

INT'L DAY OF WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OBSERVED

# 'Recognise ethnic groups as indigenous people'

STAR COUNTRY DESK

People belonging to small ethnic communities in different districts observed International Day of the World's Indigenous People with processions, discussions and cultural programmes, reiterating the demand for their constitutional recognition as 'indigenous people' and effective steps for ensuring their rights, especially on land.

In Bandarban, the people of different communities including the Marma, Chakma, Tripura, Tongchanga, Khyang, Bawm, Mro, Lusai, Khumi and Chak celebrated the day with festivities and programmes, reports our Bandarban correspondent.

Colourfully dressed men, women and children holding posters, banners and placards took part at a procession in the hill town in the morning.

The indigenous people performed their traditional cultural programmes and rendered songs on the streets.

Addressing a large rally in the district town, speakers demanded the protection of constitutional rights of the indigenous people, solution to land dispute in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) region, and full implementation of the CHT Peace Accord.

Dr Nur Mohammad Talukdar, president of Bangladesh College University Teachers Association, attended as chief guest at the programme presided over by U Cha Hla Prue Jimi, convener of International Adivasi Day Udjaponi Committee of the district.

Our Rangamati Correspondent reports: CHT chapter of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum organised a rally on the premises of Rangamati municipality



PHOTO: STAR

**A colourful procession of several ethnic communities performing aspects of their traditional culture parades different roads of Bandarban hill town marking International Day of World's Indigenous People yesterday.**

office yesterday, reiterating the demand for full implementation of CHT accord and constitutional recognition as 'indigenous people'.

The leaders of different communities urged effective steps for resolution of land dispute in the hills.

Lawmaker Ushatan Talukdar inaugurated the rally as the chief guest while Prakriti Ranjan Chakma, president of Bangladesh Adivasi Forum, CHT chapter, chaired the function.

Later, a colourful rally paraded main thoroughfares in the town.

Our Dinajpur Correspondent: A large number of indigenous people accompanied by Bangalis from all walks of life formed a human chain

in front of Nawabganj Upazila Parishad in the district yesterday marking the International Day of the World's Indigenous People.

Speakers at the programme demanded immediate arrest and punishment of the alleged land grabber's men who killed Dudu Soren on August 2, and the criminal who raped an indigenous woman leader in Chapainawabganj district recently.

They also demanded implementation of 15-point demand including constitutional rights, security of indigenous people and separate land commission for the indigenous people living in the plain lands.

The indigenous people

from different upazilas also held a rally at Dinajpur Lok Bhaban yesterday morning.

Marking the day, Thakurgaon district unit of Jatiya Adivasi Parishad and Eco-Social Development Organisation jointly brought out a colourful procession in the town, reports our Thakurgaon correspondent.

They also held a discussion at Thakurgaon Press Club auditorium with district unit President of Jatiya Adivasi Parishad Surjo Mormu in the chair.

The speakers demanded withdrawal of all false cases against the indigenous people and cancellation of all fake documents that were made to occupy land of indigenous people.

Our Mymensingh Correspondent adds: A celebration committee for International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples organized a human chain with the slogan "Bridging the Gap: Implementing the Rights of Indigenous People" in front of Mymensingh Press Club yesterday morning.

A large number of indigenous people belonging to Garo, Hajong, Cooch, Banai, Dalu, Khatriya, Hodi and Mandai communities from Mymensingh, Jamalpur, Sherpur, Tangail and Netrakona districts joined the programme, demanding steps to ensure their rights.

CASES FOR VANDALISM, ARSON ATTACKS

## 12 Jamaat men arrested in Bogra town

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

At least 12 Jamaat men were arrested in the district town on Friday night in connection with the cases for vandalism, arson attacks and carrying out subversive activities before and after the January 5 parliamentary elections.

They were arrested from a Jamaat-backed NGO office at Sutrapur Riaz Kazi Lane at around 10:00pm.

A plainclothes police team led by ASP Nazir Ahmed Khan raided the third floor of the four-storey building and arrested the Jamaat men.

The arrestees are former Jamaat ameer of Bogra

Golam Robbani, 60, former lawmaker of Bogra-1 constituency Md Shahatuzzaman, 62, Jamaat Bogra town unit Assistant Secretary Nasir Uddin, 48, Rainagar union unit leader Abdul Khalek, 63, former Shibir president of Azizul Haque College unit Mizanur Rahman, 54, Jamaat district unit leader Azadur Rahman, 50, Principal of Bogra Adarsha School and College Nazrul Islam, 54, and Jamaat activists Rabiul Siddiki, 36, Atiqur Rahman, 32, Syed Masudur Rahman, 63, Saiful Islam, 50, and Mahbubur Rahman, 45.

ASP Nazir Ahmed Khan said the Jamaat men were

wanted in a number of cases for vandalism, arson attacks and carrying out subversive activities in Sadar upazila before and after the January 5 national elections.

The arrested Jamaat activists were yesterday produced in a court that sent them to jail.

Contacted, local Jamaat leader Mizanur Rahman said police arrest his party men while they were holding a meeting on the housing project of Noble Multi-purpose Development Cooperatives.

Police arrested them on 'false' charges of vandalism, arson attacks and subversive activities, he added.

## AL man killed in bomb attack in C'nawabganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chapainawabganj

An activist of ruling Awami League was killed in a bomb attack at Sheikhola Bazar in Shibganj municipality area of the district on Friday night.

The deceased was identified as Ataur Rahman Polen, 60, son of late Fazlur Rahman of Sheikhola village under the municipality. The victim was a younger brother of Niamat Ali, acting president of Shibganj municipality unit of Awami League.

Abul Kalam Azad, 40, general secretary of Shibganj municipality unit of Jubo League sustained splinter injuries during the bomb attack. He was admitted at Shibganj Upazila Health Complex.

Ashiqur Rahman, officer-in-charge (OC) of Shibganj Police Station and locals said Polen along with some party men were

sitting in front of a shop at bazar.

A gang of criminals arrived at the place riding motorbikes at around 9:00pm, threw bombs on Polen and others and left the scene.

Polen died on the spot while Jubo League leader Azad received splinters injuries.

Being informed, police rushed to the spot, recovered the body and sent it to Chapainawabganj Sadar Hospital morgue for autopsy.

None was arrested in connection with the bomb attack as of 5:00pm yesterday.

Meanwhile, a boy was seriously injured in a bomb explosion in Kanthal Bazar area of Gomostapur upazila yesterday morning.

The injured was identified as Mohammad Mahbub, 12, son of Obaidur Rahman of Dosimoni-Kanthal village in the upazila. He is a tea boy at a tea stall at the bazar.



PHOTO: STAR

**INNOVATIVE LAND GRABBER:** A local Jubo League man has hung a signboard on the government's khas land at Bablatala Bazar in Baliaatali union of Kalapara upazila under Patuakhali district, claiming it to be the site for 'Sajib Wazed Joy Club O Pathagar'. The pro-ruling party man used the name of Sajib Wazed Joy, the son of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, apparently to illegally occupy the land with relative ease.

## Alleged bid to abduct madrasa boy, 2 held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jamalpur

Police arrested two youths in the district town yesterday afternoon for their alleged bid to abduct a seven-year-old madrasa boy.

The arrestees are Mir Sabbir, 19, son of Fazlul Haque and Sumon Islam Khan, 18, son of late Nurul Islam Khan of Bogabaid area.

The victim was identified as Iram, son of Masudur Rahman of Shantinagar area in the town.

Shahadat Hossain Milon, principal of

Model Madrasa in Sardarpara area, said on suspicious movement of three youths, including Sabbir and Sumon, on the madrasa premises, we caught the duo. However, the rest managed to flee.

During primary interrogation, Sabbir and Sumon said they came here to take their nephew Iram. However, the victim's parents said the youths were unknown to them.

Sabbir and Sumon were later handed over to police, said Imran, sub-inspector of sadar police station.

## Houses of 2 indigenous families demolished in Bandarban

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

The district forest department demolished dwelling houses of two indigenous families at Tharacha mouza in Roangchhari upazila under the district yesterday.

"Four months ago I built the houses on a portion of the five-acre land that I have been using since 1990 and I have legal documents from the district administration regarding the matter. The headman's report is also in my favour. But the district forest officials demolished the houses without giving any legal notice," said Ba Chaw Maung Marma, who claimed ownership of the land.

Ana Chandra Tripura, and Pachiha Tripura, who lived with their families in

the two houses with permission of Ba Chaw Maung, said they have become helpless as the forest department suddenly demolished their dwelling houses.

Forest official Md Rafikuzzaman, who was found on the spot, said, "The houses were illegally built in a reserved forest area and we demolished those following the decision of the high officials of the forest department."

KS Mong Marma, central committee member of Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity, said, "It is really a matter of sorrow that government officials demolished indigenous people's houses on the International Day of the World's Indigenous People."

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