

## CU academic council elections today

CU CORRESPONDENT

The election of associate professors and assistant professors to the academic council of Chittagong University (CU) will be held today.

Three panels are taking part in the election. The panels are BNP-Jamaat-backed White Panel, pro-Awami League Blue Panel and Left-leaning Pink Panel.

The white panel candidates are Mohammad Imam Hossain, associate professor of statistics department, Dr. AKM Haroon Or-Rashid, associate professor of Physics department, Dr. Shariar Talukdar, assistant professor of Fine Arts Department, and Ahmed Ali, assistant professor of Arabic and Islamic studies department.

The Blue Panel candidates are Mohammad Sekander Chowdhury, associate professor of Islamic and Culture Department, Sumongal Borua, associate professor of Orientation Language, AKM Mainul Haq Miazi, assistant professor of physics department, and Dr. Mohammad Qamrul Huda, assistant professor of Botany department.

And the Pink Panel candidates are Dr. Gonesh Chandra Roy, associate professor of Mathematics department, DR. Mohammad Abu Taher, associate professor of Management department, Mohammad Abul Mansur, assistant professor of Micro-Biology department, and Mohammad Anwarul Islam, assistant professor of History department.



BNP took out a procession in the city yesterday protesting Leader of the Opposition in parliament and Awami League chief Sheikh Hasina's remarks about late president Ziaur Rahman.

## MPs urged to support govt move to ban import of reconditioned cars

UNB, Dhaka

Urging the MPs to support the government move towards banning the import of old cars, distributors of new vehicles said the abandoned cars after some repairs are sold in the name of reconditioned cars.

In a letter to the parliamentarians, Bangladesh Automobile Distributors Association (BADA) gave an elaborate description of reconditioned cars and said old cars sold here are not reconditioned at all.

"Reconditioned means the wheels, tires, battery, brake parts, glasses, wiper, belts, filters, plugs, rust control, engine parts and catalytic converter (longevity of which is four years) must be new," it said.

Besides, the BADA said, having blue sticker of Japan Transport Authorities is a must for a reconditioned car. "But, here reconditioned cars with that standards and blue sticker are not found."

It said on the one side, buyers are being cheated while buying an abandoned car in the name of reconditioned ones and on the other there remains the risk of accident and further air pollution. Referring to studies of envi-

ronmentalists, the BADA letter said the old cars fume hydrocarbon at a level of 260 while the permissible emission level is 180.

It said cars not older than five years were allowed previously but scrapped ones are imported in the name of reconditioned cars by changing chassis and engine numbers. "And they get depreciation."

The BADA was surprised to note a claim of reconditioned car importers that five lakh employees work in their 400 shops. It also said the employees would not be jobless as each of the new car distributors will make 20 dealers and the workshops will continue.

It rejected a plea that Bangladesh would be a market of Indian vehicles if the import of old cars is banned. Prices of Indian vehicles have always been low, but they have only 2 per cent of new car market. "Those who are spreading the apprehensions live in a fool's paradise."

It argued that following the new duty structure, new cars from different countries would be available at a price from 3 lakh to 9 lakh.

The BADA letter referred to an invoice circulated by recondi-

tioned car importers that showed a Briton buy a car in 2001, which was manufactured in 1992. The invoice was fake as the British government allows five-year-old reconditioned car, it said.

The new car businesspeople also rejected a claim that annually 10,000 reconditioned cars are imported, mentioning that the BRTA registered only 1,027 cars in 2001 while 4,087 in 2000 and 4,986 in 1999.

"If it is admitted that 10,000 reconditioned cars are coming in the country every year, one must understand either those are being smuggled, paid through hundi and sold secretly."

The BADA petition further noted with surprise that the government gets Tk 900 crore in duties from reconditioned cars. The duties government actually received were Tk 37 crore in 2001, Tk 147 crore in 2000 and Tk 179 crore in 1999.

The new car distributors urged the legislators to stand by the government ban on the import of reconditioned cars to make new cars available at cheaper prices and at the same time to protect environment and increase road safety.

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## Mongla Port makes Tk 171cr profit

BSS, Khulna

Mongla Port made a net profit of Tk 171.24 crore from July 1994 to March this year.

During the period, the port handled 8,36,759 tonnes of export cargoes and 2,56,954 tonnes of import cargoes.

Thirty-nine ships can anchor at the port at a time -- five at the jetty and the rest in different buoys and anchorage.

The port also handles containers. It handled 1,47,295 containers from July 1994 to March this year.

The Mongla port, earlier known as Chalna port, was set up in 1950. It started functioning on December 11, 1950 with the anchoring of British merchant ship, City of Lyons, at Joymonirghol.

After extensive surveys by local and foreign agencies, the port was shifted to its present location at Mongla in 1954.

Mongla has been operating as an export-oriented port since its establishment. Importers have shown little interest in using the port as its links with the capital are not yet suitable for transporting goods.

An agreement was signed with Nepal in 1997 to transship cargoes. But the Himalayan kingdom stopped using the port after importing about 50,000 tonnes of goods without assigning any reason.

Establishment of better road and railway links will breathe life into the port, the port users said.

Quick construction of the Rupsa Bridge and a bridge over the Padma at Mawa would reduce the distance between Dhaka and Mongla via Bhanga to 161 km, they said.

Construction of railway from Khulna to Mongla is a long-cherished demand of the business community of the country's southwestern zone.

The railway would help boost economic activities in the region,

they felt. The high rate of deposition of silt in the Passur Channel due to 18 sunken ships is a challenge to the port. The Port Authority has submitted a proposal to the ministry to salvage the vessels.

A set of other measures including permanent arrangement for capital dredging, removal of the sunken ships, establishment of deep-sea anchorage at Akram point, replacement of some equipment and crafts should be taken soon to add a flip to the port, port users said.

### Shimul Biswas appointed BIWTC chairman

UNB, Dhaka

The government yesterday appointed eminent transport leader and social worker Advocate Shamsur Rahman Shimul Biswas as chairman of Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Corporation (BIWTC).

He took over the office yesterday.

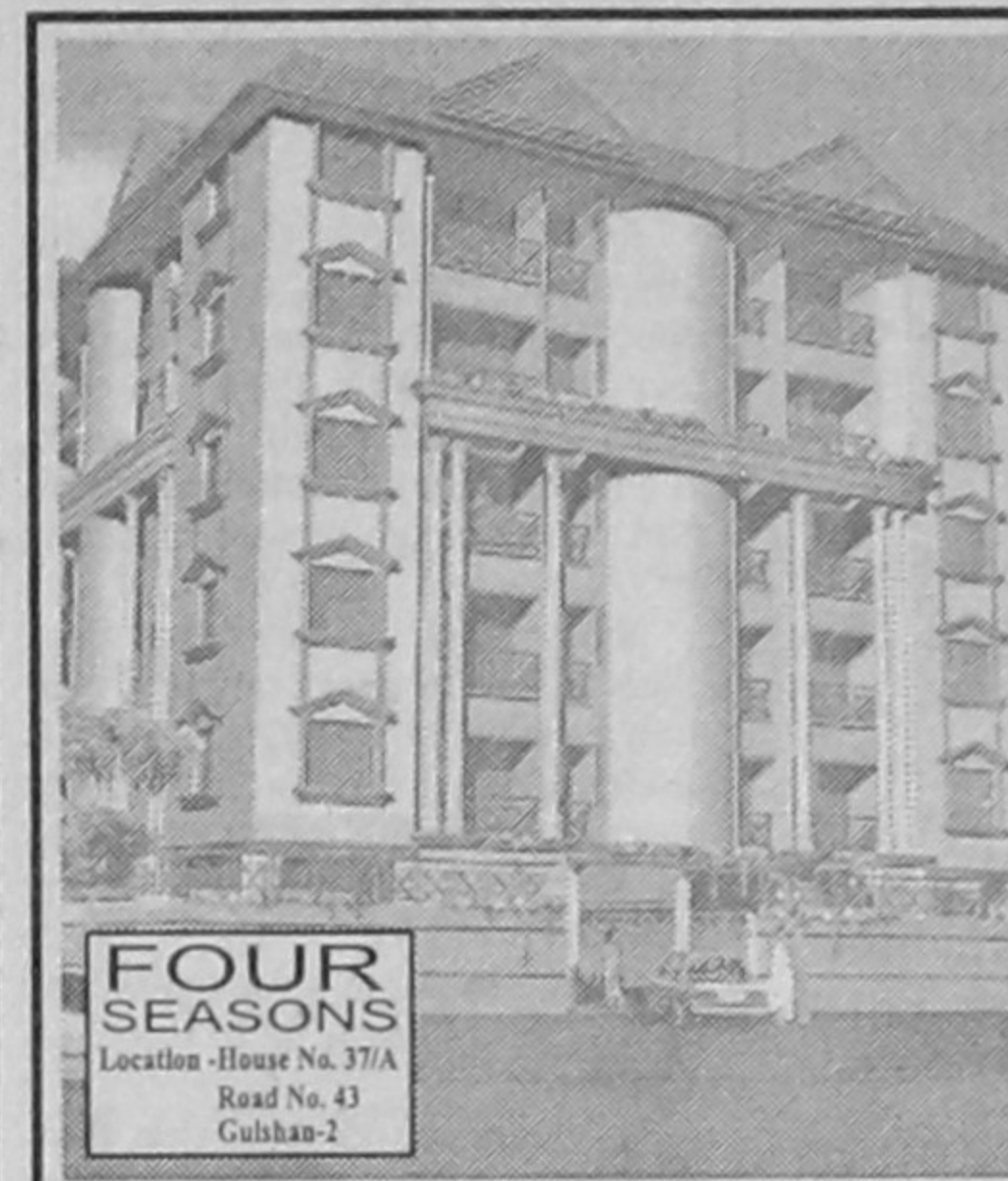
Shimul, who is the joint secretary general of Bangladesh Sarak Paribahan Samik Federation and president of the Uttarbanga Samik Federation, joined BNP in 2000, said a press release.

### Govt to reform jail code

UNB, Gazipur

Home Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury yesterday said the government will reform the existing jail code to increase the facilities of the prisoners.

The Minister was talking to the jail officials at the Kashimpur central jail in Gazipur.



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