



PHOTO: STAR

Indigenous people of Ghoraghat upazila in Dinajpur protest torching of the houses of a community member, inset, houses burnt to ashes at Bagjapara village.

## GHORAGHAT UPAZILA IN DINAJPUR

# Torching of houses of indigenous man triggers protest

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Criminals torched the houses of an indigenous family in Ghoraghat upazila early yesterday, triggering panic and resentment among the community.

The indigenous people of the area yesterday brought out a procession and submitted a memorandum to Deputy Commissioner through Ghoraghat UNO, demanding probe and justice.

According to the locals, an unidentified gang attacked the houses of Nicolas Murmu at Bagjapara, a village of indigenous people, at around 2.00am and set them afire.

In the memorandum, the community people alleged that on June 6, around 200 Bangalee settlers, led by Azizar Rahman of Bhelain village in the upazila, attacked a slum of indigenous people at Dighipara village. They indiscriminately beat up the residents including women and children and looted their houses.

The attackers also took away 40 cattle, 60 goats, 5 rickshaws and a bicycle worth Tk 11,43,000, it said.

The same day they attacked a church at Bulakipur village, assaulted several people

and hurled filthy words towards the priests of the church.

Protesting the atrocities of the settlers, the indigenous people at Balukipur brought out a protest procession in the upazila. Later they went to Ghoraghat UNO office complex and submitted a memorandum to DC.

Contacted, indigenous leader Bijoy Toppo said that the community people have been passing their days in panic and anxiety due to repeated attacks.

"We want a solution to this continuous repression on the indigenous community", he added.

Despite repeated attempts, this correspondent could not contact Aziz Rahman for his comments as he was not receiving any phone call.

Earlier on Thursday, one Morshed Ali Prodhan was murdered over collecting mango from a disputed orchard at Roghunathpur village in Ghoraghat upazila.

Later, a murder case was filed with the local police station, accusing Nicolas Murmu.

Police arrested Nicolas and sent him to jail, said OC of Ghoraghat PS.



PHOTO: STAR

A man wades through flood water at Char Gobardhan village in Teesta River basin in Aditmari upazila of Lalmonirhat yesterday.

## HEAVY RAIN IN HILLS ACROSS BORDER

# Flash flood hits over 40 villages in Lalmonirhat

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Several thousand people of 40 villages in five upazilas have been marooned as heavy rain in hills across the border in the last two days triggered flash flood.

The flood-hit people have taken shelter on government roads and WDB dam.

The worst affected villages are Kurul, Mogholhat, Kulaghat, Bowalmari, Rajpur, Kalmati, Khuniya Gachh, Gokunda, Milon Bazar, Teesta, Etapota in Sadar upazila, Bongbari, Sarkerbari, Dahagram, Sree Rampur, Bawra in Patgram upazila, Goddimari, Downani, Sindurna, Dawabari, Paruliya,

Patikapara under Hatibandha upazila, Bhotmari, Char Kakina, Rudreshwar, Jamirbari, Shoalmari villages in Kaliganj upazila and Kadomtola, Balapara, Char Gobordhan, Balurbandh villages of Aditmari upazila.

Low lying areas in Teesta and Dharla river basins were submerged during the period, said an official of Water Development Board (WDB) in the district.

Shamsul Alam, 58, of Paruliya village in Hatibandha upazila, said the flood was triggered by heavy rain in the last few days.

"Water from Teesta started to enter our home since Saturday evening", he said.

Another victim Montaz Mia, 65, of Bongram village under Sadar upazila in Dharla River basin, said more than 120 houses in the area were flooded on Saturday night. The hapless villagers took shelter on government road and the dam, he said.

Lalmonirhat WDB executive engineer Enayet Ullah said the Teesta and the Dharla were flowing below the danger level yesterday noon.

He, however, said that the water level of the rivers was increasing due to onrush of water from hills across the border.

If this rate of increase continues, the rivers might cross the danger level anytime, said the engineer.

## Poor response to Jamaat hartal in Cox's Bazar

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Jamaat's eight-hour hartal in the district ended amid poor response yesterday.

The district unit of Jamaat called the hartal, protesting the arrest of Sadar upazila Ameer Shafiul Haque.

Police picked up Shafiul from his residence in Hazarghata area of the town on Friday for his alleged involvement in February 15 violence in the district.

No picketing was seen in the town while no incident reported from any part of the district. Inter-district buses went off the roads, but rickshaws and CNG-run auto-rickshaws were seen plying the roads in the district headquarters.

Public and private offices, shops and educational institutions remained open during hartal hours. Law enforcers were on-duty at all key points in the town.

## 'Robber' beaten to death, eyes of two others gouged out

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pirojpur

A suspected robber was beaten to death while eyes of two others were gouged out by mob at Paschim Mithakhali village in Mathbaria upazila on Saturday night.

The deceased was identified as Mostafa Gharami, 45, of Badura village in the upazila.

According to Mathbaria police, a gang of robbers numbering 10-12 entered the house of Shah Alam Hawladar in Mithakhali village and looted valuables at gun point at about 9:00pm on Saturday.

As the family members raised a hue and cry, neighbours chased the gang and caught three of them -- Mostafa, Noman Gazi and Shahjahan Farazi -- while other members of the gang managed to flee the scene firing gunshots at the people.

Angry villagers beat up the three 'robbers' mercilessly and gouged out eyes of Noman and Shahjahan.

Mostafa succumbed to his injuries at hospital yesterday morning.

## Land grabber remains defiant

A CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

A local Awami League leader, who grabbed the playground of Langurbeel Government Primary School in Teknaf upazila on Wednesday night, did not remove the barbed wire fences erected around the ground as of yesterday despite a directive given by a magistrate.

Over 100 people, led by local Awami League leader and former Teknaf Sadar Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Jafar Alam, illegally occupied the playground and erected barber wire fences around it.

As Assistant Commissioner (land) Selina Kazi, also an executive magistrate, went to the spot to recover the playground on Saturday, Jafar and his men put up a strong resistance to the drive. In the face of resistance, the magistrate launched the drive and demolished a house built by the grabber on the playground.

Magistrate Selina Kazi postponed the drive after the grabber sought a 24-hour time to remove the fences. She accepted the appeal and left the spot, asking the grabber to remove the fences within the timeframe.

Though the deadline ended yesterday, the grabber didn't comply with the directive as of filing of this report at 6:00pm.

This correspondent could not talk to Jafar Alam yesterday as he was asleep, keeping the cellphone switched off.

# Defiant truck stand poses threat to school kids

MIRZA SHAKIL, Tangail

A truck stand in front of Government Model Primary School in the town disturbs schooling and poses threat to the kids.

Several years ago, trucks coming to load and unload goods at Park Kitchen Market in the town started using the land in front of the school as the District Sports Association, owner of the land, allowed it for Tk 4000 as monthly rent, association sources said.

Later, more and more trucks started using the stand, creating a chaotic situation at the spot that also turns into a haven for drug addicts at night, locals said.

"Considering academic environment of the school as well as safety of the students, we applied to the district administration on several occasions to stop use of the land in front of the school as truck stand but the situation has remained as before," said Taslima Khatun, headmaster of the school.

Abdul Halim, guardian of a Class V student of the school, expressed dissatisfaction over presence of a truck stand in front of the school for long.

The stand, also in front of the main gate of Tangail Stadium, disturbs business of 64 shops at the stadium market and pollutes environment in the area.

A Hasan Firoz, secretary of district sports association, said, "The truckers started using the land as stand several years ago through managing the then committee of the association. After taking charges last year, we urged the truck owners to

leave the place."

Sohel Miah, a transport businessman in the town, said the authorities should allocate a proper place for using as stand for the goods carrying trucks so that they do not have to park the vehicles on busy roads.

Shahidur Rahman Khan Mukti, mayor of Tangail municipality, said he is aware about the problem and seeking a suitable place in nearby areas for use as

truck stand.

Anisur Rahman Miah, deputy commissioner of Tangail, said, "After joining the office here, I directed the authorities not to allow trucks to stand in front of the school. Mobile courts have already launched drives there more than once. I will discuss with the people concerned for arranging an alternative place for standing of the goods carrying trucks."



PHOTO: STAR

The illegal bus stand in front of the Government Model Primary School in Tangail town remains a cause of concern for the kids.

# First day of hartal in CHT passes off peacefully

STAR COUNTRY DESK

The first day of 72-hour hartal enforced by three organisations in Rangamati, Khagrachhari and Bandarban districts passed off peacefully yesterday.

Parbatya Somo Odhikar Andolon (SOA), Parbatya Bangalee Chhatra Oikya Parishad (PBCOP) and Parbatya Jubo Front (PJF) jointly called the hartal, demanding cancellation of draft amendments to Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) Land Dispute Resolution Commission Act.

The cabinet on May 27 approved in principle the amendments to the law, aiming at resolving the longstanding land disputes in CHT.

The three organisations of Bangalee settlers enforced a daylong hartal and roads and waterways blockade in the three hill districts on May 30 and June 2 on the same issue.

In Rangamati, vehicles were off the roads and business establishment remained shut in the town during hartal hours. Settlers brought out a procession in the morn-

ing and paraded the main streets. No untoward incident was reported from any part of the district, according to our correspondent.

Our Khagrachhari correspondent reported that the first day of 72-hour shutdown ended in the district without any incident. Bus services to and from the district headquarters remained stopped. A few three wheelers were seen plying the roads during hartal hours.

In Bandarban, police arrested five pro-hartal activists while they were trying to block roads by burning tyres in the town, said Mohammed Imtiaz Ahmed, officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station.

The arrestees are Mohammad Suman, Mohammad Jasim Uddin, Mohammad Obaidullah, Nur Amin Tufan, and Jifu Dey.

Educational institutions and public and private offices remained open while vehicles went off the roads. Shops were also closed in the town during hartal hours, reports our correspondent.

# 15 hurt as BCL men, tempo drivers clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Netrakona

At least 15 people were injured as tempo drivers and a group of local BCL men clashed in Purbadhola upazila headquarters on Saturday night.

Police and local people said, a group of Purbadhola BCL men, led by notorious Ovi, had been demanding illegal toll from the tempo drivers for the last one month.

On Saturday night, a BCL group went to the tempo stand in Station Road area with sharp and lethal weapons and demanded illegal toll.

When the tempo drivers refused to give the money they set fire to five tempos and attacked tempo drivers, triggering a fierce clash.

Fifteen people were injured. The agitated tempo drivers also damaged about 10 shops in the area.

Seriously injured Bablu Munshi, Manik Mia, Tipu Mia and Nipendra Chandra

Das were sent to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

A case was filed with Purbadhola Police Station accusing 17 people, said Bashir Ahmed, OC of Purbodhola PS.

Police arrested Ripon, Manik, Joki and Momin in this connection. Four of them are BCL activists, the OC said.

Away in Pabna, at least 15 people were injured in a clash between two groups of villagers over a trivial matter at Bannakandi village in Faridpur upazila Saturday afternoon, reports our correspondent.

Police and locals said, when Chand Ali Mollah was returning home by a paddy-laden cart through the land of Abdul Quddus Mollah, he (Quddus) stopped him. This triggered a clash between their supporters who attacked each other with lethal weapons.

Ten of the injured were admitted to Faridpur upazila health complex in critical condition.

## SNIPPETS

### House of 'rapist' torched

UNB, Tangail

Locals torched the house of a young man at Phulmalirchala village in Ghatail upazila early yesterday on charge of violating a college girl. They also set the house of another man on fire in the area on charge of taking video of the rape scene. Police said accused Mukul, 28, and Nurul Islam, 32, kidnapped the girl while she was returning home from college on May 30. Later, they took her to nearby Kamalpur village where Mukul raped her in a house while Nurul took the video of the incident. As Mukul released the video on internet, the victim filed a case with police on June 3. Angered at the incident, locals on Saturday put several educational institutions at the village under lock demanding the arrest of the culprits. They set the houses of Mukul and Nurul on fire early yesterday as police failed to arrest them.

### Student 'missing' in waterfall

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

A medical student went missing after he fell into Nafakum waterfall, a tourist spot under Thanchi upazila on Saturday. Victim Moinul Islam Shimul, 28, is a student of Dhaka Medical College and Hospital (DMCH). Police and locals said, Shimul accidentally fell in the waterfall while he was taking photograph.

### Woman killed by son

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

An elderly woman was killed allegedly by his son over a trivial matter in Kalihati upazila yesterday morning. The deceased was identified as Anwara Begum, 65, wife of Yousuf Ali of Badda Uttarpara village. Accused Aiyub Ali, 42, went into hiding after the incident. Bazlur Rahshid, officer-in-charge (investigation) of Kalihati police station, said Aiyub locked in an altercation with Anwara over not serving his breakfast timely. At one stage of the altercation, Aiyub attacked his mother with a sharp weapon, leaving her dead on the spot.

# Bombs hurled

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of the building around 2:30pm. The minister lives on the first floor with his family, while his sister, advocate Laila Rashid, lives on the second. Neither of them was at home during the blasts.

Afroza Haq Rina, the minister's wife, said, "I was busy with house-chores in an inner room. Hearing the repeated loud bangs, I came to the front of the room and saw two motorbikes pass by quickly along the road next to our building."

She said no one was hurt, and nothing in the room was damaged.

Other witnesses said that the explosions left marks and residue on the glass and the walls where they were hurled at.

Inu alleged Jamaat-Shibir men to be behind the attack and told reporters, "The consecutive attacks on the houses of ministers, 14 party leaders and innocent people are to foil the war crimes trial. But despite their repeated attacks, we will try the war criminals."

Law enforcers including police, Rab and the Detective Branch of Police

cordoned off the area and later a bomb disposal unit collected the remains of the bombs as evidence.

Sanwar Hossain, senior assistant commissioner of DMP's bomb disposal unit, confirmed The Daily Star that the explosives were homemade bombs.

Khalilur Rahman Patwari, officer-in-charge of the Darus Salam Police Station, said they started an investigation to find those responsible for the attack, but had not yet arrested anyone.

Meanwhile, local Chhatra League activists staged demonstrations in front of the minister's house and demanded immediate arrest of the attackers.

Workers Party of Bangladesh and Sector Commanders Forum condemned the attack and demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment of the culprits.

Three crude bombs were also thrown at Foreign Minister Dipu Moni's residence on May 28, a day before a nationwide strike called by the 18-Party alliance.