

Move on to reopen CU

CHITTAGONG, Mar 31: A move is on to reopen Chittagong University which has remained closed since mid-January following clashes between rival student organisations, reports BSS.

The university authorities have taken some initiatives to reopen the university and ensure a congenial academic atmosphere on the campus.

An eight-member liaison committee headed by Prof Imran Hossain, dean of Arts Faculty, was formed in February. The committee initiated dialogue with different student organisations, but the move did bear any fruit.

The university authorities have now taken some strong security measures on the campus. More police forces have also been deployed to ensure security.

The earlier decision banning processions and meetings on the campus has also been put in place.

Meanwhile, Gonotantrik Chhatra Oikya staged a token

hunger strike in front of Chittagong Press Club on Tuesday to press home their demand for reopening of the institute.

Three get 10 yrs' RI in Sylhet

From Staff Correspondent SYLHET, Mar 31: A court here last week sentenced three persons to ten years' rigorous imprisonment (RI) each in prison for snatching walkie-talkie and identity card from a major of Bangladesh Army.

The Additional District and Sessions Judge, Narendra Chandra Das, also fined Pukon, Mamunur Rashid Chowdhury and Sirajul Islam of Taka 5,000 each.

Another accused, Kanu Miah, was, however, acquitted.

According to prosecution story, the three on July 14, 1995 snatched walkie-talkie and

Greater Chittagong Development Student Action Committee handed a memorandum to Chittagong Divisional Commissioner demanding reopening of the university.

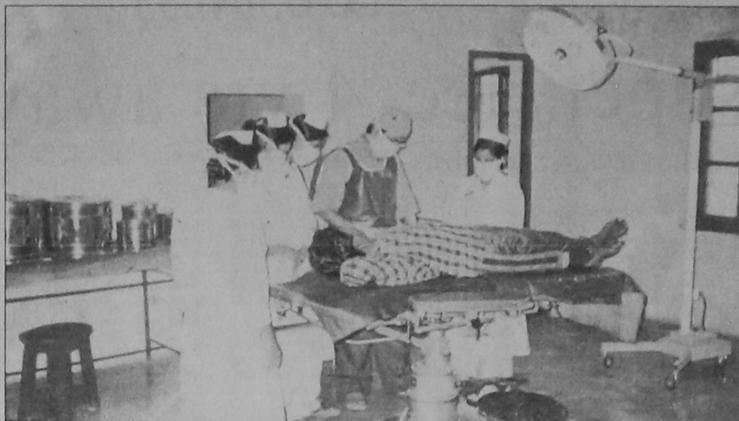
Bangladesh railway authorities have agreed to run shuttle trains between the city and the campus.

Zillur Rahman Jewel, president of (BCL) CU unit, said that any move on the campus to keep the university closed would be resisted.

However, Mujibur Rahman Manju, president of Islami Chhatra Sibir (ICS), said the initiatives to reopen the university without consulting the student organisations would not be fruitful.

He said this at a press conference at the local BNP office organised by all-party student alliance on March 29.

Closure of the university is hampering the study of 14,000 students.



Modern hospital only in name

There is no anaesthetic machine at the operation theatre of the so-called Netrakona Modern Sadar Hospital for a long time. For this reason no serious patient can be operated upon. If anyone comes here for a major operation, the on-duty doctors usually advise him to go to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

Most often the patient dies on way to Mymensingh. Will the Health Ministry officials look into the matter? — Star photo by Jahangir Alam

War of Liberation First armed resistance by Kushtia people

From Our Correspondent

KUSHTIA, Mar 31: In the month of March people in the district recall the memories of War of Liberation with heavy heart. People forged strong unity against the Pakistani occupation forces in Kushtia like other places in the country. Sons of the soil here built first armed resistance against a well-equipped regular army on March 29, 1971 and forced enemy soldiers to retreat. The freedom fighters freed the district headquarters on March 30, 1971 and kept it free up to April 15, 1971.

Finally the district was totally freed from the occupation forces on December 11, 1971.

Mujibnagar of the then Kushtia district was centre point of the War of Liberation. Mujibnagar, now in Meherpur district, was declared the capital of Bangladesh.

However, on March 4, 1971 brave people of Kushtia hoisted Bangladesh flag at a public meeting held at Islamic College ground. After that many Bangladesh flags were seen atop many buildings. But on the night of March 25 barbaric Pakistani occupation forces launched attack on innocent people, including women and

children, in the district headquarters. But people of greater Kushtia district immediately started organising themselves and at dawn on March 29 under the command of Major Osman, the then commander of EPR, Chuadanga, launched attack on enemy. The battles continued until night and the Pakistani soldiers fled the district headquarters. Many of them were caught and killed by freedom fighters.

Dr Ashabul Huq, Abdul Rouf Chowdhury, Azizur Rahman Akkas, Ahsanullah, Shamsul Alam Dudu, Golam Kibria, Badal Barister, Anwar Ali, Zahurul Huq (Raja Mia), Nurul Huq, Khondaker Rashiduzzaman Dudu, Abdul Aziz Mia, Abdul Hamid Raihan, Mir Aminul Islam, Abdul Jalil, Abdul Mazid, Abdul Aziz Khan, Abdul Momen, Abdul Hadi, Marfat Ali, Abdul Jalil, Daliluddin, Ziaul Bari Noman, Shahidul Islam Kiblu, Akkas Ali Monju, Bahauddin, Zafarullah Khan Chowdhury, Akher, Ansar Commandar, Sultan and Faruq, among others, played significant roles in the battles.

Female outlaw hacked to death

From Our Correspondent

SIRAJGANJ, Mar 31: A 50-year-old female activist of Sarbahara Party was killed at Tarash thana on March 26.

The victim was identified as Hajerunnessa, wife of Mohiruddin Bhaat under the aforesaid thana.

Police and witnesses said she was an activist of Purba Banglar Sarbahara Party. She is believed to have been murdered as she was turned into a police source.

The body was kidnapped on March 26 and was hacked to death.

She was recovered on March 29 from a field, one and-a-half kilometre away from her house.

A case was lodged in this connection, but none was arrested.

Shaheed family in distress

By Staff Correspondent



Shaheed Afzal Hossain

Afzal Hossain, a rickshaw puller in Nilphamari town fell a martyr during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971.

Following his martyrdom the then Prime Minister Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman sent a consolation message to the widow of the martyr, Karima Khatun, a resident of Sabuj Para in the then sub-divisional town of Nilphamari under Rangpur district.

Bangabandhu also donated an amount of Taka 2,000 from the Prime Minister's Relief and Welfare Fund to the widow through a cheque sent to the then sub-divisional officer (SDO) of Nilphamari. After that the widow who has a lot of children did not receive anything as donation or grant from the successive governments.

At present the martyr's family is in distress. She has sought the attention of the authorities concerned in this regard with a view to mitigating her sufferings.

Obituary

RAJBARI, Mar 31: Former municipalities chairman and district BNP president Akkas Ali Mia died of cardiac arrest here on Friday morning. He was 62, reports UNB.

He is survived by his wife, four sons and two daughters. He will be buried at Bhabanipur graveyard.

Fire incidents on rise in dists

By Staff Correspondent

Fire incidents are on rise in various districts in recent days.

Our Sylhet correspondent says: Six shops in the Mukti-joddha Market were gutted at Chhatak in Sunamganj district on Sunday afternoon. The loss was estimated to be about Taka 10 lakh initially, eyewitnesses said.

The fire originated from a cotton shop at about 3:30 pm on Sunday which soon spread to the adjacent shops and gutted six shops including the office of Thana Mukti-joddha Sangsad. However, there was no report of any casualty.

Local MP Muhibur Rahman Manik, DC, SP and other officials visited the spot. The Thana Mukti-joddha Sangsad Commander alleged that, it was an incident of sabotage.

Our Gaibandha correspondent says: Property worth over Taka one lakh was burnt to ashes in a devastating fire incident at Jamudanga village under Sadullapur thana recently.

The fire originated first from the cow-shed of Babar Uddin Munshi. Soon the flame spread to the adjacent houses. A total of four dwelling houses along with all belonging were reduced to ashes. One cow and three goats were roasted alive. The fire was brought under control by the effort of local people.

Agencies report: A classroom-cum-dormitory of a madrasa at Barguna was gutted in a fire incident on Saturday.

Firefighters said the fire broke out at about 11:45 pm at the classroom of Darul-ul-Ulum Nesaria Alla Madrasa burning down valuables worth about Tk five lakh.

They put out the fire with the help of local people after two hours of hectic efforts.

Deputy Minister for Food Advocate Dharendra Debnath Shambhu, Deputy Commissioner and Police Super of the district later on visited the spot.

Three people were injured and timber worth over Tk 10 lakh was gutted in a devastating fire at a saw mill at the BISIC industrial area in Manikganj on March 23.

Locals said the fire broke out at Mafji Saw Mill in the morning. Fire fighters rushed to the spot and brought the fire under control.

Cause behind the fire could not be ascertained. A big fire gutted at least 10 shops and injured 13 persons, four seriously, at Chandidasgati Bazaar in Sirajganj sadar thana on Thursday.

Fire Brigade sources said the fire originated from an electric short circuit from a shop at midnight and soon engulfed the surrounding area.

Fire Brigade from the district headquarters rushed to the spot and extinguished the blaze. Thirty-two thatched houses and property worth about Taka seven lakh were burnt to ashes

in a fire at Nazirpore in Pathantuli area of Chittagong recently.

Fire sources said that the blaze, originating from the tip of a cigarette in a storehouse of reed brooms at about 11:30 am, spread to the adjacent areas.

Four fire fighting units from Agrabad station rushed to the spot and doused the blaze in two hours.

The storehouse, owned by Mohammad Hossain, was partially damaged by the fire, while about 100 people became homeless.

However, no casualty was reported. Property worth about Tk 1.5 lakh was gutted in a fire at Dakkhin Kistakati village in Jhalakati sadar thana on Wednesday.

An 18-year-old girl, Parven, also sustained serious burn injuries in the flame originated from the oven of a kitchen in the morning, villagers said.

At least 12 houses were gutted in a devastating fire at Tushkherkandi under Haimchar thana recently.

The fire originated from the kitchen of a house and immediately spread to other houses. Bangladesh Red Crescent Society distributed rice, saris, lungies and other household goods among the fire affected people.

The fire could not be immediately controlled as there was no fire station at the thana.

'CHT peace accord ensures rights of tribals, non-tribals'

RANGAMATI, Mar 31: Chairman of the Task Force on Repatriated Tribals and Internal Refugees Rehabilitation Affairs Dipankar Talukdar, MP, has said proper rehabilitation of the affected people in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) during the insurgency period is one of the spirit of the CHT peace accord, reports BSS.

The long-expected CHT peace accord has established the right of the tribals without curbing the right of the non-tribals living in CHT as it is designed to ensure the rights of both tribals and non-tribals equally, Dipankar said.

"We believe in that nationalism which believes the right of all citizens living in the country and uphold the interest of all small ethnic," he said while addressing as the chief guest the biennial conference of Rangamati district unit of Bangladesh Chhatra League, held on Friday at the local Town Hall.

Focusing on the spirit of CHT peace accord which established peace and harmony in the insurgency-battered hilly region ending more than two decades' bloodshed, a dominating member of the three-member CHT Peace Accord Imple-

mentation Committee, Dipankar said deportation of non-tribals from Chittagong Hill Tracts was nowhere prescribed in the accord.

"A vested quarter, chanting slogan demanding deportation of Bangladeshes from Chittagong Hill Tracts has apparently been delaying completion of implementation of the long expected CHT peace accord," he alleged.

Dipankar urged the activists of the front organisations of Awami League to keep themselves aloof from any sorts of unwanted conflict as the vested quarter is found active in making conflicts demanding implementation of such clauses, existences of which are not found in it.

"We do not want any illogical demand of any quarter which may cause unwanted delay in implementation of the long desired peace accord," he added.

He urged them to go ahead with politics with etiquette, feeling the misery of the insurgency-battered people of this region properly. The more than two decades' long insurgency cost high beyond the tolerance of both tribals and non-tribals, he observed.

Vice-president of the district unit of Awami League Ching Key Roaza attended the conference as special guest with convener of the district unit of Chhatra League Nihar Dev Debu in the chair.

31 rocket launchers found!

MONGLA, Mar 31: Police recovered 31 rocket launchers and six powerful bombs from a colony here on Wednesday night and arrested a man, reports UNB.

Monjala police on information raided the colony on graveyard road at dead of night and recovered the launchers and bombs.

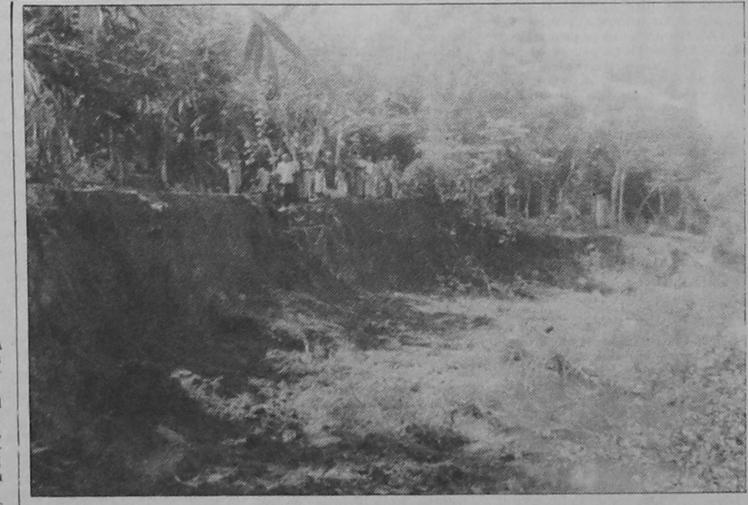
The arrested identified as Faruq was sent to thana hajat.

Man killed over land dispute in Brahmanbaria

From Our Correspondent BRAHMANBARIA, Mar 31: A man was killed and 15 others were injured in a clash over land dispute between two rival groups at Mirpara under Sarail thana on Monday.

According to eyewitnesses, supporters of Omar Ali and Zinath Ali of the village equipped with sharp weapons locked in clash.

The dead was identified as Abon Ali, 40. The body was sent to Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital for autopsy.



Badly damaged Shuvarampur Road at the outskirts of Faridpur town. It has been damaged by erosion of the River Kumar causing untold sufferings to the local people. — Star photo

Season passes off without big catches of Hilsa!

BARISAL, Mar 31: The season for procuring local variety of Hilsa, particularly the most delicious "Padmar Ilish," passed off quietly without any sizeable catches by the fishermen, reports UNB.

And the future bodes ill for fishermen, moneylenders and wholesalers as fishing trawlers and boats returned from the rivers empty or with insignificant catches.

A wholesaler trader said they used to get abundant supply of Hilsa from rivers Burigouranga, Darchirra, Meghna, Padma, Dhalchar, Gangamati, Majher Char and Ilisha. But this season the supply was scarce.

Hilsa catching season comes three times a year — twice Hilsa is found only in deep sea and in the river estuaries. Only from the first week of February till mid March, Hilsa is caught in the rivers inside.

However, this time the sellers expect the season to continue up to March and still hope to get Hilsa fishes in the few remaining days of the month.

A seller said Hilsa available during February-March season is called "Deshi Hilsa" and has high demand across the country being the most delicious of fishes.

A fisherman of FB "Mayer Doa" (Mother's Blessing), Abdul Malek, said they usually get Hilsa during the season even if

they failed to get good catches from the sea during the other two seasons.

This year is an exception though, lamented the 56-year-old fisherman saying there was hardly any catch in the rivers.

In this coastal region, Hilsa is the main source of income for a good number of people — from trawler owners to labourers in the wholesale market.

Another fisherman said they experienced similar crisis in the sea during the last season. And with similar scarcity of catches during the current season, they will be unable to feed their family.

Meanwhile, Barisal Hilsa Wholesale Market comprising 127 godowns and 135 ice factories gave a barren look in absence of trading.

An employee of Talukdar Fishing said nearly 800-900 maunds of local Hilsa were traded daily last year but this year such daily trading never exceeded even a 100 maunds.

An ice-factory owner said short supply of Hilsa fish forced them to sell ice between Tk 65 and Tk 70 per cent against the production cost of Tk 85. Even then, not more than 8-10 cans of ice were sold daily compared to 70-80 cans last year during the local Hilsa season, he added.

Faridpur Medical College Hospital patients deprived of food!

From Abdul Matin Fakir

FARIDPUR, Mar 31: The patients of Faridpur Medical College Hospital are very often deprived of their diets from the hospital authority as the diet supply contractor fail to supply dietary items to the hospital in due time.

As a result the patients have to go unfed. In a press conference at Faridpur Press Club in the evening of March 27, Md Moniruzzaman Biswas, diet supply contractor of the hospital told the local newsmen that one terrorist named Lekhon son of Md Nizamuddin of West Khabashpur and an employee of Faridpur Civil Surgeon Office forcibly took away Tk 3,500, Tk 4,500 and Tk 3,000 on March 2, March 24 and March 26 from his agent Md Tofazzal Hossain on his way to Shariatullah Market to purchase the prescribed dietary items for the patients. On the above mentioned day, diets for the patients could not be supplied in due time causing starvation to the patients.

Three separate cases were lodged with Kotwala thana just after the snatching incidents, but no action has yet been taken against the terrorist, Lekhon though the contractor personally informed the Police Super and the Superintendent of the Medical College Hospital.

Lekhon also threatened the agent of the contractor to pay him a good amount every day if the contractor continues his supply to the hospital.

The contractor also said

that if immediate action is not taken against Lekhon, he would not be able to supply food for the patients, in the hospital.

When Benapole will be declared a municipality?

From Staff Correspondent

BENAPOLE, Mar 31: Benapole was supposed to be declared a municipality long ago as its land port's annual contribution to the national exchequer stands at Tk 700 crore, but it could not be done in last two decades, reports UNB.

Political leaders and ministers occasionally visit the country's biggest land port and assure the local people of upgrading it into a municipality, but they naturally forget to follow up their words into action.

To realise their long-running demand, the locals under the banner of Benapole Unnayan Parisad had demonstrated and observed token hunger strikes on various occasions, but their programmes could not yield any positive results.

Recently, Tabibur Rahman Sarder, a ruling party MP, has forged another unity "Poutrasava Implementation Committee" with local political leaders and elite. But it could not yet make any headway in realising the demand.

News snaps

Tk 850 cr poultry farm project

PANCHAGARH, Mar 31: The largest ever poultry farm of the country will be set up at Katapara village in Tetulia at a cost of Tk 850 crore, reports UNB.

Tetulia branch of Rajshahi Krishi Unnayan Bank (RAKUB) will provide Tk 508 crore loan to implement the private sector project in the northern region, official sources said. The farm, to be known as Tetulia Pras Ltd Company, will be set up on 100 acres of land. RAKUB Regional Manager M Sahfar Rahman told that the farm will have two lakh poultry birds to lay 10 lakh eggs a week. Bangladesh Bank Governor Dr M Farashuddin is likely to lay the foundation stone of the project on Friday.

Record production of boro

HABIGANJ, Mar 31: The district produced a record amount of boro paddy this season surpassing its target, thanks to the weather, reports UNB.

Agriculture officials said some 87,900 hectares of land were brought under boro cultivation against the target of 82,010 hectares. They said fair weather has helped the farmers break their previous production records.

137 uplift schemes progressing

CHUADANGA, Mar 31: A total of 137 schemes in three thanas have just been started under Special Test Relief Programme (STRP), reports BSS.

Of the total, 46 schemes are being implemented in sadar, 60 schemes in Damurhuda and 31 schemes in Jibannagar thanas, official sources said. The schemes include repair and maintenance of roads, educational institutions, cultural organisations and graveyards. A total of 143 tons of foodgrains have been sanctioned for implementing the schemes. The schemes will be completed by June next.

Indian national convicted

JOYPURHAT, Mar 31: A court has convicted an Indian national and sentenced him to 10 years' rigorous imprisonment for smuggling firearms into Bangladesh, reports UNB.

The convict, Muktar Hossain, 27, of Malda district in India, was also fined Tk 10,000, in default, to suffer two years' more RI. Police arrested Muktar with firearms after he got down from a bus at Panchar crossing in the town on January 4, 1999. After examining the records and witnesses, Assistant Sessions Judge and Judge of Special Tribunal-2 Chandan Kumar Singh handed down the verdict on March 28.



Vice Chancellor of Rajshahi University Professor Sayeedur Rahman Khan addressing the inaugural session of National Education Week on the campus recently. — Star photo D/c

Man killed by opponents

PABNA, Mar 31: A man was killed and 15 others were injured in a deadly attack by their opponents as sequel to previous enmity at a suburban village on Thursday, reports UNB.

Locals said armed hoodlums numbering 14-15 attacked the house of Sadaruddin Mandol, 50, of village Char Balarampur at about 11 am and stabbed the residents indiscriminately. Sadaruddin died on the spot. Eight of the injured were admitted to Pabna General Hospital. Of them, condition of Rehmat Ali Mandol, 40, and Abdul Quddus, 35, was stated "critical." The body was taken to the hospital morgue. A case was lodged in this connection.

Installation ceremony

NARSINGDI, Mar 31: Installation ceremony of the newly elected executives of Narsingdi Bar Association-2000 was held at local Town Hall on Wednesday, reports BSS.

Justice Latifur Rahman, Chief Justice of Bangladesh was present in the installation ceremony as the chief guest. Al-haj M A Hannan Bhuiyan, president of the Bar Association presided over the function. Among others, advocate Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, General Secretary of Narsingdi Bar Association, advocate Asaduzzaman and Advocate Badruddoza, former Presidents of Narsingdi Bar Association, Advocate Abul Kalam, former Secretary Narsingdi Bar Association and Advocate SA Hadi addressed the function.

Work progressing

CHUADANGA, Mar 25: The construction work of Chuadanga district jail is progressing gradually at a cost of Taka one crore and 60 lakh at the first phase, reports BSS.

According to an official source, at the first phase a barrack for 64 undertrial male prisoners, boundary walls, office room and residence of the Superintendent are being constructed. So far about 20 per cent work have been completed. It is expected that the construction works of the jail will be completed by the end of the next year at a total cost of taka 14 crore which will include construction of barracks for 300 prisoners, staff quarters, water tank, water supply system, drainage, approach roads kitchen, hanging stage, hospital, inspection tower and barrack for the warders.

Workshop on health care

SHARIATPUR, Mar 31: A training workshop on Mother and Child Health Care and Family Planning, sponsored by the district information office, was held recently at the office of the Thana Nirabhi Officer, reports BSS.

Fifty persons including school teachers and imams of mosques participated in the training. The participants were informed of various programme of the government for checking population boom. They were requested to play their roles in the family planning activities in their respective areas in the greater interest of the nation.

Farewell to Satkhira DC

SATKHIRA, Mar 31: A farewell was given to Saiful Alam, the outgoing Deputy Commissioner of Satkhira on Monday, reports BSS.

On this occasion, a simple function was held at the hall room of Satkhira District Chamber of Commerce and Industries with its President Munsur Ahmed Gazi in the chair. Among others, Police Super Mosharraf Hossain Bhuiyan, Sadar Thana Nirabhi Officer Nimat Choudhury, ex-pourasabha Chairman Abdul Jalil, Chamber Vice president Ashrafuzzaman Ashu, and Zila Krira Sangstha Secretary Sheikh Nizamuddin addressed the function.



Special medical camp Feni unit of Bangladesh Diabetic Association arranged a special medical camp recently at Feni Diabetic Hospital. Photo shows doctors operating upon a patient there. — Star photo