



The miners of BCMCL in Dinajpur's Parbatipur upazila have been living a life of prisoners since the outbreak of coronavirus in the country. They are not allowed to go home and have been living in the company premises. In this photo, the families are seen giving food items to the miners at the company entrance.

PHOTO: KONGKON KARMAKER

## BCMCL miners living like prisoners

Claim their families, gather at gate to see their loved ones

KONGKON KARMAKER

Since the coronavirus pandemic hit the country in March last year, the officials, staffers and miners of Barapukuria Coal Mining Company Limited (BCMCL) have been virtually leading a confined life inside company premises to prevent the spread of the highly transmissible contagious viral infection in the mining complex.

The mine is situated in Parbatipur upazila of Dinajpur, a subsidiary of the state-owned Petrobangla.

According to the company's high officials, around 1,000 employees, including officials and staffers of BCMCL, Chinese and Bangladeshi miners of the contracted company CMC-XMC, have been staying at the mine compound since the authority restricted movement on March 24 last year.

Most of the officials are staying with their family members at the residential quarters inside. There is a separate residential quarter for the Chinese miners as well. But, the 450 local miners have been leading an isolated life without their family members, just like prisoners.

The situation is similar for the officials under the outsourcing company.

The miners talked with The Daily Star wishing not to be named.

The miners alleged that CMC-XMC, the contracted company of BCMCL, does not allow the local miners to go home although they are from surrounded villages of the coal mine.

Every day, family members gather at the mine gate to see their near and dear ones, if the Chinese contracted company allow the miners to meet, far away from the padlocked entrance.

Anjuara, a miner's wife, said she came to the mine gate with her two minor children to see her husband at around 10.00am. After waiting for two hours, she was finally able to see him. The miner said he has been staying inside with other miners for the last seven months. He works around 10 hours under the ground every day. The miners cook meal for them individually.

There are no sufficient number of fans for cooling during the scorching heat.

Anjuara said she comes to the coalmine gate once a month to

take the money from her husband to manage family expenses.

"I brought some cooked meal for him", she said, sobbing. Before the onset of the viral pandemic, he used to commute to the coalmine from home every day, but he has been staying there since the detection Covid-19 cases in the country last year.

"It is hard to manage a family without a male person", said Anjuara adding that she has been doing everything being a woman to manage her family.

Rafiza Begum, another miner's wife, said the isolation of the miners inside the coalmine compound for months after months is nothing but torture and violation of human rights. She claimed that GTC, the contracted company of Maddhapara granite mining company, allows the local miners to go home after their everyday work. "Why are they so harsh?" she questioned.

She also brought some cooked food with her. Rafiza alleged that her husband needs to cook a meal every day.

During the visit, this correspondent found that family members of 20 miners gathered in

front of the coalmine's gate to meet with their near and dear ones.

A miner seeking anonymity alleged that the officials and Chinese miners often go out of the coalmine compound every day if they needed. But, none of the local miners is allowed to go outside the compound.

"They are so hard on us", he said.

As there is no scope for the miners to go outside the coalmine, they buy their essentials from the mine gate, which is much expensive.

"We want a solution to the problem", said a miner.

Despite maintaining such tough lockdown, the authority could not be able to stay away from coronavirus infection. Recently, a Chinese miner tested positive.

Besides, there are at least 30 officials and staffers inside the coalmine suffering from fever. So, the coalmine authority has decided to conduct a test for them to be sure whether they test covid-19 positive or not.

The Daily star tried to reach Md Kamruzzaman Khan, the managing director, for his comment, however, he did not receive the phone call.

## They deliver hope on bike

Chulkathi Oxygen Bank stands beside serious Covid patients

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bagerhat

Time and again, the youths rose to the occasion when the country needed them the most. This time around, when the Coronavirus pandemic has been sweeping through the bordering districts, eight youths from Chulkathi area of Bagerhat Sadar upazila have come to the rescue of affected locals.

On May 1, they launched a 24-hour service named 'Chulkathi Oxygen Bank' to stand by critical Covid patients who cannot afford to buy oxygen-filled cylinders due to its skyrocketing prices.

Soon after getting a distress call on their hotline (01711309483) or a message on their Facebook page, two of their volunteers hop on a motorbike with an oxygen cylinder and rush out to the home of the patient.

Aside from providing the free service to patients in Bagerhat Sadar, the volunteers so far served patients in Morrelganj, Fakirhat and Mongla upazilas in Bagerhat, and Rupsa upazila in neighbouring district of Khulna.

Out of the eight volunteers, Shakib Hasan Johnny, Kazi Rezwana and Choyon Debnath already contracted Covid-19. But the disease could not deter them from their will to serve the less fortunate and they resumed their voluntary work soon after they tested negative.

Arif Dhali, one of the founders of the oxygen bank, said several of his friends decided to provide free oxygen support to Covid patients as finding affordable oxygen supply was getting difficult due to its rising

demands.

They first got training from doctors on how to handle oxygen cylinders and necessary apparatus and gathered Tk 34 thousand to buy two sets of oxygen dispensing units along with cylinders.

With the third set of cylinder they received a from a well-wisher recently, they have been working day and night to save every possible human life, Arif said, adding that they refill the three cylinders at a time, for Tk 150 each, from Khulna and they pay Tk 1,000 for the round trip transport of the cylinders.

Covid survivor Shakil, an employee of Local Government Engineering Department in Rampal upazila, said he was thankful to the Creator for sending the volunteers of Chulkathi Oxygen Bank with the crucial oxygen support that saved his life.

Lalima Ahsan, a relative of Covid patient Shipon, from Morrelganj upazila, said they called Chulkathi Oxygen Bank when Shipon was in dire need of oxygen.

"We are grateful to Chulkathi Oxygen Bank" and its volunteers for promptly delivering the oxygen, which ultimately saved his life, she also said.

Jakaria Hossain Shawan, another of the founders and the coordinator of the oxygen bank, said thanks to the courage displayed by their volunteers and the contributions made by a few kind-hearted souls, they have so far been able to continue the invaluable service for people in the region.

If more people from the affluent section of the society joined their cause, they would be able to reach out to a larger number of critical patients, he added.



Two volunteers of Chulkathi Oxygen Bank, located in Bagerhat Sadar upazila, headed for the home of a Covid patient to deliver an oxygen cylinder.

PHOTO: COLLECTED

LUHAIUNI TEA GARDEN

## Stalemate continues over firing of tea worker

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

For the third consecutive day, the workers of Luhaiuni Tea Garden, in Kulaura upazila of Moulvibazar, staged demonstrations on Thursday, to press home their 11-point demands that include job reinstatement of a fellow worker. The tea workers have been holding agitations as the authorities closed the garden indefinitely since Wednesday morning.

Worker Shyamal Pachi said on May 20, without issuing any prior notice or warning, Assistant Manager Nazrul and Gatekeeper Sadhu cut down a tree that he had planted inside the garden. Referring to Section 26 (Ka) of the Bangladesh Labour Act, they terminated his job on May 22, as he protested their chopping down his tree the other day, he claimed.

Under Section 26 (Ka), job of any worker can be terminated without showing any reason.

The job termination of Shyamal Pachi on May 22 sparked a workers' unrest at the garden and the workers have been gathering there to press home their 11-point demands that include reinstatement of his job.

Ajit Kairi, president of the tea garden Panchayat committee, said on June 22 morning, when the workers took position in front of the



A section of tea workers during a demonstration at Luhaiuni Tea Garden in Kulaura upazila of Moulvibazar yesterday.

PHOTO: MINTU DESHWARA

garden office and threatened to call a strike, the authorities called police in and declared indefinite work suspension.

That same day, a 13-member delegation led by Satya Narayan, a member of the local union parishad, met Mabud Ali, the garden's general manager.

But while talking to reporters, Mabud claimed

that Shyamal Pachi tried to attack the garden's assistant manager with a sharp weapon after an altercation on May 20, Ajit also said.

Habibur Rahman, sub-inspector of Kulaura Police Station, said police have been maintaining law and order in the garden since Wednesday morning and the workers had been hold demonstrations peacefully.

## Two held for killing 2 dolphins in Brahmaputra

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalmonirhat

Two people were detained and fined Tk 5,000 each by a mobile court for capturing two Ganges river dolphins in the Brahmaputra river in Chilmari upazila of Kurigram.

The mobile court led by Mahbubur Rahman, executive magistrate and Chilmari upazila nirbahi officer (UNO), passed the order under Section 37 (2) of the Wildlife and Biodiversity Conservation and Security Act-2012 in the yesterday morning.

The UNO said that the two endangered mammals were found dead and they were buried as per the order of the mobile court.

The detainees are Suzan Chandra Das, 35, a fisherman, and Amber Ali, 40, a battery-run easy bike driver of Ulipur upazila.

Ahsan Habib, sub-inspector (SI) of Chilmari Model Police Station, said that the two dolphins were entangled in a fishing net in the river and died.

Later on, Wednesday afternoon, Suzan bought the two dolphins for Tk 10,000 from a fisherman.

But locals detained him and Amber Ali in Matikata area while they were taking the



Two people were detained and handed down a fine of Tk 5,000 by a mobile court on Thursday morning for killing two Ganges river dolphins in the Brahmaputra River at Chilmari in Kurigram.

dolphins to Ulipur upazila.

Locals handed them over to the police along with the two dead dolphins. Police later informed the UNO and the Wildlife and Biodiversity Conservation Authority, SI Ahsan Habib said.

Wildlife and Biodiversity Conservation Officer in Rangpur Smriti Singh Roy said she visited the spot after receiving the news.

BE A PART OF  
SOMETHING BIGGER

Build your Career with UCB as "Probationary Officer"

Leading private commercial Bank, United Commercial Bank Limited is looking for smart, young, energetic, confident, self-motivated and hardworking fresh graduates as "Probationary Officer" to meet the growing need of its development platform.

### JOB REQUIREMENTS:

- **Academic qualifications:** Applicants should have minimum 4 years' Graduation in any subject/ discipline from UGC approved reputed University / Foreign University with at least CGPA 3.00 out of 4.00 or First Class/equivalent result and minimum GPA 4.00 out of 5.00 in SSC, HSC and equivalent levels. In case of "O" level and "A" level, minimum "5Bs" and "2Bs" respectively.
- **Nationality:** Applicant must be a Bangladeshi citizen
- **Age:** Not over 30 years as on July 15, 2021

### SELECTION PROCEDURE:

The selection process will be purely on merit basis and short-listed candidates will have to sit for competitive written test. Successful candidates in written test will be called for interview

### PLACEMENT POLICY AND COMPENSATION:

Selected Probationary Officer shall remain on probation for a period of 1 (one) year with consolidated salary of Tk.41,900/- per month. On satisfactory completion of probation period, Probationary Officer will be confirmed as Senior Officer in the regular scale of the Bank of Tk.52,000/- per month with other benefits

JOIN US

### OTHER CONDITIONS:

- Candidates selected for appointment as Probationary Officer will be required to execute a Bond on non-judicial stamp for serving UCB for a minimum period of 03 years from the date of joining
- Candidates unwilling to work anywhere in Bangladesh, need not to apply
- Incomplete application will not be considered for selection process.
- UCB reserves the right to accept or reject any application without any reason whatsoever. Persuasion/ canvassing in any stage of selection process shall be treated as disqualification

### APPLICATION PROCEDURE:

If you think, you are ready to take challenges and meet the requirements, please apply through [www.bdjobs.com](http://www.bdjobs.com) with attachment of a recent passport size colour photograph and certificate/ transcript of Graduation within July 15, 2021