



PHOTO: STAR

Trucks lie stranded in a kilometres-long queue on the road leading to Barapukuria coal mine in Dinajpur yesterday as vehicular movement got badly disturbed due to hartal in the district and countrywide blockade enforced by BNP-led 20-party alliance.

# Blockade brings woe to brick kiln operators, traders

## Hundreds of trucks loaded with coal, imported items stranded at Barapukuria, Hili land port

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Hundreds of trucks from different districts have remained stranded in Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Ltd (BCMCL) area of Parbatipur upazila and Hili land port in Dinajpur due to hartal in the district and countryside blockade programme imposed by BNP-led 20-party alliance.

Brick kiln operators and owners of industrial units in different areas of the country hired the trucks to bring coal from BCMCL that recently resumed sale of the item after seven months.

Meanwhile, the BCMCL authorities suspended coal loading into trucks as not a single truck left the mine area since Tuesday.

During a visit to the mine site on Tuesday, this correspondent

found a seven kilometre long queue of trucks on the highway in front of the mine.

The number of trucks would be around 2,500 and there are at least three people including the driver and the helper with each truck, locals said.

Over 7,500 people coming from different districts are staying near the mine area amid problem of accommodation, food, water, and sanitation, said Dulal Mia, a truck driver of Panchagarh.

The ongoing situation adds to the problems of industrial units including brick fields that are in dire need of coal, said Dulal Ahmed of Sirajganj, who has been staying at the mine site for the last three days.

During political agitation last

year, the area saw similar situation although the number of stranded trucks was lower that time, said stakeholders.

They urged the political parties to call off their programme to mitigate the sufferings of people.

The law enforcers are also facing difficulty to maintain law and order in the area amid the presence of so many additional people, locals said.

Police arrested a truck helper for committing a crime in BCMCL area, but they later released him on Tuesday as the truckers blocked a nearby rail track.

It will not be possible to start further loading of coal into the trucks if vehicular movement remains stalled, said Shariful Islam, deputy general manager of BCMCL.

The brick field operators badly

need coal to start brick baking during the ongoing peak season as the process is already late this year due to coal shortage, said Avijit Basak, operator of a brick kiln at Madhabpur village in Dinajpur Sadar upazila.

A large number of trucks are also stranded at Hili land port.

Traders at Hili land port said they loaded these trucks for sending to different places of the country with hope that BNP would not impose any hartal or blockade ahead of Biswa Ijtema on the outskirts of the capital.

Nepal Chakroborty, director of Panama Port Link Ltd of Hakimpur upazila in Dinajpur, said they are worried as many trucks are loaded with perishable imported goods.



PHOTO: STAR

Villagers built this 250-foot-long bamboo bridge over the Jinjiram River at Makhonerchar village in Dangdhora union of Dewanganj upazila under Jamalpur district to ease their communication.

# Villagers make bamboo bridge on self-help basis

## Demand concrete bridge over Jinjiram River in Dewanganj of Jamalpur

ABM AMINUL ISLAM, Jamalpur

People of Makhonerchar village in Dangdhora union of Dewanganj upazila under the district have made a 250-foot-long bamboo-made bridge over the Jinjiram River flowing between Makhonerchar and Nimaimari villages to get a sort of relief from their years-long communication problem.

Over three thousand people of Makhonerchar have to cross the river to reach their croplands, educational institutions,

health centre, market, banks and different offices including the union parishad and the upazila headquarters on the other side of the river.

Besides, around 15 thousand people of Nimaimari, Kauniarchar, Dangdhora, Garohari and Bagharchar villages on the west bank of the river have to regularly come to the east side of the river to see and work in their croplands.

Tired of waiting for years to get a concrete bridge constructed by the authorities concerned, the

people of Makhonerchar village led by local union parishad (UP) member Lutfar Rahman took initiative to build a bamboo bridge with their own finance and labour in mid-November last year, said Al-Amin and Rafikul Islam of the village.

"We were able to complete the 250-foot-long bamboo bridge at a cost of about Tk 1.5 lakh early December last year," said UP member Lutfar Rahman.

"But the structure is not likely to last more than one year as it has to bear

load of a large number of people and huge quantities of goods. And it will be difficult for us to reconstruct the bridge," he added.

Several farmers on both sides of the river said they need a concrete bridge with facilities for movement of motor vehicles to carry harvested crops from fields to home.

Abdul Gafur, LGED engineer of Dewanganj upazila, said he will write to the higher authorities for construction of a concrete bridge over the Jinjiram River soon.

# Fake DB man held in Rangpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Rangpur Kotwali Police arrested a fake officer of the Detective Branch (DB) of Police from Grand Hotel intersection in the city yesterday.

The arrestee, identified as Shahidul Islam Sumon, 30, son of Mayser Ali of Rudreshwar village in Kaliganj upazila of Lalmonirhat district, is an accused in a number of cases filed with different police stations of the division, police said.

Ferdous Wahid, sub-inspector of Kotwali Police Station, quoted witnesses as saying that Sumon posing himself as the officer in-charge of district DB police, intercepted a youth passing through the area around 10:00am and demanded money from him. At one stage of altercation, they engaged in a scuffle.

The on duty policemen at the intersection rushed to the spot and asked Sumon to show his identity card. As he failed to show ID police arrested him.

Md Abdul Qader Jilani, officer in-charge of the police station, said Sumon has long been involved in illegal activities, including forgery, drug peddling, mugging and abduction.

After primary interrogation, police produced the arrestee before a court that sent him to jail, the OC added.

# MYMENSINGH NURSING COLLEGE

# Students on nonstop strike to realise 2-point demand

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Students of Mymensingh Nursing College (MNC) yesterday went on an indefinite strike to press their two-point demands.

The demands include removal of Principal Monwara Khatun and Housekeeper Nazmun Nahar and cancellation of the transfer orders against their fellow students.

The agitating students brought out a procession on the campus, boycotting their classes at noon.

Earlier on the day, they confined the principal and

the teachers to their rooms. They also formed a human chain and held a rally on the campus to realise the demands, said sources.

"Our strike will continue until the demands are met," said Tofazzol Hossain, secretary of Students Welfare Association of MNC.

Principal Monwara Khatun and other teachers remained confined to their rooms as of filing of this report at 5:00pm yesterday.

On October 28 last year, a group of students ransacked college dormitories and

created anarchy on the campus.

Later two committees were formed to investigate the incident, said the principal.

Following recommendations of the committees, Directorate of Nursing Services transferred eight students of MNC to other colleges as punitive measures on December 27, she said.

Additional police have been deployed on the campus to maintain law and order there, said Abu Md Fazlul Karim, officer-in-charge of Kotwali Police Station.

# PROTESTING ARREST OF FELLOW WORKER

# Transport workers attack police station, block roads

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Madaripur

At least 10 people, including two policemen, were injured when local transport workers attacked the Sadar Police Station yesterday, protesting the arrest of a fellow worker in connection with a murder case.

At around 11:00am, police detained local transport worker Mongal Talukdar, 45, a resident of Chhoyna village in the upazila, for not giving his deposition before the court

as key witness in a murder case, said Abu Bakar Siddique, additional superintendent of police in Madaripur.

Following Mongal's arrest, Khairul Hasan Liton, a leader of the district transport union, phoned Emdadul Haque, officer in-charge of Sadar Police Station, and requested him to release Mongal.

The OC, however, did not pay heed to the request and kept Mongal in police custody.

Protesting the incident,

district transport workers blocked Madaripur-Shariatpur road and Dhaka-Barisal highway around 12:00noon and vandalised the delivery centre, doors and windowpanes of the Sadar Police Station.

They also besieged the police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) members at the police station.

Later, the law enforcers fired 20 rounds of rubber bullet to disperse the agitating workers that left 10 people, including two police men injured.

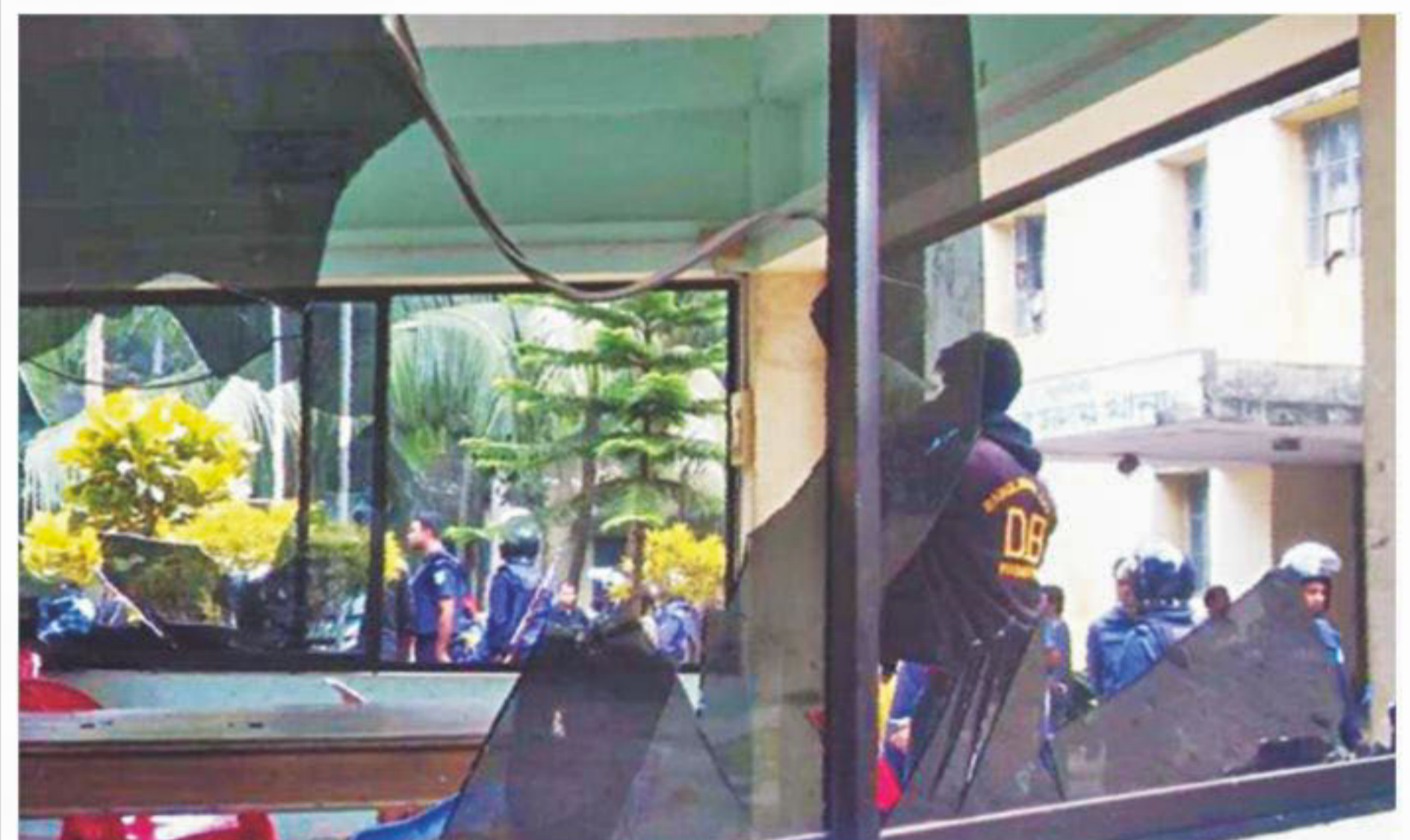


PHOTO: BANGLAR CHOKH

Local transport workers attack law enforcers and vandalise Sadar Police Station in Madaripur, protesting detention of a fellow worker on charge of his failure to give deposition in a court as key witness in a murder case.

# Clash over land dispute leaves one dead, 15 hurt

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

A man was killed and at least 15 others were injured in a clash over land dispute at Nandisaha village in Palashbari upazila of the district yesterday.

Police said there had been a long-standing dispute between two rival groups over taking control of a disputed marshy land at the village.

As a group went to the land for planting boro seedlings at around 11:00am,

their rivals prevented them from doing the job. At one stage of altercation, the two groups locked in a clash that left a man dead and 15 others injured.

The dead was identified as Sayed Ali, 30. He sustained critical injuries during the clash and died on the spot. Being informed, police went to the spot and dispersed the clashing groups.

Of the injured, seven are undergoing treatment at Palashbari Upazila Health Complex and Gaibandha

Sader Hospital while the rest took first aid at the health complex.

Those who have been hospitalised are Bachchu Mia, 34, Chand Mia, 30, Lal Mia, 26, Harun Mia, 25, Mokhlesur Rahman, 33, Abdul Gafur, 31, and Abdul Khaleque, 23.

Additional police have been deployed in the area to avert any further clash. No one was arrested in connection with the incident as of 6:00pm yesterday.



PHOTO: STAR

Coastguards seize two tonnes of illegally netted jatka (hilsa less than nine inches long) from three launches in the Dhaleshwari River in Munshiganj district early yesterday.