

## ‘This is all we have’ Mro, Tripura communities demand protection of 400- acre ancestral land

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A group of indigenous people yesterday demanded the cancellation of the lease to a rubber industry in Bandarban’s Lama upazila.

The authorities of the Lama Rubber Industries are trying to grab more land than it had leased and they are desperate to evict 39 indigenous families from their ancestral lands, alleged the victims of land grabbing at a press conference organised by Lama Sarai Bhumi Raksha Sangram Committee at Jatiya Press Club yesterday.

They also alleged that the industry’s people have filed a “false” case against some locals belonging to the Mro and Tripura communities, who are protesting the land grabbing.

The factory got a lease of around 1,600 acres of land in the upazila’s Sarai union. However, the authorities are trying to grab another 400 acres of land in Langkam Para, Joychandra Para, and Rengyen Para, said committee convener Rungdhojon Tripura.

As part of their plan, the factory authorities, accompanied by some local goons, attacked the farmlands of the two communities on April 26.

Two days later, a victim – Langkom Mro – filed a case against the attackers. Police arrested two of them but they were released on bail later, said Rungdhojon.

“We protested the attack and demanded punishment for the attackers. Following our protests, the factory authorities filed a false extortion case against 11 of us,” said Langkom Mro, also member secretary of the Sangram Committee.

“We demand immediate punishment to the attackers and effective measures on the government’s part to

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The development site of Kaptan Bazar Complex, a project under Dhaka South City Corporation, has remained submerged like this for a long time. The stagnant water is a prime breeding spot for Aedes mosquitoes. As DSCC is responsible for controlling the dengue menace, it itself turning a blind eye to such a situation does not bode well for city dwellers.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

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## No let-up in dengue woes

3 dead, 208  
hospitalised  
in 24 hours

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts have been repeatedly warning about a big wave of dengue in the coming days if authorities do not take proper measures. And now, the country has witnessed three deaths in a single day, the highest this year.

At least three dengue patients died in Cox’s Bazar, while 208 were admitted to different hospitals across the country in the last 24 hours till 8:00am yesterday.

This year’s death toll is now 26.

Of the deaths, 15 occurred in Cox’s Bazar and 11 in Dhaka, according to Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS).

Of the new patients, 51 are from outside Dhaka. Dengue cases this year have risen to 7,113.

A total of 806 dengue patients are still undergoing treatment;

## One more Keraniganj fire victim dies Death toll rises to 4

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

One more person, who was burnt in a fire along with five other family members in Keraniganj on August 30, died at a city hospital early yesterday.

Iduni alias Panna Begum (50) breathed her last around 5:00am while being treated at Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery, according to hospital sources.

She had 30 percent burns on her body, said doctors at the burn institute.

With Panna, four out of the six injured have died so far.

Two others – Sonia Akter (26) and Yeasin (12) – are receiving treatment at the hospital.

The fire broke out and spread to the ground floor when Panna Begum lit the gas stove on August 30 morning.

Fire officials suspected that the fire originated from a leak in the gas line on the ground floor.

PRAYER TIMING		SEPTEMBER 6	
Fazr	Zohr	Asr	Maghrib Esha
AZAN 4:35	12:45	4:30	6:20 7:45
JAMAAAT 5:10	1:15	4:45	6:25 8:15
SOURCE: ISLAMIC FOUNDATION			

# A cause of concern for the little ones

Cases of viral hand-foot-mouth disease on rise



PHOTO: COLLECTED

This disease mainly affects children under the age of 10. We are receiving an abnormally high number of such cases this year. There is no specific treatment for the disease. We prescribe medicine based on the symptoms. It requires around 14 days for recovery if treated.

DR MAHFUZA HUSSAIN  
Head of dermatology at Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute

MOUDUD AHMED SUJAN

Adiba, a three year-old from Dhaka’s Mirpur, was taken to Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute yesterday, with lesions all over her limbs and inside her mouth. She has been suffering from this for the last few days and has had a fever since Sunday.

The child has been restless due to all the itching and cannot eat food because it hurts while chewing.

After diagnosis, doctors at the hospital confirmed that Adiba has developed hand-foot-and-mouth disease, which she probably got after being in close contact with a child with similar symptoms.

Like her, some 25 to 30 percent of children going to this hospital have been diagnosed with the disease, doctors said.

“This disease mainly affects children under the age of 10. We are receiving an abnormally high

number of such cases this year,” Dr Mahfuza Hussain, head of the dermatology department at the hospital, told this correspondent yesterday.

According to virologists, hand-foot-and-mouth disease is a mild, contagious viral infection commonly affecting children. It is caused by different types of viruses, including Coxsackievirus A16.

Dr Mahfuza said there is no specific treatment for the disease. “We prescribe medicine based on the symptoms. It requires around 14 days for recovery if treated.”

“We advise providing liquid food to the children to meet their nutritional needs,” she added.

The infected children should be isolated from other children, as the disease spreads through touch and sharing objects, Dr Mahfuza explained.

First reported in New Zealand in 1957, the disease had small-

scale outbreaks in different parts of the world during the first few decades since then.

Since 1997, however, the disease has noticeably changed its character, as noted in different Southeast Asian countries.

In Bangladesh, there was a major outbreak of the disease in Natore and Tangail in 2017, according to Dr Arifa Akram, assistant professor of virology at National Institute of Laboratory Medicine and Referral Centre in Dhaka.

“In recent years, we have noticed outbreaks of this disease in clusters. It is mostly non-fatal. However, in rare cases, it may cause neurological complications in patients,” Dr Arifa said yesterday.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahfuza advised parents and guardians to take their children to the doctor if they notice such symptoms.

## The choice is theirs

Says Dipu Moni on  
allowing student  
politics at edu  
institutions

UNB, Dhaka



Education Minister Dipu Moni yesterday said the educational institutions will decide

whether to allow student politics on the campus.

“The outcome of banning student politics in educational institutions is not usually good. This should also be considered,” she said.

The minister was talking to reporters after attending a meeting on law and order situation during SSC and equivalent exams in the capital.

Being involved in politics is a matter of an individual’s fundamental rights, said Dipu.

“It is between a political party and an educational institute, what rule they made and what understanding they have regarding student politics. The education ministry does not decide nor intervene in these matters,” said the minister.

“People have different opinions regarding allowing student politics in educational institutions but there is no alternative

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# Arrest culprits immediately

ASK demands justice for  
murder of Narendranath  
Munda

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rights organisation Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK) yesterday called for an immediate arrest of all persons responsible for the recent attack on the Munda community in Satkhira, in which Narendranath Munda died.

All the accused of the case filed over the killing of Narendranath must be arrested quickly to ensure justice, said ASK in a statement yesterday.

A team of the rights body visited the Munda village in Satkhira’s Shyamnagar recently.

Narendranath succumbed to his injuries a day after 200-250 people attacked Dhumghat Munda village inhabited by 22 Munda families on August 19.

The statement said the attack was led by Rashedul Islam and Ebadul Islam to take possession of 30 bighas of land owned by the ethnic minority community.

On the day of the incident, the attackers confined all the Munda families to their houses at gunpoint and destroyed their crops, according to the findings of the ASK delegation, led by its executive director Nur Khan Liton.

As Narendranath and his three daughters-in-law tried to resist, the attackers beat and hacked them.

A case was filed with Shyamnagar Police Station against 30 named persons, including Rashedul and Ebadul, and 160-170 unnamed persons.

However, only four named and one unnamed accused have so far been arrested. Masterminds Rashidul and Ebadul are still out of the law enforcement’s reach, the statement read.

ASK also demanded the arrest of those involved in the torture of Munda women, compensation for the crops destroyed, setting up of a police camp in the Munda village to ensure safety and appropriate measures by the district administration to stop land grabbers.

# Increase allocation for minorities

Says Oikya Parishad on  
budget disparity

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

“The Liberation War was fought under the leadership of Bangabandhu to establish equity, dignity and justice for all. But after 50 years of independence, religious discrimination is currently at an extreme level in the country,” said Neem Chandra Bhowmik, president of Hindu-Buddhist-Christian Oikya Parishad, yesterday.

He made the remarks while speaking at a press conference organised by the Parishad on the “budget disparity” of the religious affairs ministry.

While reading out a written statement, Parishad general secretary Advocate Rana Dasgupta said only Tk 304.93 crore was allocated for the ministry of religious affairs, excluding the operation cost.

“The total allocation rate for the religious majority is 97.87 percent, while the allocation for the religious and ethnic minorities stands at 2.13 percent only,” he said. The figure was nearly the same as the budget for the previous fiscal.

Highlighting the picture of discrimination in the ongoing ministry projects, Rana said, “The total cost of the ongoing projects under this ministry is Tk 9,932.8 crore. Of which, 96.85 percent are allocated for the religious majority and only 3.15 percent for others. We thought that our situation will improve after the 2008 election. But the discrimination remains.”



Electric transmitter and other equipment have been lying abandoned right next to the old central jail road for a long time now. The devices were supposed to be reinstalled a while back but now they are just gathering dust. This photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON