

BDR MUTINY IN 2009

Charges framed against 147 in Satkhira, Mymensingh

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Special courts in Satkhira and Mymensingh yesterday framed charges against 147 members of BDR, renamed as BGB, in the mutiny cases of 2009.

In Satkhira, the special court set up at 41 Bangaldesh Border Guard (BGB) battalion headquarters yesterday framed charges against 105 mutineers of 41 BGB Battalion, reports our correspondent.

Of the accused, 16 accused jawans submitted written statements to the Special Court No 1

pleading not guilty.

The court on October 24 last year fixed February 6 for hearing for charge framing against 105 mutineers of the battalion.

All the 105 mutineers were produced before the special court yesterday.

A three-member court headed by Rajshahi BGB sector Commander Lt Col Yahia Azam Khan framed charges against the BGB jawans after hearing.

The other members of the court are Lt Col Khalid Hossain and Major Touhidul Islam, sources said.

The prosecutor told the court that in support of the Pilkhana BGB

headquarters carnage on February 25-26, 2009, the 105 accused soldiers revolted at Satkhira. They looted heavy arms and ammunition breaking the armoury of the battalion and kept arms and ammunition in their possession breaking the discipline of the BGB, he said.

Away in Mymensingh, a special court framed charges in mutiny case against 42 jawans of BGB of Mymensingh sector headquarters and 45 Rifles Battalion under the sector yesterday.

The Special Court-17 headed by Sector Commander of Border Guard

Bangladesh (BGB) of Kushtia Col Md Nazrul Islam Sarker started the proceedings at about 8:15am, which continued till 12 noon.

Of the accused, three jawans pleaded guilty before the court while 39 claimed themselves innocent.

The complainant alleged that the accused BGB members took part in the mutiny on February 26, 2009 expressing solidarity with the mutineers of Pilkhana headquarters.

They took control of the sector and battalion headquarters, looted firearms and ammunition from armories and fired blank shots, he said.

Verdict in case against 13 Mar 1

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

The Special Court-13 will deliver judgement in the mutiny case against 13 jawans of BGB Dinajpur sector on March 1.

The court, headed by Dinajpur Sector Commander Col Saleh Ahmad, fixed the date on Thursday after framing charges against all the accused.

Two other members of the court are Lt Col Mahfuz Alam and Major Muhammad Masud Ull Islam.

Of the accused, 11 confessed to their involvement in the mutiny at the sector headquarters on February 26 in 2009 while the rest claimed innocence.

Arguments between the prosecution witnesses and the accused were also held yesterday, court source said. A total of 17 witnesses gave their statements before the court.

Trial of the mutiny case began at the special court, set up at Dinajpur sector headquarters, on November 27 last year. At the beginning, Junior

Commanding Officer (JCO) Enamul Haque brought the charges against 13 rebels of the sector.

The complainant told the court that the jawans revolted against their officers on February 26, 2009, looted firearms and ammunition from armory and fired blank shots.

The trial proceedings started at 9:30am and continued until 3:00pm. Deputy Attorney General Biswajit Roy was present on half of the attorney general.

Home minister visits Felani's family

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kurigram

Home Minister advocate Sahara Khatun yesterday visited the house of Felani's father Nurul Islam Nuru at Colonitari village under Nageswari upazila of the district.

Seeing the minister, Nurul Islam Nuru burst into tears and demanded justice for the killing of his daughter by the Indian border guards.

The home minister consoled Nurul Islam and other relatives of Felani, 15, who was shot dead by BSF at Anantapur frontier under Phulbari upazila on January 7. She also gave the victim's father Tk3 lakh.

"We went to India in search of work due to poverty. My family members are passing days in hardship in India," Nurul Islam said.

He urged the home minister to take necessary steps for safe return of his family members.

"We strongly condemned the incident and demanded justice for the killing," the minister said, adding that the

Indian government has already taken actions against the BSF men responsible for the killing of Felani. She urged the people not to cross the border without valid papers.

The home minister reached Nageswari in a helicopter at 12:15pm and went to Felani's house by road. She visited Felani's grave and offered special prayers.

Lawmakers AKM Mostafizur Rahman and Md Jafar Ali, Home Secretary Abdus Sobhan Sikdar, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Hasan Mahmud Khan and Rangpur Divisional Commissioner Md Jasim Uddin, Deputy Inspector General of Police (DIG) of Rajshahi Range Siddiqu Rahman, Director General (DG) of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) Major General Rafiqul Islam and other high officials were present.

BGB sources said while Felani along with her father was entering the country through the border pillar No 947, her clothes got entangled in the barbed wire fence.

Temple ransacked, caretakers beaten up in Tangail

Burglary in another in Kishoreganj

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Criminals ransacked a Hindu temple in Tangail while burglars took away cash, jewellery and other valuables from another temple in Kishoreganj on Saturday night.

Criminals ransacked a Hindu temple, damaged idols and also beat up its two caretakers in Madhupur upazila of Tangail on Saturday, reports our correspondent.

The gang stormed into the temple at Sholakuri village at dead of night and damaged several idols, locals said.

They also beat up caretakers of the temple—Dhiren Chandra Sheel, 50, and his wife Chandra Bai, 40. The injured were admitted to the Madhupur

filed a case with the police station in this connection and police have already arrested four people.

Romesh Chandra Koch, chairman of Bangladesh Adivasi Koch Organisation, condemned the incident and demanded punishment of the culprits.

In Kishoreganj, burglars looted cash, jewellery and other valuables from a temple in Katiadi upazila on Saturday night, reports our correspondent.

Police and temple committee sources said, an unidentified gang entered Radha Gobinda temple in Katiadi Sadar at dead of night by cutting its tin fence and took away one and a half tolas of gold and 5 tolas of silver ornaments worn by the idol, 4 precious statues, cash money and other valuables.

Nitya Gopal Banik, general secretary of the temple committee, claimed that cash and valuables worth Tk5 lakh went missing.

Farid Uddin Ahmed, officer-in-charge (OC) of Katiadi PS said, a case was lodged with the police station in this connection.

Train's guard punches passenger for fare

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Passenger of a Dinajpur-bound train lost a tooth as the guard punched him on the face following a quarrel over the train fare at Parbatipur railway station on Saturday night.

The injured, Enamul Hasan, 33, of village Behagaon of Setabganj upazila of Dinajpur, was taken to Parbatipur health complex with profuse bleeding.

On Saturday evening, Enamul was returning home with eight sacks of paddy seeds after visiting his in-laws in Badarganj upazila of Rangpur district, witnesses said.

After he boarded the Dinajpur-bound local train at Parbatipur station with the paddy seeds guard Md Zakirul Islam demanded Tk 150 as train fare to Dinajpur.

Following a quarrel over the fare, Zakirul punched Enamul on the face, causing uprooting of one of his upper teeth, witnesses said.

While talking with local journalists at the station, Zakirul admitted to punching train passenger Enamul.

Officials of Parbatipur railway said that the incident occurred as the train guard did not wear his uniform.

"Zakirul has been withdrawn from his duty. Departmental action will also be taken against him," said Md Abdul Karim, stationmaster of Parbatipur railway station.

Enamul filed a complaint with Parbatipur railway police station yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR
Climbing a date tree to gather delicious juice represents a typical scene in rural Bangladesh during the winter. The photo was taken from Krishnanagar union under Sadar upazila in Faridpur, a district famous for high quality molasses produced from date juice.

BCL paralyses Ruet, Comilla University

RU CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activists yesterday locked the gates of all dormitories of Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (Ruet), besieged the administrative building and took out a procession on the campus demanding removal of the vice chancellor.

Campus sources said around 100 BCL men, led by university unit convener Harunur Rashid, put the gates of six dormitories under lock and key at around 7:00am.

Later, the BCL men along with the general students of several departments besieged the administrative building and brought out a procession on the campus demanding removal of Vice Chancellor (VC) Prof Sirajul Karim Chowdhury, as the VC, what they said, failed to meet their 12-point demand placed on January 17.

The demands include appointment of new teachers, construction of a shaeed minar on the campus, appointment of a physical instructor for gymnasium, renovation of the auditorium, immediate solution to university bus crisis and internet facility at residential halls.

The VC along with some top officials of the university went to the halls at around 9:00am and unlocked the gates.

On January 17, the students placed a memorandum to the VC to meet their demands within the next 48 hours. They started boycotting classes from January 19 as the authorities did not pay heed to their demands within the deadline.

In the wake of student agitation, the

authorities closed the university for 15 days from January 21 for winter vacation. The university reopened yesterday.

BCL leaders and activists said they are demanding removal of the VC as he failed to meet the demands of the general students.

Contacted, Prof Sirajul Karim Chowdhury said the university authorities have taken initiatives to meet their demands gradually.

Though the university authorities assured the general students of fulfilling their demands, some people are trying to create chaos on the campus using the students, the VC added.

Meanwhile, BCL activists at Comilla University locked the academic building yesterday morning demanding withdrawal of expulsion order against a party man, according to a correspondent.

They also brought out a procession on the campus demanding withdrawal of the expulsion order against Md Ilias Hossain, a third year second semester student of public administration department of the university.

Campus sources said Ilias attacked the residence of lecturer Moshiur Rahman on January 24, alleging that the teacher gave him poor marks in an examination.

Following the incident, the university authorities formed a committee to investigate the incident.

On the basis of probe report, the university authorities expelled Ilias for a year on Thursday.

Later, the BCL men stopped agitation around noon as the authorities assured them of considering their demand.

Death of schoolgirl triggers protest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Death of a schoolgirl yesterday triggered protest by students and locals in Sujanagar upazila.

The girl died after a speedy microbus hit her at Poradanga village.

Agitated students put up barricade on Pabna-Sujanagar highway disrupting traffic movement for about one hour.

Victim Monzila Khatun, 14, was daughter of Chenu Uddin of village Berulia in Sujanagar upazila. She was a student of class eight in Poradanga Hajji Ezem Uddin High School.

Police and locals said, a speedy microbus hit her at Poradanga at about 10:00am yesterday when she was going to school. She died on the spot.

Students of different schools and locals rushed to the spot and put up a barricade on Pabna-Sujanagar road. They also brought out



PHOTO: STAR
A farmer gives a bleak look at his boro seedbed in Aila-hit Dakope upazila of Khulna district as the seedlings are dying due to salinity and lack of irrigation facilities.

AILA-HIT DAKOPE UPAZILA OF KHULNA

Salinity damages seedlings of irri, boro paddy

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Paddy plants grown in seedbeds are gradually withering under the adverse impact of climate change and lack of necessary irrigation facilities in Aila affected Dakope upazila of Khulna district.

Most of the lands in several unions of the upazila have been under the influence of saline water for the last two years and it badly hampered growth of irri and boro paddy plants.

Upazila agriculture officials suggested the farmers to use sweet water stored in the temporary reservoirs for watering the withered plants but it has proved too ineffective to serve the purpose.

Consequently, farmers of Baruikhali, Khona, Khatail, Gorkhali, Harintana and Kalishganj villages of Pankhali union are losing the hope to reach the production target this season.

Because, severe cold, crisis of sweet water and salinity are damaging the seedlings of vast lands just at the onset of irri and boro cultivation.

Expressing grave concern over the situation, farmers Kumaresh Biswas, Chinmoy Biswas and Halim Sheikh of Chalna union said all the efforts to save seedlings have failed as their lands always remain under the influence of salinity while severe cold and lack of irrigation facilities add to the problem.

Increase in salinity in the rivers has made it quite impossible to use irrigation facilities in the paddy lands, said Sumongal Roy of Laudob village.

Two hundred and fifty hectares of land in Bajua, Kailashganj, Laudob, Dakope, Banishanta, Tildanga and Pankhali unions were targeted for irri and boro cultivation this year, they said.

"Severe cold and crisis of irrigation water have created serious problem for saving plants grown in seedlings. Besides, abnormal rise in salinity is likely to affect production," said Dakope Upazila Agriculture Officer Md Nazrul Islam.

Agriculture department will provide necessary support to farmers to produce irri and boro paddy overcoming the problems, he said.