

## Battle for Mong throne

**JASIM MAJUMDER, Khagrachhari**

Dispute over throne and conflict between traditional indigenous and government laws put the Kingdom of Mong in the hill district of Khagrachhari in disorder and chaos.

The Mong Circle on over 2700 square kilometer of land is an autonomous area ruled by indigenous people since the British colonial period.

Different tribes, including Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Rakhine and Mag, have been living in 1200 villages under 34 unions in the kingdom of Mong Circle.

The king rules his kingdom in 88 Mouzas with the help of 88 headmen (mouza heads) and 950 Karbaris (village chiefs).

But the trouble began when King Mong Prue Chaine died in 1991 and Paila Prue Chowdhury was sworn in as the acting king. Besides, appointment of Paila Prue by the government in 1998 as king of the 'autonomous estate' further deepened the problem over throne between Paila Prue



**Paila Prue Chowdhury**

and Unika Devi, daughter of late King Mong Prue Chaine.

As such, the Mong circle is now under a dual rule.

Unika decides everything, including local arbitration and possession of land with the support of 'subjects', though Paila Prue is in the throne.

Rajib Roy, husband of Unika Devi, claimed that neither Paila Prue Chowdhury nor anybody else can be the king of Mong circle as long as the daughter of late King Mong Prue Chaine is alive and active.

Unika rules the circle as heir to



**Unika Devi**

the throne under a will written by her father King Mong Prue, he said.

On the other hand, Paila Prue also claims himself as the legal king of the same circle.

"Being appointed by the government, as per law of the country, I am the legal king now," he said.

"Unika and her husband Rajib are trying to control the circle by force," Paila Prue said.

Advocate Monjur Morshed Bhuiyan, a senior lawyer, said the matter now requires to be settled in the court and anyone having the court order in favour will be the next king.

After the death of King Mong Prue the government appointed 88 headmen to help collect revenue and mediate purchase and sale of land, sources said.

Now the headmen are left with a very little job as the local deputy commissioner's office has been entrusted with the responsibility of revenue collection recently and the fund crisis makes the king unable to maintain his men.

Shaktipoda Tripura, president of Headmen Association, said they get only Tk 400 per head as honorarium a month.

The Karbaris are the most sufferers as they do not get honorarium neither from the government nor the king for the important role they play in maintaining order in the Mong societies through conducting local arbitrations, they said.

The Chittagong Hill Tracts is divided into three circles --- Bomang, Chakma and Mong --- centring Bandarban, Rangamati and Khagrachhari.

A king traditionally rules each circle since the British regime.

### BILLBOARD MAKES FOUNTAIN AN EYESORE

The fountain built to beautify the city on the island at Chittagong Wasa intersection has turned into an eyesore as a vested quarter has erected a billboard on it reportedly in connivance with a section of dishonest officials to the resentment of the city dwellers.

ZOBAER HOSSAIN SIKDER



Chittagong University Central Library.

## CU library being computerised

**NUR UDDIN ALAMGIR**

Chittagong University (CU) authorities have taken initiative to bring its central library under computerised automation system to rid the students and researchers of the hassle of finding out desired books searching through manual catalogue.

CU Central Library is among the remarkable libraries in the country with a rich collection of different books, journals and other reading materials.

But the students, teachers and researchers of the university are to struggle a lot to get a desired book from the catalogues that lie in huge piles in the library.

"When the library is brought under the computerised automation system it will help one to find out desired book easily within shortest possible time," said Hamida Yasmin, computer lab in-charge of the library.

"In this system readers will be able to find out a book by themselves and those who don't know how to take help of computer to find out a book, lab operators will be there to help," she added.

The process of introducing

the automation is now going on in full swing, sources said.

The university authorities have already installed a server and 12 computers, which are being programmed now.

Apart from the books, journals and reading materials on the present list of collection, the books scheduled to arrive soon will also be catalogued, they said.

Enriched with the computers, the library has already started providing the students and researchers with latest information through Internet service.

Mohammed Shakhawat Hossain, a fourth year student of the Physics Department, said finding books through manual catalogues was very time consuming.

Besides, very often one had to be disappointed and leave the library empty handed, as the desired book could not be found even after a long search, he said.

"It's really a great pleasure for us that automation system will help us find out a desired book and save our time as well," said Fahima Sultana, a student of Arts Faculty.

It will also encourage the students to develop a reading habit, she said.

The three-storied library has separate reading rooms for teachers and students of different faculties and an auditorium for seminar and symposium.

It remains open between 8:00am and 8:00pm in the working days when 80 employees, including 11 officers, work in two shifts.

The library started its operation with only 14,000 books in 1968 and it has now 2,05,000 books, 35,100 journals (binding), 2,900 rare books, 575 thesis papers, 1750 research papers (photocopy) and 515 compact disks (CD) on different topics.

Collection section collects local and foreign journals and books.

Reference section preserves the research reports, encyclopedias, dictionaries, manuals, calendars, handbooks and other publications.

The reprography section provides the opportunity for photocopy at a cost of 50 paisa per page in the library building.

The World Bank and CU authorities signed an agreement to set up an information centre at the library, said acting librarian SM Abu Taher.

## theweekthatwas

### Agrani Bank branch opens at Hathazari

The 865th branch of Agrani Bank was opened at Kuaish Burishchar area in Hathazari upazila on Sunday.

Bank Director SM Nurul Hoque inaugurated the branch at a ceremony on the Sheikh Muhammad Degree College premise.

"This is first branch of a bank at this expatriate-dominant locality and it will now provide thousands of expatriates, businessmen and service holders with banking facility at their very doorstep," Nurul Hoque said at the inaugural function.

Bank Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Syed Abu Naser Bakhtiar Ahmed was present as chief guest while General Manager of Bangladesh Bank, Chittagong Md Harunur Rashid Chowdhury and Agrani Bank Deputy Managing Director FRM Hafizul Islam were the special guests. Bank's General Manager, Chittagong circle Md Enamul Hoque presided over the function.

Naser in his speech sought wholehearted support and cooperation from the locals so that the new branch could be a profitable one.

He also instructed the branch manager to provide loan to good projects and to render efficient and prompt services to address requirements and earn confidence of the valued clients.

Harunur Rashid assured his best possible cooperation to the customers of the bank.

### World Press Freedom Day observed

The regional office at Nandankanan on Wednesday.

Amrita Lal Dey, Sheikh Mohammad Abdul Mazid Chandu, Abdul Malek, Md. Solaiman, Monir Ahmad, Nurul Hoque, Ilias Chowdhury, Saber Ahmad, Maksudul Maola, GC Datta, Sirajul Hoque, Satya Narayan Majumder and Manjurul Alam spoke at the meeting with Bateskap Chittagong President Abdullah Mohiuddin in the chair.

The regional committee of Bateskap was reshuffled at the meeting unanimously with Abdullah Mohiuddin, Abdul Malek and Saber Ahmed as president, general secretary and organising secretary.

To mark the day Chittagong Union of Journalists' (CUJ) organised a discussion at its office on Wednesday.

CUJ President Shahid UI Alam presided over the meeting while former President Mostak Ahmad, Vice President SM Ibrahim, General Secretary Reaz Haider Chowdhury, former General Secretary Swapan Mahajan, Joint Secretary Nirupam Das Gupta and Finance Secretary Nuruddin Ahmad spoke.



Veteran Language Movement veteran and Poet Mahbul Alam Chowdhury, popular drama personality and Awami lawmaker Asaduzzaman Noor and poets Syed Shamsul Haq and Nirmalendu Goon inaugurate the three-day 7th National Recitation Festival releasing balloons at Shilpakala Academy premise at Chittagong Shilpakala Academy on May 4.

### T&T employees protest govt decision

Bangladesh Tele Jogajog Sramik Karmachari Parishad (Bateskap), Chittagong regional leaders called upon all to launch a vigorous movement against the government decision to turn T&T a company.

They made the call at a meeting of Bateskap at

### Cop action on journos condemned

Chittagong City Corporation Mayor ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury denounced the police atrocities on journalists during a cricket match between Bangladesh and Australia at Chittagong Divisional Stadium and demanded exemplary

punishment to the 'culprits' involved in the heinous attack.

He was addressing as chief guest a protest rally on Wednesday on Chittagong Press Club (CPC) premises.

"The brutal attack on media men was not a stray incident but a pre-planned action of a blueprint of the present four-party alliance government that aims at killing the free thinkers of the society like what the Pakistani occupation forces committed at the fag end of their certain defeat during the War of Liberation in 1971," mayor said.

Former pro-vice chancellor of Chittagong University Dr Abu Yusuf Alam presided over the rally organised by Nagorik Committee, Chittagong.

Gono Forum Chittagong President M Kafil

### Cuet students observe Rag Day

The students of 32nd batch (2001) of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (Cuet) observed Rag Day on Wednesday amid fanfare, joy and enthusiasm.

On the occasion the students and teachers brought out a colourful procession on the Cuet campus.

Vice Chancellor (VC) Professor Dr Mir Shahidul Islam led the procession at GEC Intersection in the port city that ended at the Chittagong Press Club premises after parading different streets.

A festival and cultural programme were organised on the Cuet campus in the evening. The students also organised an open-air concert at night where two popular musical bands of the country, Souls and Dalchhut, performed.



Visitors admire the models of different Chinese vessels of bygone days put on display at a nine-day exhibition that ended at Chittagong Govt Art College Gallery on May 9. AK Khan Foundation organised the exhibition titled 'Peace of Envoy from China' in memory of Great Chinese Admiral Zheng He's historic voyage to Chittagong in 1421.

### Attack on tribal people protested

Leaders of Pahari Chhatra Parishad, Hill Women's Federation and Democratic Youth Forum strongly condemned the brutal assault on the villagers by 'security forces' at Perachhara in Khagrachhari on Wednesday.

The leaders in a joint statement on Thursday alleged that a group of security personnel attacked and harassed 19 tribal people and raided the houses of Perachhara village on Wednesday.

They demanded immediate and exemplary punishment to the persons responsible for the incident.