

Call to empower traditional CHT institutions

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

Speakers at a views exchange meeting yesterday called upon the government to empower the traditional social institutions of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and include indigenous leaders in every development activity in the region.

They were speaking at the meeting organised by Bandarban Bohmong Headmen-Karbari Association at Bandarban Khudra Nrigosthir Sangskritik Institute with its president, seventeenth Bohmong Circle King engineer U Chaw Prue, in the chair.

Local lawmaker and state minister for CHT affairs Bir Bahadur Ushwe Sing was chief guest at the programme.

The speakers demanded cancellation of the leases of rubber plots in remote Lama, Alikadom and Nykkhongchhari upazillas of the district as the influential lease holders grabbed vast tracts of jhum land in the name of rubber plantation.

They also claimed that the forest department occupied around one lakh acres of jhum land following a declaration of some areas as reserve forest in early 1980, and demanded cancellation of the declaration.

Bohmong circle chief engineer U Chaw Prue in his speech urged the headmen and karbaris of 109 mouzas of Bohmong dynasty to pay Tk 100 jhum tax instead of Tk 6 from next year.

The leaders placed a set of recommendations, including ensuring of participation of circle chief, headmen and village chiefs in all local government development activities.

Bandarban Bohmong Headmen Association Secretary Suilapru Chowdhury, Executive Director of LRD ShaTi Mong Prue, Deputy Commissioner Dillip Kumar Banik, and Superintendent of Bandarban police Sanjith Kumar Roy, ADC revenue Harunur Rashid Aung Shwe Prue Karbari, Hla Thuri headman, Mong Kyaw Nu headman and Bohmong king U Chaw Prue also spoke on the occasion.

Bhabani's another land grabbed

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Over a month into the incident, about 22 decimals of land of a Hindu family at Rasulpur village in Patgram upazila grabbed allegedly by a local influential is yet to be recovered.

After getting nod from the officer-in-charge (OC) of Patgram Police Station, the alleged grabber ploughed the land and cultivated maize recently.

Victim Bhabanikanta Sen, 46, son of late Madanmohan Sen of the village, submitted a written complaint to Lalmonirhat Deputy Commissioner (DC) on December 14.

DC AFM Alauddin Khan said he had already informed Patgram Upazila Nirbahi officer to investigate the matter.

Bhabani said the OC of Patgram police station called him and Nazrul Islam, the alleged grabber, to his officer on November 24 and surprisingly he told Nazrul to plough the land without verifying his documents.

Local UP member Sunil Chandra Sen said he tried to resolve the issue in local arbitration but Nazrul did not accept the process showing his muscle power.

OC Aboni Shankar Kar said he told Nazrul to plough the land as he had been enjoying the land for the last 30 years and told Bhabani to go to the court.



New building of Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

PHOTO: STAR

MMCH now a patient-friendly hospital

MD AMINUL ISLAM, Mymensingh

Mymensingh Medical College Hospital (MMCH) is drawing large number of treatment seekers from the district and adjoining areas, thanks to the development of medical services and overall environment there during the last one year.

"Following satisfactory services, the average number of admitted patients here has risen to around 2300, which was earlier 1700. The number of outdoor patients has nearly doubled, reaching around 3000," said Dr Lakshmi Nayaran Majumder, assistant director of the hospital.

The medical representatives of different pharmaceutical companies and brokers of clinics are not allowed to enter the hospital, he said.

Now a delivery at the hospital cost only Tk 300 to Tk 500 while a

patient requiring surgery for the purpose needs Tk 1500 to Tk 2000, hospital sources said.

Twenty four-hour free pathology service is available there for a nominal cost, they said, adding that three separate wards for urology, neurology and burn and plastic surgery were introduced in a renovated form in last one year.

"During my service since 2004, I never observed such a tremendous change at the hospital," said Dr Chitta Ranjan Devnath, an associate professor and head of haematology department.

The positive change at the hospital started due to the initiative by present Director Brig Gen Md Nasir Uddin Ahamed who joined there in November last year, said Dr Motiur Rahman Bhuiyan, secretary of Bangladesh Medical Association's Mymensingh unit.



Brig Gen Md Nasir Uddin Ahamed

"Of course, support by the staff and doctors helped to make the hospital patient-friendly, providing free medicines, and necessary tests and medical procedures for nominal costs.

"But a vested quarter including those involved with many clinics, medicine shops and pathological test centres are plotting against the director, as the improved conditions

at the hospital have affected their illegal business," said Dr Bhuiyan.

Recently a section of hospital staff in connivance with outsiders are engaged in a false propaganda against the director, to drive him away from the hospital, alleged several stakeholders.

Earlier the patients were forced to buy medicines from outside as massive theft of the essential items at the hospital was rampant, but now such a situation is rare, said a senior staff nurse preferring not to be named.

Abu Bakkar Siddique, a cancer patient from Gafargaon upazila in Mymensingh, was provided with required medicines worth Tk 30,000 from the hospital on Sunday, said his daughter-in-law Lima Akhter.

The hospital environment is much cleaner now and the toilets can be used with ease, said several patients and their attendants.

Hospital Director Brig Gen Nasir Uddin Ahamed said they are going to introduce e-health card at the hospital soon, first of its kind in the country, to maintain the treatment history of the patient.

It will help to prevent overuse of medicines and wrong treatment, he said, adding, "I will continue to perform my duty with responsibility as long as I am here. I want cooperation from the society to make the hospital even more congenial for patients."

Engineer Nurul Amin Kalam, secretary of Mymensingh Nagorik Andolon, a forum of civil society, said, "I recently visited the hospital and found its overall environment much better than before. We are supporting the MMCH authorities' bid to make the hospital a model in the country."



Friend of dogs and crows

Horendro feeds them for 30 years

SUZIT DAS, Faridpur

When everyone in Faridpur town is going to work early in the morning, a 54-year-old man is seen walking on the roads with a bag full of bread to feed dogs and crows.

Horendro Chandra Sutradhar, co-owner of a jewellery shop in Faridpur town, has been doing this for 30 years.

Every night, he and his wife make the bread at home, and he feeds them to dogs and crows in the morning. The dogs and crows approach him when they see him as he is well-known to them.

Horendro said, "When I was child, I saw my father put jars full of water in different places in our village, so that birds and other animals could drink it in summer season. From that I became inspired."

"I have been doing this since 1986. Now I think it is my duty to feed them, because some dogs and crows wait for me

on the road. They know me, so when I reach those places they come to me and I give them the bread," said Horendro.

"My family members always help me to do this work, they never forbid me," Horendro said, "I am doing this so that those animals can understand that humans have a lot of sympathy for them."



my shop."

Radhakanto Sutradhar, 47, younger brother of Horendro, said, "Now it has become our family work, so everyone helps him to do it."

Radhakanto added, "Horendro thinks it is his duty, so he does not stay home even when he is sick or it is raining."

Subroto Saha of Kamlapur area said, "I see him regularly when I take a walk, it is definitely a good thing that he does."

Rasel Sheikh, a shopkeeper of DIV Bot Tola area, said, "I see him feeding the dogs when I come to open my shop. Now I try to feed the dogs that come in front of

Christian mission guard murdered

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Criminals stabbed to death a night guard of a Christian mission in Dinajpur Sadar upazila early yesterday, a day after his appointment there.

The victim was Suku Soren, 45, son of Laxman Soren of Auliapur village under the upazila.

The authorities of Auliapur Mission employed Suku Soren, a local 'easy-bike' driver, for guarding the mission complex at night as all the staff started leaving for home to celebrate the Christmas on December 25, said Supol Hembram, a mission official.

Around 1:00am, criminals entered the mission complex climbing the boundary wall, when Suku caught one of them and started screaming.

Then the criminals stabbed him with knife and fled the spot. His bow and arrows were found damaged.

Locals took Suku to Dinajpur Medical College Hospital where he succumbed to his injuries around 1:30am.

Police sent the body to the hospital morgue for autopsy. The incident triggered panic among the Christian community ahead of their biggest festival.

"We are suspecting that Suku was killed by thieves," Mahfuz Uz Zaman Ashraf, additional SP of Dinajpur, told the journalists after visiting the spot.

Drug addicts, who often roamed around the complex, might have committed the murder, locals said.

100 ducks poisoned to death in Jessore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Benapole

Over 100 ducks died after eating poisoned paddy at Arpara village in Jessore Sadar upazila on Wednesday night.

Jamirul Islam and Sagor Hossain, owners of the ducks, alleged that their rival Modasser Ali sprayed poison at his paddy field in the afternoon. The ducks ate the poisoned paddy and died.

They added that the loss could be around Tk 1 lakh.

Later, a complaint was filed with Jessore Kotowali Police Station in this regard, said Officer-in-Charge Illias Hossain of the PS.

Two jailed for child marriage

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

A mobile court jailed two men for a month for arranging an underage marriage of a girl in Panchbibi upazila of Joypurhat on Wednesday night.

The convicts are girl's grandfather Farid Hossain Mollah, 70, of Ratanpur village, and elder brother of the groom Fozle Rabbi, 21, of Godapara village under Bogra Sadar upazila.

A mobile court led by Panchbibi upazila nirbahi officer Nur Uddin Al Faruk, raided the house of the bride at around 11:00pm and caught them red-handed.

Family members and relatives of the bride and groom fled the spot sensing presence of the mobile court.

Non-MPO teachers threaten movement

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Non-MPO (monthly payment order) teachers threatened to go for a non-stop movement from January 8 if their demand to take them under MPO was not met immediately.

They came up with the ultimatum at a divisional meeting in the town yesterday.

Organised by Non-MPO Teachers and Employees Association, the programme was held in Krishnachura area of Mymensingh Railway Station.

Hundreds of teachers from Mymensingh, Sherpur, Jamalpur, Netrakona and Tangail took part at the programme.

The speakers at the programme demanded government's immediate steps to take them under MPO.

Some 10,000 teachers and employees of non-MPO institutions in Mymensingh division have been doing their jobs for years without any salary, they said.

Like teachers of the same category in other parts of the country, those in Mymensingh have been passing a miserable life but the government is totally indifferent to the matter, said the speakers.

They also threatened to go for a non-stop movement in front of Jatiya Press Club in Dhaka from January 8 if the demand was not met immediately.

Central vice president of the association Sharifuzzaman Aga Khan, former upazila parishad chairman Fayezur Rahman Fakir and Principal Md Delwar Hossain Shibli spoke at the programme.



COST OF CALLOUS GREED: A poultry farmer on Tuesday gets upset to see his reared ducks fallen dead, being victim of 'poison traps' set by poachers at Sunampur village in Juri upazila under Moulvibazar district on Monday evening.

PHOTO: STAR