

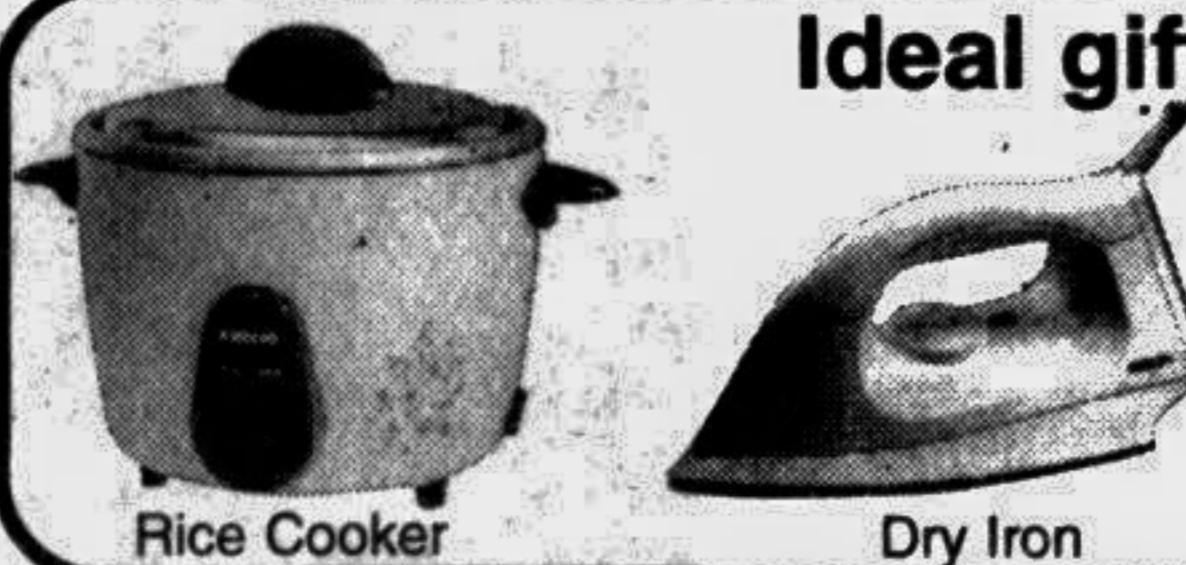


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PHILIPS

# Wide-bodied plane lands at Osmani Airport

SYLHET, Dec 20: Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina today declared Osmani Airport as an international airport and said all formalities to upgrade it would be completed by middle of next year, reports UNB.

"We believe in balanced development of all regions of the country and are taking steps to that end for people's welfare," she said at the inaugural function of wide-bodied aircraft service to Sylhet.

The prime minister said the opening of Airbus service was a step towards upgrading the airport to a world-class one. Soon other formalities would be completed and technical facilities introduced to turn it into an international airport, the country's third after the ZIA in Dhaka and another in Chittagong.

An Airbus from Dhaka, carrying 93 people on board, including the crew, landed at Osmani Airport in presence of the prime minister for the formal launch of the service.

The prime minister witnessed the landing of the big aircraft and disembarkation of the passengers. She also exchanged pleasantries with them.

In initial stages, the Airbus with a capacity of 220 passengers will fly once a week into this northeastern city and the flight frequencies will be increased gradually, Biman officials said.

And on completion of upgradation of the airport to international standard, direct flights from the Middle East and England will be operated regularly.

## Varsity closed till Jan 26 BCL-Shibir gunfight at IU: 12 injured

ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY, Dec 20: Authorities have declared the Islamic University closed till January 26 following a gunbattle between two rival student organisations today, reports APB.

Police said at least 12 students received bullet injuries when the ruling party backed Chhatra League and Islamic Chhatra Shibir traded gunfire during the hour-long clash.

As the two student fronts were locked in the clash, panic gripped the entire campus, witnesses said.

Police lobbed more than 50 tear gas shells and fired rubber bullets to bring the situation under control.

Of the injured, M. Bakibillah and Musa of Bangladesh Chhatra League and Zillur Rahman

had been admitted to Kushtia and Jhenidah sadar hospitals.

Witnesses said the clash erupted when some BCL activists swooped on a Shibir activist on the campus at about noon.

When the news spread on the campus, the rival Shibir activists rushed to the spot and countered their opponents.

The university authorities, in an emergency meeting with Acting Vice-Chancellor Prof M. Mahatabuddin Sarker in the chair, declared the university closed.

Male students were advised to vacate their respective halls by 4 pm today and female students by 10 am tomorrow, campus sources said.

## AL leader killed in Mymensingh

MYMENSINGH, Dec 20: A local leader of Awami League was killed by miscreants at Valuka in Gouripur thana on Saturday evening, reports UNB.

The victim was identified as Idris Ali, 45, of Tilatia village and an executive committee member of Gouripur thana Awami League.

Witnesses said the miscreants waylaid Ali'srickshaw near Valuka rail line and hit him with lethal weapons. He died on way to hospital.

Local people caught one of the assailants, Chand Miah, from the scene and handed him over to police.

The body was sent to hospital morgue for autopsy.

## Feni clash

From Page 1

Police and BDR patrols, however, cleared the roadblocks in the afternoon to end the prolonged traffic halt on the highway.

During the widespread clashes at least 30 people, including eight BCL workers, six Juba Dal and JCD men and 16 passers-by, were injured.

Of them, Chhatra League leader Shamim and Juba Dal worker Hannan succumbed to their injuries at hospital.

Condition of Jatiyatabdali Chhatra Dal workers Babul, Swapan, Nizam, Hanif and Ilyas and BCL's Jashim, Uttam, Swapan and Kohinoor and pedestrian Joynal, Dulal, Rahimullah, Kanchan, Ruku Mia, Shahidullah and Abdul Aziz was said to be critical.

All shops and establishments in the town kept shutters down throughout the day.

Police reinforcements from neighbouring districts were called in and deployed along with BDR personnel at various points in the town gripped by tensions.

## Watch towers

From Page 1

Kanchpur bridge, the home Minister said all the traffic control towers (watch towers) will be equipped with wireless sets, telephones and push button traffic signals for ensuring normal flow of traffic in the areas.

He said a centrally coordinated traffic control system will be introduced comprising the DMP and district police.

He said one police sergeant and four constables will work round-the-clock in each watch tower.

## Airstrikes

From Page 1

tors go back in there."

Both leaders threatened further military action, if necessary, to force Iraqi compliance.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin said in a statement today that "use of force has complicated the resolution of the Iraqi problem," Interfax news agency reported.

Yeltsin had already expressed strong condemnation of the US-British air raids on Iraq, describing the decision to strike without the backing of the Security Council as a violation of the UN charter.

A Beijing report says after condemning the United States for launching military strikes on Iraq, China offered today to help find a diplomatic solution to the controversial UN weapons inspections at the heart of the crisis.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Zhu Bangzao welcomed the decision by the US and Britain to end the air assault and stressed China's continued opposition to such raids.

"We have taken note of the fact that with the call of relevant parties, the United States and Britain ceased their air strikes against Iraq," Zhu said in a statement carried by the official Xinhua News Agency.

China was ready to work with all interested parties on the weapons inspections, Zhu said.

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A couple of German Sunday papers' front pages deal with the impeachment vote against US President Bill Clinton yesterday. Headlines read, clockwise, beginning at bottom left: "Clinton Loses Battle on Impeachment", "Will Clinton Be Toppled?", "Parliament votes: Clinton Should Be Impeached" and "Impeachment Debate Starts with a Bang — Livingstone Gives up".

— AP/UNB photo

## Clinton won't quit

From Page 1

The vote was 228-206 in favour of Impeachment. Five Democrats sided with Republicans and five Republican lawmakers backed the Democratic president.

In rapid-fire order, the other three articles were voted on, all of them stemming from Starr's eight-month investigation and the politically drenched House impeachment inquiry that followed.

The second article, alleging Clinton lied in a deposition in the Paula Jones sexual harassment case, was rejected, 229-205.

The third article, alleging obstruction of justice, cleared narrowly, 221-212, and need and needed the votes of five Democrats to pass. It cited Clinton for efforts to influence grand jury testimony by Ms Lewinsky and Betty Currie, his secretary, as well as other actions.

The fourth article fell, 285-148, on a bipartisan rejection. It would have impeached Clinton for abuse of his office in lying to Congress in written responses to 81 questions that the House Judiciary Committee posed to him as part of its impeachment inquiry.

All but one of the 435 was present. Democratic Rep George Miller is recovering from hip replacement surgery in California.

The galleries were full, and a crowd gathered outside the Capitol on a day unlikely any other in over a century.

Livingston's bombshell aside, the nation was absorbing news of the latest round of airstrikes against Iraq, a campaign that prompted some Republicans to openly question whether Clinton was using his powers as commander in chief to try to manipulate the impeachment process.

On the White House lawn after the vote, dozens of Democratic lawmakers gathered around the president in a shaw of support. Clinton emerged from the building arm in arm with his wife.

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