the upazila health complex.

Mamun has injured on his backbone and he will have to stay a few more days there for treatment, said Dr Abdur Rouf, medical officer of the health complex.

Salahuddin Tilu, chairman of the school managing committee, said they will take necessary action against the responsible teacher when the student comes round.

The High Court recently delivered a verdict banning physical punishment to children at educational institutions.

RU goes on winter vacation

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi University (RU) went on a nine-day winter vacation yesterday.

The students started leaving the campus on the same day. Classes and examinations will remain suspended till January 31.

However, offices and residential halls will remain open during the period. Sources said many departments have voluntarily decided to take classes and examinations during the vacation.

Classes and other regular academic activities will resume on February 01. Meanwhile, a 16-day winter vacation started at Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet) on Friday. It will continue till February 5.

The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the academic council of the university on Thursday. Administration sources said, classes and examinations will remain closed while administrative works will continue during the vacation.

11-month-old child rescued 18 days into abduction

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

Mirzapur police yesterday rescued an 11-month-old child after 18 days of his abduction and arrested an abductor couple from Rasulpur in Tangail Sadar upazila and Musinda village in Kalihati upazila.

The rescued child is Nayan, son of Ali Ahmed of Gorai Nazirpara village in Mirzapur upazila and the arrested couple is Abdul Matin, 60, and his wife Moriam Begum, 50, of Char Koptas village in Sirajganj Sadar upazila.

Habibullah Sarkar, officer-in-charge (OC) of Mirzapur Police Station, said Abdul Matin rented the house of Ali Ahmed a few months ago introducing himself as a cloth trader.

Matin abducted the child of his house owner, Noyon on January 4. Later, in a telephone call, he demanded Tk 1 lakh from Ali

Ahmed as ransom and asked him to keep the ransom money on the railway track at Rasulpur in Tangail Sadar upazila at 9:00pm on Friday.

Meantime, Ali Ahmed informed the matter to police. Police arrested Abdul Matin red-handed while receiving the ransom money yesterday morning.

Later, as per confessions of the abductor, police raided the house of one Ismail Mondol at Musinda village in Kalihati upazila and rescued Nayan and arrested Matin's wife Moriam Begum from there.

The arrested couple was interrogated by Mirzapur police to whom Matin and Moriam confessed that they had abducted the child in a hope of getting a lot of money at a time, police said.

Jamil Hasan, additional superintendent of police (ASP) of Tangail, said the arrested couple is an active member of a gang of abductors.

SNAPS AND SNIPPETS



This rare species vulture, rescued by locals after its electrocution near Srimongal upazila town in Moulviabazar district on Thursday, is kept for treatment at the mini zoo owned by Sitesh Ranjan Dev, a wildlife expert in Srimongal.

Rare species vulture rescued

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulviabazar

A rare species vulture was rescued by locals when it was hit by a full voltage electricity wire near Srimongal upazila town on Thursday. The near extinct vulture is now under treatment at the mini zoo of Sitesh Ranjan Deb at Srimongal town. Every day a large number of people are visiting the zoo to see the vulture. Zoo owner Sitesh Ranjan Deb, also an eminent wild life expert said, the right wing of the 10-kg vulture was seriously injured after being hit by a full voltage electricity wire at Uttarsur village near Srimongal town on Thursday. Instantly the vulture fell down the ground. Local people caught the injured vulture. Later, Sitesh brought it to his zoo. The zoo owner is giving treatment to the near extinct bird which is rarely seen in our country. Sitesh said about 15 to 20 days will be needed for complete cure of the bird. Afterwards, the vulture will be freed, Sitesh said.

UP member, Imam arrested

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Natore

A Union Parishad (UP) member and an Imam of a mosque were arrested for helping to solemnize a child marriage here on Friday night. The arrestees were Akkas Ali, member of Doyarampur UP under Bagatipara upazila and Abdus Sattar, son of Jamal Uddin of village Dumrai, also an Imam of Doyarampur mosque. Locals said, marriage of Aktar Hussain, 20, of Katulia village under Pabna Sadar upazila was held with Amena Begum, 14, daughter of Abdul Gafur of village Sardia under Bagatipara upazila on Thursday. Abdus Salam, officer-in-charge of Bagatipara police station said the UP member and the Imam gave fake certificates showing the girl's age over 18 and registered their marriage accordingly. Police sent the two to a Natore court from where they were sent to jail.

Timber worth Tk 9 lakh seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

About 400 cubic feet (CFT) of teak wood worth Tk 9 lakh was seized from Asambasti area in Rangamati town by the officials of Chittagong Hill Tracts South Forest Division yesterday night. Acting on a tip off, a team of forest officials led by assistant conservator of forest (ACF) Md Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, seized a truck loaded with teak from Asambasti in the town, Forest Division sources said. However, the criminals managed to flee after sensing presence of forest officials, ACF Rezaul said.

3 killed as boat capsizes in Kaptai lake

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

One person died and two others went missing as a boat capsized in Kaptai lake on Friday evening. Police recovered the body of Dipshikha Barua, 25, son of Pradip Barua

of village Bhoirabpur, Kolkata. But two others still remained missing till filling of this report at about 4:00pm yesterday. Dipshikha came to relative's house at Kaptai on Thursday.

Divers are searching for

the two bodies.

The bodies are yet to be traced, said Md Siddiqui, officer in-charge (OC) of Kaptai police station.

However, the recovered body was handed over to relatives yesterday, the OC said.



Rajshahi University (RU) Vice Chancellor Prof Abdus Sobhan hands over gold medal to a student of Taposhi Rabeya Hall of RU for her outstanding academic results as the authorities arranged the function to award gold medals and crests to 38 meritorious students of the hall on Friday.

PHOTO: STAR

3 Hizb-ut-Tawhid men arrested in Natore

Outlaw held in Pabna

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Three operatives of outlawed Islamist outfit Hizb-ut-Tawhid were arrested at Bhagnagarkandi in Singra upazila of Natore Friday afternoon.

The arrestees are Tohibur Rahman, 40, son of Khodabux of Debipur village, Abu Sayed, 19, son of Amanullah of Baro Bamondi village, and Ansar Ali, 34, son Fakir Mohammad of Sindur kauta village in Meherpur district.

Local people caught the three while they were distributing leaflets at the village at around 2:00pm.

The villagers later handed over the three to the police who also recovered seven books on jihad, two CDs and some leaflets from their

possessions.

Police produced the arrestees in a Natore court at around 12:30pm yesterday. The court sent them to jail rejecting bail prayer.

Our Pabna correspondent reported that an underground operative of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (PBCP-Red Flag) was arrested at a village under Ataikula Police Station yesterday morning.

The arrestee is Md Bablu, 45, son of Erad Ali of Dharmagram village in Pabna Sadar upazila.

Officer-in-charge of Ataikula Police Station Md Habibur Rahman said the outlaw is accused in seven criminal cases.

Police will produce him in a court today.