

Barapukuria locals protest plan for open pit mining

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Local people under the banner of National Committee to Protect Oil, Gas, Minerals Resources, Power and Port besieged Barapukuria Coal Mine yesterday protesting government's plan to go for open pit mining and demanding compensation for aman crops and postponement of the ongoing land survey.

The agitating people are also demanding withdrawal of the cases filed on January 21 with the local police station against some 16 people who obstructed a move for conducting survey to assess the amount of damage caused due to coal extraction from Barapukuria coal mine.

They locked the two main gates and prevented the officials and staff from entering the BCMCL office. Addressing a rally at the entrance to the residential area, the speakers vowed to resist government's move

for open pit mining and demanded compensation for aman crops and postponement of the ongoing land survey.

They threatened to launch a tougher agitation programme tomorrow (Wednesday) if their demands were not met by 10:30am today.

On March 28, the affected people enforced a road and rail blockade programme demanding implementation of their six-point as per the agreement signed on August 30 in 2006, following the death of three people on August 26

the same year when aggrieved villagers tried to besiege the Asia Energy office in Phulbari.

Contacted, Managing Director of Barapukuria Coal Mine Company Ltd Engineer Quamruzzaman said the government is yet to take any initiative for open pit mining. The BCMCL authorities agreed to pay compensation to the affected people, he added.

Deputy Commissioner Md Jamal Uddin said land survey is a must to assess the damage and for disbursement of money among the affected people.



PHOTO: STAR

Locals hold a rally in front of the entrance to Barapukuria coal mine yesterday protesting government's plan to go for open pit mining and demanding compensation for aman crop and postponement of the ongoing land survey.

Schoolboy murdered in Pabna

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Criminals hacked to death a class IX student of Bera High School in Bera upazila under Pabna district on Saturday night.

The victim, Md Mizanur Rahman, 16, son of late Abdul Bari of village Hatigara in Bera upazila, went out from his residence on Saturday afternoon but did not return, and family members and police.

Later locals found his body with several injury marks at Hurasagar embankment in the village early Sunday.

Police recovered the body and sent to Pabna Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy on Sunday morning.

Mizan was buried yesterday morning. "My son Mizan often told me that he will be established in life through education. He had no enemy. Why have the criminals killed him?" Mizan's mother Monowara Begum said weeping.

"Mizan, a brilliant student as well as a well-behaved boy, was dear to the teachers and students. We cannot imagine that he is no more. A rally, protest procession and human chain will be held in front of the school on Thursday demanding punishment of the killers," said Md Ali Ashraf, headmaster of Bera High School.

The officer in charge (OC) of Bera police station Sheikh Zillur Rahman said, "Primary investigation shows that Mizan's love affair with Shyama, a girl of the same village, might have led to the murder. On Saturday afternoon Mizan went out in response to a cell phone call but he was found dead later."

Victim's brother Md Monnaf filed a case with Bera police station on Sunday accusing two persons and police arrested Shyama in this connection, police said.

May Day makes no difference to them

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati

The May Day meant no respite from toiling for them as they had to remain busy in operating machines for making soil paste, shaping it to make bricks, putting them for burning or loading the prepared bricks onto trucks under the scorching heat of the sun.

During a visit to Manikchhari Bricks, a brick kiln at Manikchhari, some ten-kilometres off the district town, this correspondent saw around a hundred workers, aged between 12 to 55 years, working as usual even on the May Day on Sunday.

"I have been working here for the last four months. But the owner did not give us rest for a day. We asked the manager to give us leave today. But he asked all to work," 13-year-old Imon told this correspondent.

Several others including Al-Amin, Raju, Bellal, Mujib

and Mizan echoed the same. Abdul Malek, manager of the brick kiln, however, said, "I ordered all the labourers to take rest today (Sunday). But they are working at will."

Brick kiln owner Tipu Mia said, "All the workers did not work last week due to rain. Each labourer has taken Tk 20,000 to 50,000 in advance. If they are allowed to take rest I will be loser."

Set up in 1982 on about four acres of paddy field at Manikchhari without permission from the Department of Environment (DoE), the kiln uses firewood for burning bricks and 20-foot-long chimneys instead of mandatory 120-foot permanent chimneys, causing serious pollution to environment in the surrounding areas.

Twenty five other unauthorised brickfields in different upazilas of Rangamati district are also burning bricks flouting the rules of DoE, sources said.

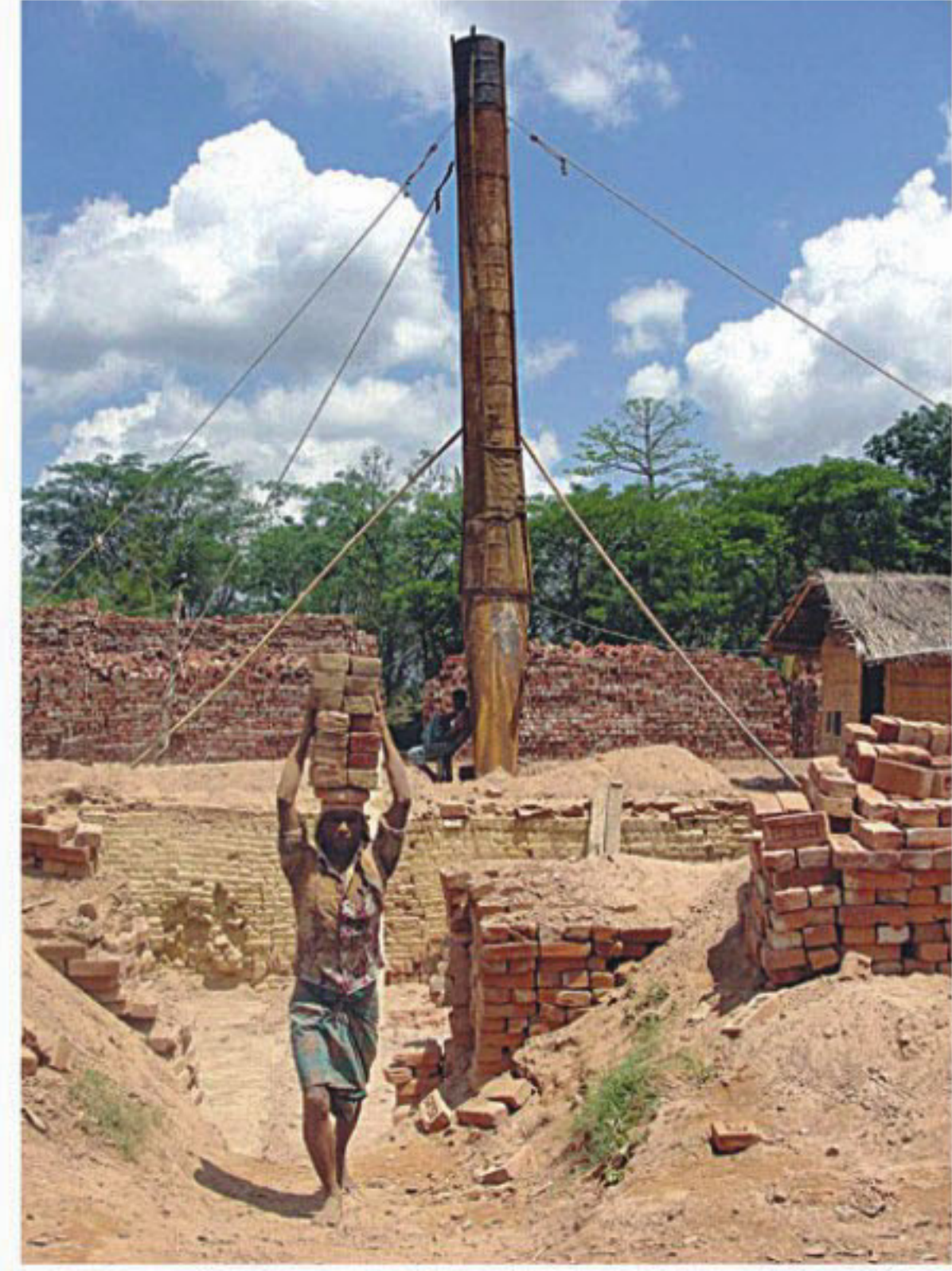


PHOTO: STAR

NO RESPITE: Work goes on at a brickfield at Manikchhari in Rangamati on May Day, Sunday.

KMCH interns continue work stoppage

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Interns at Khulna Medical College Hospital (KMCH) continued their work stoppage yesterday to press home their four-point demand.

Their demands include non-interference by outsider in internal affairs of KMCH, introduction of ID card system for visitors, punishment to AL leader Shafiqul Azam Lenin and adequate measures for security of doctors at the hospital.

The interns went on work stoppage for indefinite period from Saturday in protest against attack on assistant registrar Dr. Rafiqul Islam on Thursday allegedly by the organising secretary of Shyamnagar upazila unit of Awami League of Satkhira district.

Fire at seven jute godowns in 2 dists

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Fire gutted four jute godowns in Narayanganj on Sunday and damaged goods in three others in Khulna yesterday.

A devastating fire gutted four jute warehouses in Nitaiganj Tamakpatti area of Narayanganj town on Sunday morning.

Eyewitnesses said, the fire originated following explosion of an electric transformer near the warehouse of Sharmin Jute Balers and soon engulfed the adjoining three warehouses of Universal Jute Balers and Tangail Jute Balers at 9am.

On information, four fire fighting units of Mandolpara and Haziganj fire services rushed to the spot and brought the blaze under control at noon after frantic efforts.

The warehouse owners said a total of 1.5 lakh maunds of jute worth Tk 20

Woman 'kills' her baby, 'commits' suicide

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chandpur

A housewife allegedly committed suicide after poisoning her 3-year old baby girl to death in Modhyo Raghunathpur area of the city yesterday morning.

The deceased were identified as Badrun Nahar, 25, wife of trader Shahid Bepari and her daughter Sefa.

Mamun, sub-inspector of Chandpur Model police station said the incident took place in absence of the husband of the woman.

Sensing the matter, the family members took her to Chandpur Sadar Hospital. As their condition worsened, they were being shifted to Comilla, but both succumbed to their injuries on the way.

The reason behind the suicide could not be known immediately.

In Satkhira, a newly married woman allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from the ceiling of her house at village Agunpur in Kalaroa upazila yesterday morning, reports our correspondent.

The victim was identified as Renuka Khatun, 20, wife of Rabiul Islam, a Malaysia expatriate.

Quoting locals police said, marriage of Renuka was solemnised with Rabiul about three months back.

She committed suicide at about 5.30am after a talk with her husband over cell phone last night, they said.

BCL at HSTU locks academic, admin bldgs

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

BCL unit at Hajee Danesh Science and Technology University (HSTU) yesterday locked the academic and administrative buildings confining VC, teachers, officials and staffs for several hours.

Earlier, the BCL men enforced an indefinite strike on the campus on Thursday to realise their three-point demand including removal of VC and a director of account department for alleged corruption.

Besides locking the buildings, the students also held a rally in front of administrative building.

They demanded removal of vice chancellor Professor Afzal Hossain for his alleged failure to control corruption at the university.

The protesting students also demanded an end to employees' political links with Jamaat-e-Islami and BNP.

Python lays eggs at mini zoo



OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A python has laid around 30 eggs at the mini zoo run by wildlife conservator Sitesh Ranjan Deb in Srimongal upazila of Moulvibazar district.

During a visit to the mini zoo on Sunday, this correspondent saw that the python was hatching the eggs, winding itself into a coil, while its male partner was guarding her.

"The python laid the eggs at about 10:00am on Sunday. The eggs, numbering around 30, are white in colour and look like the eggs of goose. Immediately after

laying the eggs, the mother python curled itself into a coil and started hatching the eggs. So the actual number of eggs could not be calculated," Sitesh Ranjan said.

"A python usually hatches the eggs for 60 to 75 days. After that, young ones come out. During the hatching period, the mother python does not take food and its male partner keeps on guarding," he said.

The wildlife conservator said the pythons have been residing there since he had collected the couple from Dinarpur village under Nabiganj upazila of Habiganj district three years ago.

Poll dates for more UPs

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Schedules for elections to 157 union parishads in Jamalpur, Rangamati and Lalmonirhat districts have been announced, report our correspondents.

Jamalpur District Election Officer (DEO) Mahmudul Alam said polling to 64 union parishads in seven upazilas of the district will be held from June 4 to 25.

As per schedules, voting will take place in 15 unions of Sadar upazila on June 4, 11 unions of Melandah upazila on June 7, seven unions of Islampur upazila on June 11, seven unions of Madarganj upazila on June 14, eight unions of Bakshiganj upazila on June 18, eight unions of Dewanganj upazila on June 21 and eight unions of Sarishabari upazila on June 25.

The returning officer fixed May 9 and May 19 for submission and withdrawal of nomination papers for Sadar upazila, May 12 and May 22 for Melandah upazila, May 16 and May 26 for Islampur upazila, May 19 and May 29 for Madarganj upazila, May 23 and June 2 for Bakshiganj upazila, May 26 and June 5 for Dewanganj upazila and May 30 and June 9 for Sarishabari upazila.

The DEO said necessary measures will be taken to ensure free, fair and transparent elec-

tions to 64 unions parishads in the district.

In Rangamati, elections to 48 union parishads in ten upazilas of the district will be held from June 5 to 29, according to District Election Officer (DEO) Md Sakhawat Hossain.

Four unions in Kawkhali upazila will go to polls on June 5, four unions in Jurachhari upazila and two unions in Bilaichhari upazila on June 8, seven unions in Longudu upazila on June 12, five unions in Kaptai upazila and three unions in Rajasthali upazila on June 15, five unions in Barkal upazila on June 19, four unions in Naniachar upazila on June 22, eight unions in Baghaichhari upazila on June 26 and six unions in Rangamati Sadar upazila on June 29.

As many as 2,78,489 voters in ten upazilas of the district are expected to exercise their right to franchise on the scheduled dates to elect their union leaders for the next five years.

Lalmonirhat district election office sources said, elections to 45 unions in five upazilas of the district will be held from June 4 to June 19.

Voting will take place in nine unions of Patgram upzila on June 4, 11 unions of Hatibandha upazila on June 7, nine unions of Kaliganj upazila on June 11, eight unions of Aditmari upazila on June 14 and eight unions of Lalmonirhat Sadar upazila on June 19.

শাখা স্থানান্তর

অধিকতর গ্রাহক সেবা ও উন্নততর ব্যাবিকিং সুবিধা প্রদানের লক্ষ্যে এবং হযরত শাহজালাল (র:) আন্তর্জাতিক বিমান বন্দর সংলগ্ন জোয়ারসাহারা অঞ্চলের আর্থ-সামাজিক উন্নয়নে অঙ্গীকারবদ্ধ **উত্তরা ব্যাংক লিমিটেড** জোয়ারসাহারা শাখা পুরাতন অবস্থান হতে নতুন ঠিকানায় স্থানান্তরিত হয়ে গতকাল ২ মে (সোমবার) নতুন আঙ্গিকে যাত্রা শুরু করেছে।

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