

SNAPS

CU classes resume

CU CORRESPONDENT
Classes at Chittagong University (CU) resumed on Thursday after a month long vacation on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr, Martyred Intellectual's Day and Victory Day.
Presence of students was very thin and a few classes were held in some departments. The university shuttle train and the bus plied between the city and the campus as per schedule. Resident students have been returning to their dormitories.

Unidentified killers strangle youth

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg
Unidentified killers strangled a youth at Mirersarai on Wednesday night.
The victim was identified as Hanif Mia, 20. Hanif Mia went out of their house at Baraiyerhut village under Mirersarai upazila to purchase medicine for her ailing mother in the evening. But he did not come back to the house.
His body was recovered beside a railway track nearby at around 9.30 am on Thursday.

Sheikh Razzak Ali not seen in BNP functions

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna
Former Speaker of the parliament Sheikh Razzak Ali is not attending any party programme in Khulna where he has been staying for the last few days.
Sources close to him revealed that Razzak Ali had decided to go back to his active legal profession keeping himself away from party politics.
Razzak Ali's arrival in Khulna city was not known to most of his party leaders and activists till Wednesday. He is now observing the current political situation keeping himself aloof from active politics, said a family source who confirmed that he won't leave BNP or join any other party.
The former speaker also did not attend the Victory Day programmes. Only a few top party leaders talked to him over telephone, rather than visiting his private house at Farazipara in city. Other party leaders are avoiding him 'intentionally'.
However, this correspondent failed to reach him either by telephone or personally despite frequent attempts. He won't not talk to any newsman, came a sharp reply from a lady telephone receiver who replied to a call by this correspondent.

Call to rally round a 'third force'
OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari
Abdur Rouf, one of the pioneers of the 11-point student movement in 1969 has pleaded to rally round a third force.
As part of a countrywide unity process, Rouf, ex-whip of parliament during the Awami League's rule in 1973, he appealed this while exchanging views with journalists at Domar upazila on Thursday.
He categorically said that the leaders of two major political parties are busy in changing their lots at the cost of people's miseries. The entire nation is eagerly waiting for a change in national leadership. With this aim in view a unity process has started, he told the attending newsmen.
It is to be mentioned that Rouf, a close associate of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, was elected a member of parliament (MP) thrice from the Domar-Dimla constituency.

Alamdanga UNO's removal demanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chuadanga
All the chairmen of 13 Union Parishads (UPs) in Alamdanga have demanded removal of Alamdanga Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Abdul Hamid Molla.
They demanded this following a difference of opinion between the UNO and the UP chairmen in approval of development projects during the monthly law and order meeting and the upazila development co-ordination committee's meeting held at the Alamdanga Upazila Parishad auditorium on Thursday.
The UP chairmen also blamed the UNO for delaying the approval of development projects which results in hamper in uplift activities in their upazila. They further declared that they would boycott all the meetings with the UNO in future until the UNO's removal. They also brought the matter to the Deputy Commissioner's (DC's) notice.
Meanwhile, the UNO alleged that the UP chairmen ransacked the conference room creating stalemate during the meeting.

Politics with people's misery

Two women at state minister's public meeting deny they had fainted from starvation during Hasina's Nilphamari visit



Noor Jahan Begum, 45, (3rd from left) and Hasina Banu, 40, (5th from left) on the dais with State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haque Milon (wearing suit at right) at a public meeting at the Ramganj Hat High School ground on Thursday. A partial view of the meeting (far right).

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Poor Noor Jahan and Hasina Banu, who allegedly 'fainted from starvation' at Ramganj bazaar in Sadar upazila during Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina's November 17 visit, are again at the centre of political rhetoric.
The former prime minister during her visit to different munga-affected areas of the district had nursed the two 'fainted' women and the photos were published in some national dailies.
The photos had created sensation in the country with the opposition accusing the government of "doing nothing" to save the people from starvation.
It was reported in some of the dailies that the two women fainted as they were starving for seven days though Sheikh Hasina did not make any such statement during her visit.
On Thursday at a public meeting at Ramganj Hat High School ground, Noor Jahan and Hasina Banu categorically denied that told any one that they had been starving for seven days.
"Those who said so (that we were starving for seven days) are great liars", they told the audience in presence of State Minister for Education ANM Ehsanul Haq Milon.
Noor Jahan, wife of late Hatem Ali Sheikh of Laxmichapa union of Sadar upazila, said that on that day (November 17 in the month of Ramadan) she was fasting and came to Ramganj to see Sheikh Hasina despite her illness. There were heavy crowds on two sides of the road and at one stage she fell down due to suffocation, fainted and trampled by many.
Hasina Banu, wife of late Jamaluddin of Tapamari union under Sadar upazila, said that she came to see Sheikh Hasina though she had stomach pain and was fasting. She also fell down and fainted due to jostling.
Noor Jahan said when she regained sense, she saw Sheikh Hasina in front of her.



PHOTO: STAR

She said Sheikh Hasina asked her what was her problem.

"I relished that I fell down and was trampled."
"I also told her (Sheikh Hasina) that I was sick and had chest and stomach pain."
Both of them said Sheikh Hasina gave them Tk 200 each to buy medicine.
Noor Jahan said she trades in bangles and ribbons in the village.
Hasina Banu said she maintains her family with the income of her rickshawpuller son.
Addressing the public meeting, Ehsanul Haq Milon said Sheikh Hasina came to "discover deaths like in 1974 when thousands of people died of starvation."
"Failing, she staged a street drama using Noor Jahan and Hasina Banu. But today, Noor Jahan and Hasina Banu unveiled the conspiracy to the whole nation", Milon said.
Naming local AL lawmaker Asaduzzaman Noor, Milon said, "His street drama has flopped".

He told the meeting that the BNP government gave two lakh 62 thousand VGF cards in the district and allotted a huge quantity of food grains, which is the highest since independence.
He said the government has taken steps for female education.
Now employment of 60 of staff for primary schools and 30 per cent for secondary level has been ensured.
He said had the post-independence government taken pragmatic steps for female education like the present government, every family of the country would get an educated mother now.
The State Minister for Education also said students will get text books at the beginning of the next academic session.
Presided over by Sadar upzila BNP President Alamgir Sarkar, the meeting was addressed by, among others, Nilphamari district BNP General Secretary Anisul Arefen Chowdhury, upazila BNP secretary Mir Selim Firok and Mostofa Prodhan Bachchu.

FFs, 11-party boycott V-Day meet as Jamaat MP invited

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira
Lawmaker was invited.
When contacted, Hasanuzzaman, Member Secretary of the Sangsad, said the boycott decision was taken at its meeting on December 16 in the morning.
Satkhira Municipality Chairman Sheikh Ashraf Haq left the meeting venue as soon as the Jamaat lawmaker reached there, sources said.
The 11-party alliance in a joint statement on the night of December 15 protested the district administration's invitation to Jamaat MP Abdul Khaleq Mondol and boycotted the meeting.

Gaibandha ADM stand-released on corruption charge

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha
Additional District Magistrate (ADM) Mojibar Rahman Al-Mamun of Gaibandha was stand-released on Wednesday on charge of irregularities and corruption in recruitment of teachers and staff of Asaduzzaman Girls High School and College and allocation of shops in a market owned by the institution.
The order was passed by Deputy Commissioner Tapan Chandra Majumder.
Al-Mamun left Gaibandha on Thursday. His service has been placed under the disposal of the establishment ministry, official sources said.
They said the ADM was managing committee president of the institution. There are allegations that during his tenure he made irregularities in recruitment of teachers and staff and allocation of 72 shops of the institution's market.
Huge amounts were collected from allottees of shops and recruitment of teachers in the name of donation, which have not been properly accounted for, they said.
After the stand-release of the ADM, the DC took over as president of the institution's managing committee and seized all its papers and documents.
The DC has formed three one-member committees to probe the irregularities. These comprise Abedur Rahman, Hena Mostafa Kamal and Kiron Ghandra Roy.

Loan defaulters face 1,158 certificate cases by RAKUB

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari
The Nilphamari regional office of Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank (RAKUB) has filed 1,158 cases against its loan defaulters.
RAKUB is yet to get back Tk 138,26,89,000 from its from its borrowers. The loans were given for poverty alleviation, animal husbandry, current capital and crop production through its 20 branches last year.
Of the total amount Tk 76,89,000 the defaulters grabbed Tk 45,000.
The bank had a target to distribute Tk 38,300,000 as loans through its 20 branches in the 2003-2004 financial year, but actually the bank distributed Tk 8,570,000 till November 13. The bank granted Tk 26,12,000 for establishing 341 goat rearing farms. At the same time the bank realised Tk 90,100,000 lakh.
The Regional Manager of RAKUB, Nilphamari, Abdul Hakim told this correspondent that various steps had been undertaken to realise the loans either by filing certificate case or by lodging cases in the 'Arthio Rin Adalat'.
The bank is also arranging 'Rin Mela' (loan fair) where the loanees are given special facilities to repay their loans easily. The bank also consults with the loanees which has brought a fruitful result, he added. He expressed his optimism that the farmers would be able to realise their loan once they receive a fair price of their produce.

A Jamaat leader's audacity

No Victory Day programme at Chandipur High School and College

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha
It was a different Victory Day for the anguished students of Chandipur F Huq High School and College and their guardians this year.
They brought out a procession at Sundarganj demanding removal of principal of the school and college Mozammel Huq, a Jamaat-e-Islami leader, and laid a siege to the local Union Parishad office as they were deprived of Victory Day celebrations.
Deviating from tradition, the National Flag was not hoisted atop the institution and the principal did not take up any programme to celebrate the Victory Day. Chandipur UP Chairman Khorshedul Alam Pramank told a press conference on Thursday.
No teacher was available there on the day, he said.
The institutions had celebrated Victory Day in a befitting manner in previous years, he said.
"Being informed, the Sundarganj UNO deployed police to control the situation" the UP chairman said.
On Thursday, some journalists during a visit saw several hundred students of the school and college boycotting annual examinations demanding removal of the principal.
They told newsmen that the programme would continue till their demand is met.
Former headmaster Abdul Khaleque Mia said there is a long-standing disagreement over formation of a managing committee of the institution.
The tenure of last committee expired on April 17, 1999. Since then there is no committee.

13 hurt in BNP attack on AL V-Day meet in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
Amu among injured as house vandalised
Activists of Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) allegedly swooped on Victory Day programmes organised by opposition Awami League (AL) and its student wing in Jhalakathi and Barisal, injuring 11 persons.
AL leader and former food minister Amir Hossain Amu also suffered minor injury when his house and the house of Jhalakathi Krishak League President Mannan Rasul were vandalised allegedly by BNP activists on the Victory Day.
Party men claimed that BNP activists allegedly belonging to infamous Mizan Bahini swooped on two processions brought out by Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) at Jhalakathi town on the Victory Day (Tuesday). At least 11 BCL activists were injured in the attacks.
Jhalakathi BNP vice-president Mahbubul Huq Nannu denied the charge.
On Monday in the evening, a group of BNP activists allegedly led by Barisal City Corporation Commissioner Zia and Firoz marred AL's Victory Day rally at Rupatali in Barisal, local people claimed.
However, Barisal BNP leaders refuted the allegation.
Police said any case was yet to be filed in connections with the attacks.
Barisal AL leaders in a statement condemned the attacks.
They also boycotted government's Victory Day programmes protesting renaming of the Bangabandhu Udyan.

World Vision launches AIDS prevention project

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh
Chairman Mahmud-Al-Noor Tarek, Additional Police Superintendent Md Akkas Uddin, Bhuiyan and World Vision Operation Director in Bangladesh Theofil Hajong were present as special guests. World Vision Zonal Coordinator Shaibal Sangma was in the chair.
Dr Md Saidur Rahman, National Health Coordinator and Nastin Singh local coordinator of World Vision explained the project.
The project will cover sex workers, transport workers and rickshawpullers in Mymensingh town and the "risky" areas of Haluaghat upazila project sources said.
People frequently crossing the border will also be under surveillance.
Besides World Vision officials, local doctors and quacks will be involved.
Speakers at the inaugural function called for launching a campaign to make people aware of the deadly AIDS. They also thanked the World Vision for taking up such a project.

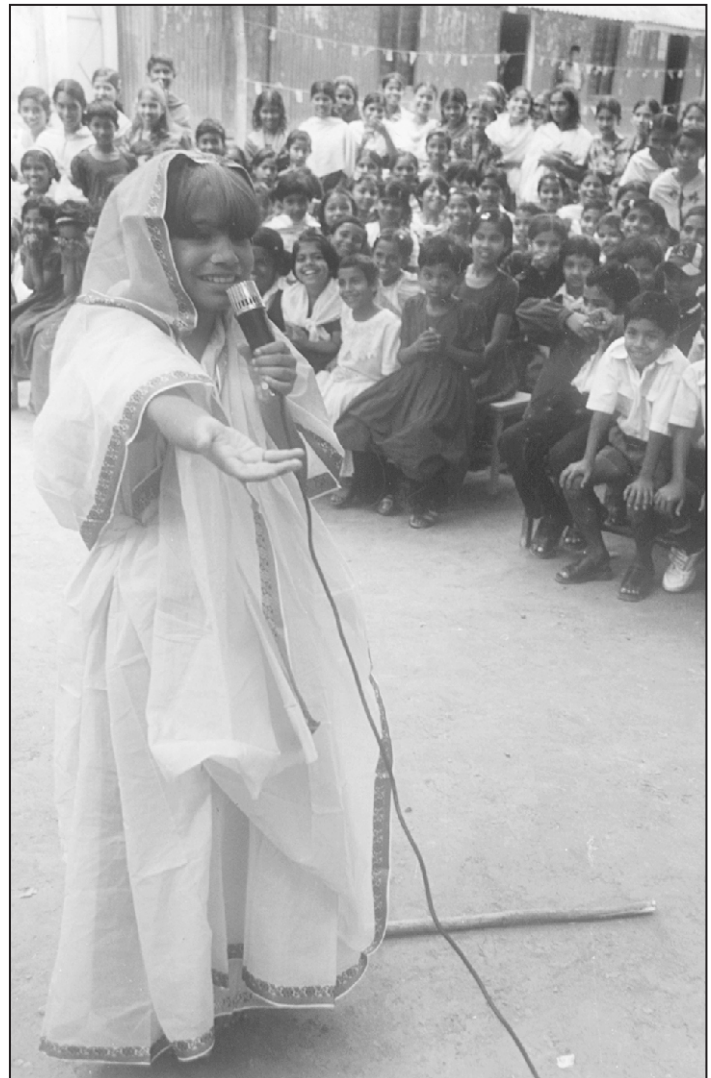


PHOTO: AKM MOHSIN

A tiny tot wearing a saree enthralled students of Kalma Government Primary School under Louhajang thana with patriotic songs in an open air Victory Day cultural programme on Tuesday (December 16).

Refusal to pay toll

JCD leader arrested for assaulting intern at Barisal hospital

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal
Barisal Kotwali Police arrested a JCD leader and ex-Vice President of the Barisal Sher-e-Bangla Medical College Students' Union for demanding toll and assaulting an intern doctor in the early hours of Wednesday.
The arrested was identified as Faruk Abdullah Bin Alauddin Sohel alias B Sohel.
Police sources said, Dr Nasir Uddin, an intern doctor of the Medicine Unit-2 of the hospital lodged a case as complainant on Tuesday accusing B Sohel for demanding toll and beat and injured him.
In the FIR Dr Nasir said Sohel demanded Tk 10,000 as toll from him in front of his Room No 210 of the intern doctor's hostel on Monday night.
On refusal, Sohel beat him injured him, while other doctors rescued him and saved his life and got himself admitted to the hospital.
Following the FIR police raided the campus and arrested B Sohel on Wednesday morning and sent him to jail after rejection of his bail prayer by the magistrate. B Sohel earned a bad name on the campus for illegal toll collection from local, foreign students, doctors, patients and also for carrying arms in the examination hall.
Earlier, he was arrested many times, but managed to bail out from jail under patronisation of political Godfathers.