

Joint border survey to resume today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The Indo-Bangla joint survey of the adversely possessed lands (APL) along the Meghalaya-Sylhet frontier will resume today.

The officials took the decision yesterday after a series of view exchange meetings with the people of bordering villages in the last few days.

The joint survey on the said borders remained suspended since 20 June in the face of protest by border people at several places. Besides, the work was suspended in January and in April.

On return from the borders, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Revenue, of Sylhet Ahmed Shamim Al Razi told this correspondent yesterday that the survey would resume on the Lynkhat-Sonarhat area, close to the much talked Padua frontier today.

Our survey team is ready for the job while the Indian team from Meghalaya is expected to reach the spot in time, he added.

Two more separate meetings with the bordering village people were held yesterday -- one at Zila Parishad Rest House at Naljur, near Tamabil border and the other at Hajipur Bazar, near the Padua borders.

Additional Deputy Commissioner, General, Md Mizanur Rahman, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Revenue, Ahmed Shamim Al Razi, Upazila Nirbahi Officer of Gowainghat Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury and UNO of Jaintapur talked with the local leading people.

The officials assured the locals that there was no such decision to hand over their lands to the Indians.

But we need to survey border lands since things remained unsettled for decades. Both India and Bangladesh want a peaceful solution to the longstanding

border problems, they told the locals.

Local people expressed their fear and agony telling how the Indians including tribesmen as well as the BSF had been causing trouble for the Bangladesh border people for long.

The intruders even took away crops from Bangladesh territory and looted forests and fishes of the water bodies regularly, they said. The joint survey must be done in a transparent way, they pointed out.

Apprehending that their lands might be handed over to the Indians, the frontier people had been opposing it since the beginning of the survey.

Under the banner of 'conscious citizens of border' they staged human chains and protest rallies at different bordering upazilas till 30 June. The upazilas are Gowainghat, Jaintapur, Kanaighat, Companiganj and Jakiganj.



PHOTO: STAR

Students of AVJM Government Girls' High School in Munshiganj town pray for salvation of the departed souls of 39 students killed in Monday's road accident at Mirsarai in Chittagong. Educational institutions across the country yesterday mourned the loss of lives of the children in the tragedy.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

A gang, allegedly plotting to grab the endowed property of Sri Sri Narayan Thakur temple at Kamalganj in Dinajpur Sadar upazila, felled and looted around 30 trees from the premises on Tuesday.

30 trees looted from temple compound

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A gang felled and took away around 30 precious trees from a land allegedly belonging to Sri Sri Narayan Thakur temple at Kamalpur Bazaar in Dinajpur Sadar upazila on Tuesday. There are about 140 trees on 64 decimals of endowed property that was given to the temple authority about 150 years ago, said locals and temple authorities.

On Tuesday noon, 20 to 25 men led by Akkas Ali and his brother Rafiqul Islam of Kamalpur village came to the temple area brandishing sharp weapons and wooden sticks, locals said.

They felled about 30 jackfruit, mango and eucalyptus trees and several bamboo clusters on the temple land, cut them into pieces and carried them away.

As the members of temple committee protested the illegal act, the miscreants threatened them of dire consequences, even forcing them out of the country, if they become vocal about the incident.

Locals alleged that the temple committee men sought help of local administration during the incident but to no effect.

After failed attempt to grab the temple land for long, Rafiqul and Akkas axed the trees out of vengeance in collusion with Md

Mokarram Hossain, chairman of Kamalpur UP under Dinajpur Sadar upazila, said several people living around the temple.

Besides, Mokarram mysteriously caught temple committee members Manik Roy and Tapan Roy and handed them over to police, triggering tension among the people of Hindu community in the area.

However, Manik and Tapan were later released.

Asked about the matter, UP Chairman Mokarram Hossain said, "The land actually belongs to Akkas and Rafiqul and members of the temple committee felled the trees without any authority."

Akkas and Rafiqul also claimed that the land belongs to them.

When contacted, Bhabesh Chandra Roy and Biswa Mitra, president and general secretary of the temple committee, asserted that the land belong to them and attackers illegally felled the trees on Tuesday noon.

On the other hand, Dinajpur Sadar police station officer in charge Hasan Shamim Iqbal said that the land is a disputed one according to the district land department office.

A tense situation was prevailing in the area but this correspondent did not see any law enforcers during his visit to the place yesterday.

25 injured as rival BCL groups clash in Chhatak

UNB, Sylhet

At least 25 students were injured in a clash between two rival groups of Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) at Gobindaganj College in Chhatak upazila on Tuesday noon.

Of the injured, Zamir, 25, was admitted to Osmani Medical College Hospital and Rubel, 19, Rasel, 21, Redwan, 23, Mithun, 20, Fazal, 20, Sreebas, 21, Polash, 22, Zayed, 20, Khasru, 25, Liton, 22 and Sufiyan, 24, were rushed to Chhatak Hospital. Others took first aid at different medical centers in the upazila town.

Witnesses said tension was prevailing for the last several days between BCL Gobindaganj College unit president Sayadur Rahman Sayad group and the district unit Chhatra League leader Masud Kamal Sufi group over establishing supremacy on the campus.

The clash ensued as Zamir Ali of Sayadur group and Khasru of Sufi group engaged in an altercation in the morning.

As a sequel to the incident, the two groups, equipped with firearms and sharp weapons, chased each others on the college campus leaving at least 25 injured from both sides at noon.

During the clash Sylhet-Sunamganj road was blocked and vehicular movement came to a halt for about a half hour. Shops were shut down in the area and pedestrians were running helter-skelter for safety.

On information, police rushed to the spot and quelled the situation.

Meanwhile, principal of Gobindaganj College shut the college for two days till today, following the clash.

Rangpur torture victims go 'mysteriously' missing

A CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Two women, tortured on June 26 following an arbitration at Kashiganj village in Modhupur union of Baderganj upazila, mysteriously went missing after the upazila office of Women and Children Affairs Department lodged a case against local influential people.

However, villagers alleged that the victims--Hafiza Begum Happy and Saheda Begum--have been moved elsewhere by the influential people.

Happy and Saheda were severely beaten up by some villagers led by AL and BNP leaders in presence of Modhupur Union Parishad Chairman Aynal Haque and UP member Abdul Kader.

Moreover, a gang of criminals allegedly at the instructions of the UP chairman, UP

Follow-up

member and other influential people beat up a reporter of an electronic media and its local correspondent on Monday when they went to the village to cover the incident.

The arbitration took place a day after Hashem Ali, husband of Happy, committed suicide at his father-in-law's house after an altercation between husband and wife over campaigning during the recently held UP election.

But the arbitrators inflicted punishment on Happy, saying that Hashem committed suicide due to mental agony caused by her in their conjugal life, and on Saheda, accusing her of instigating Happy to lock in

an altercation with her husband.

One of the villagers got a video record of the torture on his mobile phone and informed a number of newsmen of Baderganj upazila on July 4.

When reports were published in a number of local and national dailies on July 6, Baderganj upazila officer of woman affair department Mahmuda Begum lodged a case against 17 villagers including the UP chairman, UP member and Awami League and BNP leaders of the union.

Police arrested three of the accused--Mahbubur Rahman and Enamul Hoque of BNP and Enamul Hoque of Awami League--on July 7 at their houses. The rest of

the accused, including the UP chairman and UP member, are still at large.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Baderganj Police Station Tobarak Hossain Sarker quoting villagers said Happy along with Saheda campaigned for UP member candidate Ilyas Ali in the recently held UP election.

Some villagers, seeking anonymity told this correspondent that Abdul Kader asked Hashem to prevent his wife from working in favour of his (Kader) rival candidate Ilyas Ali a few days before the election. Accordingly, Hashem tried to stop them from wooing votes for Ilyas, but to no effect, the villagers added.

They further said that Hashem committed suicide following an altercation with Happy over the election issue.

Criminals kill girl after abduction

UNB, Brahmanbaria

Criminals kidnapped a 12-year-old girl and killed her after rape at Dharmondal village in Nasirnagar upazila early yesterday.

Local UP chairman Baharuddin said victim Razia Begum, daughter of a local poor man, went missing after she was called out of her house by some unknown people on Tuesday night.

Villagers found her body at a field near her house yesterday noon.

On information, Nasirnagar police rushed to the spot and recovered the body.

Police suspect, the girl might have been killed by a

gang after rape in the morning.

In Thakurgaon, a kid was raped at Futanibazar village under Sadar upazila on Friday evening, reports our correspondent.

Victim's father filed a rape case on Tuesday afternoon with Thakurgaon police station accusing Mohammad Mamun, 22, son of Mohammad Ibrahim of Futanibazar village under the same upazila.

Police said, the six-year-old daughter of Toibur Hossain went to a village shop adjacent to her house to buy a blade on Friday evening.

Mamun book her to a nearby lonely house of one Kadul Islam and violated her.

Five 'suicides' in 3 days in Satkhira

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

A male school student, three housewives and an elderly man allegedly committed suicide in Sadar, Tala and Kalaroa upazilas in the last three days, ending on Tuesday.

The victims were identified as Abdur Rakib, 14, son of Ekramul Haque of Palashpole in Sadar upazila, Sushama Rani Mondal, 27, wife of Kenaram Mondal of village Gopaldanga, Saira Khatun, 35, wife of Rawshan Ali of village Barobila and Jharna Rani Das, 34, wife of Sushanto Das of village Jagdanandakati in Tala upazila and Ibrahim Hossain Gain, 65, son of late Ishaque Gain of village Boalia in Kalaroa upazila.

Police said Abdur Rakib, a class ten student of Palashpole High School in Satkhira town committed suicide by hanging from the

ceiling of his house at Palashpole at about 11:30pm on Monday.

Sources said, Rakib's father rebuked him for not studying regularly on Sunday noon. At this he committed suicide at night.

Quoting local people police said, following a family feud, Sushama Rani Mondal committed suicide by hanging herself at her house at village Gopaldanga in absence of her husband at about 12:15pm on Tuesday.

The other victims, Saira Khatun and Jharna Rani Das, took poison in their houses and died on way to Satkhira Sadar Hospital on Sunday.

On July 9, Ibrahim Hossain Gain, following family trouble, took poison in his house at Boalia and died on the spot.

Police recovered the bodies and sent them to Satkhira morgue for post-mortem.



PHOTO: STAR

Transport owners and workers block Dhaka-Aricha highway near Manikganj bus stop yesterday demanding an end to alleged extortion and harassment by police.

Transport workers protest 'extortion' by police

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Transport workers blocked Dhaka-Aricha highway in the district for 20 minutes yesterday morning to protest, what they said, harassment by the law enforcers.

The workers however postponed their road blockade programme for six hours after Deputy Commissioner Munshi Shahabuddin Ahmed assured them of taking steps to settle the matter.

Police said thousands of transport workers thronged Manikganj bus stand area in the morning and blocked the highway at about 10:10am.

Hundreds of vehicles got stuck on both sides of the highway due to the blockade.

Chandi Chakrabarty, secretary of microbus owners' association, claimed that police regularly collect illegal toll from truck, bus, minibus and microbus drivers on the highway in different ways.

They often file cases against the drivers only to harass them, he added.

The protesters withdrew the blockade at

about 10:30am after the DC rushed to the spot and assured them of solving the problem.

However, the workers threatened to siege the highway again if the authorities concerned failed to take any move in this regard in six hours.

Contacted, Assistant Police Superintendent of Manikganj Sadar Circle Md. Jasim Uddin said some influential people instigated the road blockade programme for their 'personal gain'.

He said, DB police seized 170 sacks of relief rice from a shop on Monday night. They also seized the truck that was used for transportation of the rice.

Tarek Khan, brother of AFM Sultanul Azam Khan Apel, president of District Truck Owners' Association sold the relief rice on black market and Monaem Khan, general secretary of the association is the owner of the seized truck. The two leaders organised the programme to save Tarek and to get back the seized truck, the ASP said.

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