



PHOTO: ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER

Most of the footpaths in Chittagong city remain illegally occupied in exchange of toll paid to local influentials and mastaans backed by political parties. (From left) A rickshaw 'garage' along the Paltan Road in Dampara and hawkers markets along roads at Sholohahar and New Market.

4x3

# \$6m UNDP scheme for CHT development

MONIRUL ALAM, Rangamati

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has prepared a six million dollar project for development of Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and employment creation by utilising local resources.

The planned 'Economic Opportunities Project (EOP)' will give emphasis on confidence building among the people and development of agriculture, horticulture, handloom, small industries, tourism and forest resources.

The project followed a 15-day visit to the region by a joint team comprising officials of Bangladesh and UNDP in November last year.

The team, after its visit, submitted reports to the government and the UNDP headquarters, recommending the project and areas and sectors to be covered under it,

sources in UNDP and Bangladesh officials said.

"Work on the EOP project will start when funds will be available. UNDP is trying to mobilise funds. So far I knew, its top officials are lobbying for this", said one source.

The mission that visited the area included UNDP Director for Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF) Michael Hyen; its Field Manager Heilly Usikila; its experts on youth development, information technology, agriculture, horticulture and small industries, and high officials of Bangladesh government.

During its assessment tour, the team held talks with local officials, businessmen, prospective investors, public representatives and also grassroots level people.

The team in its report said the CHT region has great prospects

for development through utilisation of its huge natural resources and manpower.

The projects will be implemented in two phases. Plans involving 1.8 million dollars will be implemented under a two-year pilot project and the rest 4.2 million dollars in next three years, the sources said.

The EOP projects will be implemented jointly by UNDP, Bangladesh government and local bodies under the Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Facility (CHTDF).

The report said the entire CHT region has good prospects for tea plantation, development of agriculture, horticulture, handloom, small industries and tourism.

The report made a special recommendation for utilisation of human resources in the region

through training and self-employment.

"The prospects can bring good fortune for this region and the nation at large", said the report.

The report also said that the CHT region is a good place for investment as crimes are lesser there compared to other areas of Bangladesh.

The mission, however, detected some constraints like lack of good telecommunication facility and education among people.

"Merely, potentialities in honey production, wood-based furniture production and agricultural produces can help this region towards economic growth", the report said.

It also emphasised good road communication so that people of remote areas can get access to markets easily.

## Hartal in Moulvibazar villages for gas

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

A dawn to dusk hartal was observed in three unions in Moulvibazar yesterday to press their demand for gas supply.

The hartal was called in Kagabala and Nazirabad unions in Moulvibazar Sadar upazila and neighboring Mirzapur union in Srimangal upazila by a newly formed local civic body which is demanding pipeline supply of gas in the area from the Bibiniya gas filed.

To press the demand, the civic body also held a big public meeting on Monday with Abdul Gafur in the chair.

People of nearby Mansurnagar, Rajnagar and Tengra unions in Rajnagar upazila are also preparing to start agitation for gas supply in those areas.

Wall writings in support of the demand are also seen in the area.



PHOTO: STAR

Tank lorries (left) queuing at the Balashi ghat for oil from the floating oil depot. Supplies to the empty depot are expected soon.

## Khagrachhari road barricade withdrawn

A CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The indefinite road barricades at Etchhani, Gamaridala, Kamalchhari and Khagrachhari were withdrawn yesterday evening on the 7th day of the programme following talks between local leaders of indigenous people and officials, according to a press release signed by indigenous leaders and transport owners.

Army personnel were also involved in the talks.

The Zila Nagorik Committee and the Jhum Janagon Forum, two local bodies of indigenous people, jointly called the road barricade demanding withdrawal of settler Bangladeshers from the hills.

The press release said it was agreed at the talks that neither

Bangalees nor the indigenous people will occupy lands till the issue is resolved by the Land Commission formed as per the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord.

The meeting also decided that homesteads built in recent days by either side will be removed.

The press release was signed by Khagrachhari Sadar Union Parishad (UP) Chairman Priti Bindu Dewan, Komolchhari UP Chairman Soupru Marma and Maishchhari UP Chairman Saiza Marma.

The talks held at Khagrachhari Regional Council (RC) office was attended by, among others, RC member Shudha Shindhu Khisha, Roktotpol Tripura, Nagorik Committee General Secretary Bakul Chakma, and army commanders of Khagrachhari Sadar Zone and Mohalchhari Zone.

## Fishing trawler sinks in Bay: 4 missing

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Four fishermen are missing as a trawler, caught in gusty wind, sank in the Bay of Bengal about 17 kilometers from Kuakata coast on Friday.

The missing fishermen are Nurul Islam, 35, Bashir Ahmed, 28, Sobahan, 31, and Abdul Kader, 40.

There were 12 fishermen on board the trawler FB Chakmaia (FB-49) when it capsized, survivors rescued by other trawlers who reached Kuakata coast on Saturday noon said.

The ill-fated trawler belonging to Kalapara Fishermen's Cooperative Association had sailed on Monday last.

## Lorries queue for fuel at Balashi

Oil tanker yet to reach the dry depot

OUR CORESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Tank lorries are queuing for diesel at Balashi floating depot, which is dry for last two weeks.

The lorries were waiting on the bank of Brahmaputra yesterday hoping that oil tanker MV Taposh would reach Balashi ghat with 3.95 lakh litres of diesel for Gaibandha and adjoining districts.

Depot in-charge Motiur Rahman told this correspondent that due to less flow in the Jamuna at Pachkola, high draft oil vessels can not reach Balashi floating depot.

MV Taposh, a light vessel, is now carrying diesel to Balashi and Chilmari floating depots in

Gaibandha and Kurigram. This vessel can move in six feet deep water but it needs about 15 days to reach the destinations.

"We are selling diesel to dealers at Tk 29.18 per litre. Even traders from Rangpur, Satibari, Gobindagnaj and Palashbari rush here to collect diesel when a barge reaches", Motiur said.

"The floating depot has a capacity to take 2.60 lakh litres. So the vessel has to stay here for three days. This causes delay in bringing the next consignment", he said.

The rush is more here because dealers prefer Balashi floating depot to other supply spots in Khulna, he said.

## PROTESTERS OBSERVE AT RU 'Taher murdered as killers of Yunus went unpunished'

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi city unit of Peshajibi Samonnoy Parishad, coordination council of professionals, yesterday staged a sit-in on the campus protesting killing of university teachers Prof Muhammad Yunus and Prof S Taher Ahmed.

A meeting was also held on the 'Shabash Bangladesh' premises. Presided by Language Movement veteran Advocate Golam Arif Tipu, leaders of former Rajshahi University Central Students' Union (Rucusu) addressed it. Ex-Rucusu vice president (VP) and Workers' Party politbureau member Fazle Hossain Badsha was present as special guest.

In his address, Badsha said, had the killers of prof Yunus been pun-

ished then Prof S Taher would have not been killed.

He criticised the BNP-Jamaat Alliance government and police administration for not arresting the university unit president of Islamic Chhatra Shibir Mahub Shalehi, an accused in Prof Taher murder.

He urged the student community and progressive students and political organisations to unite to go for tougher agitation against the killers of university teachers.

"We shall organise all former Rucusu leaders and general students in Dhaka to launch a fresh agitation against the teachers' killers, he said.

Among others, former Rucusu VP and GS Bayazid Ahmed, former VP Nurul Islam Thandu, Rakib Hassan Munna, former GS advocate Shamsul Haque Tuku, Zahangir Kabir Rana,

Progressive Teachers' Association convener Prof Muhammad Nurullah and Awami League city joint secretary principal Shafikul Alam, languages veteran Prof Fazlul Haque and Abul Hossain spoke.

The speakers said that fundamentalist forces defeated in 1971 are raising their heads again and hatching a conspiracy to undo the achievements of the Liberation War.

They said the defeated forces killed Awami League leaders Shah AMS Kibria, Ahsanullah Master, Prof Muhammad Yunus, Prof S Taher Ahmed and other intellectuals in a planned way.

They demanded immediate arrest and exemplary punishment to the killers of Prof Yunus and Prof Taher.

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