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Fear never leaves them

Still reeling from the shock of 2016 attacks, Bagda farm Santals now 'under threat of eviction' due to proposed EPZ

MOSTAFA SHABUJ, Bogra

The Santal people whose houses in Gaibandha's Gobindaganj were set on fire in 2016 are now facing homelessness again as they are among the nearly 1,500 families who might be evicted to make way for setting up an export processing zone.

Five years ago today, three Santal men were killed and many others injured during a clash as police tried to evict an entire Santal community from a piece of land that the people say they got from their ancestors. But the authorities of Rangpur Sugar Mills claim that it is theirs.

Following the clash, rickety shacks of the underprivileged people were set on fire and about 2,500 Santal and Bangali families in the area known as Bagda Farm lost all or part of their belongings.

About 1,500 of those families still live there and the nearby Madarpur and Joypurpara areas. The EPZ the government plans to establish will make them homeless and they will lose the land where they grow rice and other crops.

Maj Gen Nazrul Islam, executive chairman of Bangladesh Export Processing Zones Authority (Bepza), met the deputy commissioner of Gaibandha and other stakeholders on August 24. But no representative from the Santal community was present at the meeting.

The Santals have been regularly demonstrating against the planned EPZ.

On November 12, 2019, the government decided to

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A boy and a woman of the Santal community carrying firewood near Joypurpara village in Gobindaganj, Gaibandha. They are from the nearly 1,500 Santal and Bangali families facing homelessness as the government plans to build an export processing zone on over 1,800 acres of land in the area.

PHOTO:
MOSTAFA SHABUJ

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Global food prices hit 10yr high: FAO

REUTERS, Paris

World food prices rose for a third straight month in October to reach a fresh 10-year peak, led again by increases in cereals and vegetable oils, the UN food agency said on Thursday.

The Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) food price index, which tracks international prices of the most globally traded food commodities, averaged 133.2 points last month compared with a revised 129.2 for September.

The September figure was previously given as 130.0.

The October reading was the highest for the index since July 2011. On a year-on-year basis, the index was up 31.3 percent in October.

Agricultural commodity prices have risen steeply in the past year, driven by harvest setbacks and strong demand.

The FAO's cereal price index rose by 3.2 percent in October from the previous month. That was led by a 5 percent jump in wheat prices, which climbed for a fifth consecutive month to reach their highest since November 2012, FAO said.

Tighter availability in global markets due to reduced harvests in major exporters,

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ROAD TO FREEDOM THIS DAY IN BANGLADESH LIBERATION WAR HISTORY

China pledges aid to Pakistan

NOVEMBER 6, 1971

SHAMSUDDOZA SAJEN

CHINA PLEDGES 'RESOLUTE SUPPORT' IF PAKISTAN INVADED

China called on India and Pakistan today to find a peaceful solution to their frontier dispute, but warned that it would "resolutely support" Pakistan in the event of war.

The warning came in a speech by the Acting Foreign Minister, Chi Pengfei, at a banquet marking the completion of talks between Chinese leaders and a Pakistani delegation led by the former Foreign Minister, Zulfikar, Ali Bhutto.

"Our Pakistan friends may rest assured that should Pakistan be subjected to foreign aggression, the Chinese Government and people will, as always, resolutely support the Pakistan Government and people," Chi declared.

Earlier, Chinese Premier Chou Enlai held a second round of talks today with a Pakistani delegation headed by Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, special envoy of President Yahya Khan. The discussions, which began yesterday, reportedly dealt with tension on the Indian-Pakistani border. Pakistan shared ideas with the Chinese delegation that would leave shortly for the United Nations on how the Indian-Pakistani crisis could be handled in the Security Council.

INDIRA GANDHI CALLS REFUGEES BURDEN

India Prime Minister Indira Gandhi said today that the flow of refugees from East Bengal had resulted in a "terrific burden" on India and posed "a real threat to our political stability and even our

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Bodies of 2 Bangladeshi recovered from no-man's land

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The bodies of two Bangladeshi nationals, who were shot dead allegedly by the Indian Border Security Force on Wednesday, were finally recovered from the no man's land of Sylhet's Kanaighat yesterday.

Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) recovered the bodies and handed those over to police following a flag meeting with BSF in the afternoon, said Mohammad Tajul Islam, officer-in-charge of Kanaighat Police Station.

BGB, however, did not officially comment on the incident and the flag meeting.

The dead are Arif Uddin, 22, and Askor Uddin, 28, of Erailigul village in Kanaighat upazila.

The policeman said, "One has a bullet wound

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Nasa to deflect asteroid in test of 'planetary defence'



AFP, Washington

In the 1998 Hollywood blockbuster "Armageddon," Bruce Willis and Ben Affleck race to save the Earth from being pulverized by an asteroid.

While the Earth faces no such immediate danger, Nasa plans to crash a spacecraft traveling at a speed of 15,000 miles per hour (24,000 kph) into an asteroid next year in a test of "planetary defense."

The Double Asteroid Redirection Test (DART) is to determine whether this is an effective way to deflect the course of an asteroid should one threaten the Earth in the future.

Nasa provided details of the DART mission, which carries a price tag of \$330 million, in a briefing for reporters on Thursday.

SEE PAGE 5 COL 2

Anti-Covid pill 89pc effective

Says Pfizer

AFP, Washington

Pfizer yesterday said that a clinical trial of its first pill to treat Covid-19 shows it is highly effective.

The drug called Paxlovid achieved an 89 percent reduction in risk of hospitalization or death among adult patients with Covid who are at high risk of progressing to severe illness, Pfizer said.

The results from this middle-to-late stage clinical trial are so good that Pfizer will stop recruiting new people for the trial, the company said.

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PRAYER TIMING NOVEMBER 6

Fazr Zohr Asr Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4-55 12-45 4-00 5-30 7-15
JAMAAT 5-30 1-15 4-15 5-34 7-45

SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION

India, NZ stay in the hunt

REUTERS, Dubai

Former Twenty20 World Cup champions India kept alive their slim chances of making the semifinals with an eight-wicket rout of Scotland in their Super 12 Group II match on Friday.

Virat Kohli elected to field after winning his first toss of the tournament and the 2007 title holders bundled out the Scots for 85 in 17.4 overs at the Dubai International Stadium.

KL Rahul blasted an 18-ball fifty as India chased down the paltry target in 6.3 overs for their second win in four matches.

Unbeaten Pakistan have already qualified from the group with eight points.

Importantly for Kohli's team, they now have the best net run-rate in the group should it be required in case of any qualification logjam.

India's fate in the tournament is beyond their control after thrashings by Pakistan and New Zealand in their first two games.

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India's Rohit Sharma (L) and KL Rahul bump their fists after a boundary during their T20 World Cup fixture against Scotland at the Dubai International Cricket Stadium on Friday. India romped to an eight-wicket victory against the Scots, keeping their slim chances of a semifinal berth alive. For more see page 14.

Star HEALTHLINE

Goitre associated with HYPERTHYROIDISM may need treatment

STAR HEALTH DESK

A goitre is an abnormal enlargement of thyroid gland. The most common cause of goitre worldwide is lack of iodine in the diet.

Iodine is essential for the production of thyroid hormones, and is found primarily in seawater and the soil in coastal areas.

In the developing world, people who live inland or at high elevations are often iodine deficient and can develop goitres when the thyroid enlarges in an effort to obtain more

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