



Guardians of the students of The Millennium Stars School and College in Rangpur city block Rangpur-Dinajpur highway yesterday protesting exorbitant hike in the tuition and admission fees for different classes of the institution.

Doubling of tuition fee triggers protest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Guardians of the students of The Millennium Stars School and College, an English medium institution in Rangpur city, blocked the adjacent Rangpur-Dinajpur highway yesterday morning hike exorbitant protesting in tuition and admission fees.

This year the school authorities demanded Tk 13,000 as admission fee and Tk 2,600 as monthly tuition fee for each of class three students whereas the fees last year were Tk 5,000 and Tk 1,300, said the agitating guardians, adding that the fees for other classes also see unfair increase.

A large number of vehicles got stranded on the road during the blockade for half an

hour from 10:00am.

Later the principal of the institute persuaded the aggrieved guardians to withdraw the road blockade by assuring them to consider the matter.

Guardians warned of tougher movement if the institute authorities did not reduce the fees. Contacted over cell phone, Md Abu Sayeed, principal of The Millennium Stars School and College, said he was busy at an emergency meeting of the institute and so, could not talk on the matter.

Admitting yesterday's incident, Arjun Kumar, a teacher of the institution, said the authorities concerned would take a decision regarding the issue soon.

Smugglers clash with BGB

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Three alleged smugglers sustained bullet injuries as they locked in a clash with BGB members near Hatkhola border in Panchbibi upazila of Jaypurhat early yesterday.

Lt. Colonel Khasru Sabbir, commander of Jaipurhat-3 BGB, said a gang of around 150 smugglers swooped on a BGB patrol team at about 5:30am as the border guards obstructed them from bringing smuggled cattle into the country.

At a stage, the BGB members fired 12 gunshots, leaving the three smugglers injured.

The smugglers, including the injured three, later managed to flee the scene.

The BGB team seized five cattle from the spot.

Saline water floods farmlands due to mindless sand lifting

Victims at Kuakata village blame a housing company

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Several hundred farmers formed a human chain at Khajura village of Kuakata area under the district yesterday, demanding early steps to save their standing crops and farmlands from continuous intrusion of saline water, caused allegedly by sand lifting by a housing company.

To make plots at Khajura village, about three kilometres to the west of Kuakata Zero Point, Yes Bangla, a housing company, started lifting sand through pipes on Thursday.

Saline water coming with the sand has already flooded around 100 hectares of farmland with aman crop, affecting 500 families.

Sweet water sources like ponds and canals have also become polluted due to mixing of saline water.

"Many of us could not complete harvesting our aman paddy as saline water that comes with sand from the nearby housing project over-flooded the cropland. Upcoming robi cultivation also faces uncertainty due to the situation," said Abul Hasem Musulli, a local farmer.

"Our domestic animals like cows and buffaloes are facing problem of drinking water as sources of sweet water are getting polluted by saline water. Immediate step should be taken to save our agricultural land from saline water," said Abul Hossain, another farmer who took part in the human



A housing company on Thursday started sand lifting with a dredger to fill up lands to make plots at Khajura village in Kalapara upazila under Patuakhali district while the accompanying saline water causes massive flooding of the farmlands, much to the distress of farmers. Right, locals form a human chain at Khajura village yesterday demanding steps to stop the callous act for saving their farmlands.

PHOTO: STAR

chain.

Habibur Rahman, president of Orca Abason Polli, a cluster village set up by the Red Crescent to rehabilitate 80 families, said, "Continuous lifting of saline water causes permanent damage to soil fertility. If the callous



act is not stopped, local farmers will borrow untold sufferings."

After visiting the area on Monday, Kalapara Upazila Agriculture Officer Moshir Rahman, said, "Local farmers are suffering much as saline water is causing vari-

ous problems in the area. I am preparing a report on the matter to send to the higher authorities to take step in this regard."

When contacted, Kalapara Upazila Nirbahi Officer Jahangir Hossain said they were also taking

steps to save the agricultural lands.

Siddique Master, local agent of Yes Bangla, declined to make any comment in this regard although this correspondent contacted him several times on the mobile.

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