

SNAPS

**Minor girl crushed under wheels**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Lalamonirhat

A minor girl was crushed under the wheels of a BRTC bus at Namuri Bazar in Aditmari upazila.

The victim, Moni Akhter, was the daughter of one Mozibur Rahman. Police seized the bus but the driver of the bus managed to flee.

**Education week begins at CU**

CU CORRESPONDENT

A week-long Education and Research Week-2003 began at the Chittagong University (CU) on Sunday.

Vice Chancellor AJM Nuruddin Chowdhury inaugurated the programme, arranged by the faculty. Pro-VC Prof. M. Shamsuddin, former VC Dr. Abdul Karim, Dean of Social Science Prof. Mahbub Ullah, acting dean of arts faculty Prof. ANM Wahidur Rahman were present, among others.

**Wild elephants destroy army security post**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bandarban

A herd of wild elephants demolished a security post at an army camp in Alikadam area of the district on Saturday night. None of the army men at the camp was injured, official sources said. Wild elephants killed at least 70 people in the hill district in the last two years, according to police. Most of the deaths were in Lama, Alikadam and Sadar upazila areas.

**Medicine traders observe strike at Gaibandha**

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Medicine traders at Gaibandha observed a half-day strike on Saturday protesting alleged attack on the owner of a medicine shop in the town earlier.

The strike was called by Gaibandha unit of Bangladesh Chemists and Druggists Samity.

Medicine shop owners brought out a procession and handed over a memorandum to the deputy commissioner, demanding arrest of culprits.

# 2,000 units closed in N-region in 7 yrs

Inflow of Indian goods, load shedding blamed

**BSS, Thakurgaon**

About 2,000 small and cottage industries, including silk factories in Thakurgaon and Rajshahi were closed in the northern region in the last seven years due to inflow of cheap Indian goods, lack of capital and load shedding.

These industries were members of Rajshahi unit of National Association of Small and Cottage Industries of Bangladesh (NASCIB).

Several lakh workers and employees of these industries became unemployed, NASCIB sources said.

Bangladeshi goods cannot compete with cheaper Indian goods in the market. Goods are now stockpiled in many other industries, which are facing closure, they said.

The industries closed include electric fan factory, garments factory, automatic rice mills, engineering workshop and printing press.

These include about 300 industries in different BSCIC Estates.

Many of these industries were detected as 'sick' but did not get any government help despite repeated attempts, they said.

Some businessmen told this correspondent that banks do not cooperate with the entrepreneurs. They do not get bank loan even after repeated attempts. Bank loans are provided to big industries only, they alleged.

# Clashes mar Muktagachha AL council: 10 hurt

**BSS, Muktagacha**

Clashes left at least 10 Awami League activists injured and marred the triennial council of the party's Muktagachha unit here on Sunday.

Police and witnesses said three of the 10 injured AL workers were admitted to a local hospital and one of them was later transferred to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital.

The clashes between the groups followed several days of tension over formation of a new committee.

Rashida Mohiuddin and Abdul Malek Sarkar is leading one group while the other groups is being led by Abdus Samad Master and Abdul Hya.

Witnesses said the council venue was suddenly shifted outside the main town without informing the Samad-Hye group. This angered their supporters who brought out a protest march and proceeded towards the new venue.

The rivals reportedly attacked the procession, resulting in clashes.

Party sources said the Samad-Hye group later boycotted the council after a futile reconciliation attempt by central Awami League leader Saber Hossain Chowdhury, who came to join the event as chief guest.



Teachers and students of Patuakhali Science and Technology University took out a procession on the campus recently on the occasion of National Tree Plantation Movement 2003.



PHOTO: STAR

An elderly man with two babies in his lap wades through rainwater in Halishahar area on Sunday. Incessant rain for the last three days left many areas of Chittagong city waterlogged.

## Hilli customs foil forgery, seize imported mangoes

**BSS, rajshahi**

Customs authorities have foiled a bid by an importer to deprive the government of Tk 1,27,579 revenue by submitting forged treasury bills at Hilli Land Customs (LC) station in Dinajpur on Sunday.

Official sources here said customs officials became suspicious when a clearing and forwarding (C&F) agent of a trading company, in collaboration with a Dhaka-based company was trying to pay customs duty and other taxes on a consignment of eight tons of mango valued at about Tk 1.5 lakh, imported from India.

On-duty customs officials checked the consignment with the concerned bank and confirmed that the two bills showing payment of Tk 1,27,794 were forged.

The imported mangoes have been seized and sold in auction. A case has been filed with Hakimpur police station against the importer and the C&F agent, customs sources said.

## Land grabbers demolish house in Rajshahi

Court order ignored, victims claim

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi**

Defying a court injunction, some influential persons have demolished a portion of a two storied building owned by two families at Shaheb Bazar in Rajshahi and are constructing a high rise building on the land.

Hired men of the influential persons are now threatening the two families to leave the rest portion of the building "before being evicted", it is alleged.

Families of Naresh Ram and his brother Gopal Ram, both small businessmen, have been living in the two storied building for more than 70 years, local people said. Naresh and Gopal are sons of late Suriya Ram.

Sources said "attempt to capture" the land by the influential persons started in early 2002. The two brothers filed a case on June 26, 2002 challenging them.

On May 14 this year, the Senior Assistant Judge's court, Rajshahi issued a temporary injunction on demolition of the building or eviction of the family till delivery of the verdict in the case.

But the court order was violated next day and hired men of the influential persons demolished a portion of their building and beat up members of the two families.

After the demolition, Naresh Ram and Gopal Ram lodged a case on May 19 this year, accusing Nuruzzaman Pitar of Malopara, Quamrul Ahsan Dipu of Ranibazar and Shirajul Islam Lal, Zahangir Alam Haran of Rajarhata areas in Rajshahi city.

When contacted by this correspondent, the accused persons claimed that the land belonged to them. They also showed photocopies of "deeds" on the land.

But Naresh Ram and Gopal Ram claimed that the deeds (which the accused persons showed) are "forged" and a case in this regard was under trial.

When asked about the demolition, Nuruzzaman Pitar and Shirajul Islam Lal said Naresh and Gopal themselves demolished their own building to harass them.

"We offered the families an amount of money to hand over the land to us, considering that they lived there for many years. But they (the families) want more money", Pitar said.

When contacted, Naresh and Gopal said they want to live in their ancestral home, not money.

## Road mishaps kill 2 in Ctg, Dinajpur

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Two persons were killed and at least 45 injured in two road accidents in Chittagong and Dinajpur on Sunday.

A BSS report from Dinajpur said one person was killed and 30 were injured, three of them critically, when a bus fell into a roadside ditch at Durgapur Banbagan on the Dinajpur-Godaghat highway. Bus driver Dulu Miah, 35, died on the spot.

Another BSS report from Chittagong said a septuagenarian man was killed and 15 people were injured when a Chittagong-bound bus fell into a ditch at Sesuria under Banskhalip upazila.

Kabir Ahmed (70) of Bailchori village under Banskhalip upazila died on the spot.

## Monohordi municipal polls today

**BSS, Narsingdi**

Election in Monohardi Poursasabha will be held today for the first time after its establishment in June last year.

All preparations have been completed to hold the election in a free and fair manner, officials said.

Police, Ansars and BDR personnel will be deployed in all the nine polling centres to maintain law and order they said.

Three candidates for the post of chairman, 10 for three posts of reserved women commissioner and 32 for nine posts of ward commissioner are contesting.

## Ex-UP member murdered

**UNB, Jhenaidah**

An ex-Union Parishad member was shot and chopped to death by unidentified assailants at Bankira village in Sadar upazila on Saturday night.

The deceased was identified as Abul Kalam Azad, 45, of Nabinagar village in Chuadanga district. He was abducted and taken to the village by the miscreants following a previous enmity.

# Northwestern region 'high risk zone' for AIDS

**BSS, Rajshahi**

Speakers at a day-long workshop here on Sunday said the north-western region of Bangladesh was becoming a "high risk zone" of HIV/AIDS infection from neighbouring India.

They said the government and NGOs should take immediate steps to prevent spread of HIV/AIDS in the region, which is increasingly becoming vulnerable to the killer disease.

The workshop on "Orientation of Journalists on HIV/AIDS Issue", followed by an open discussion, was organised by the Centre for Communication and Development (CCD) in collaboration with CARE, Bangladesh. It was held at the conference hall of Postal Academy.

CCD Chairman Shah Anisur Rahman, Executive Director Golam Murtoza, Chairman of Mass Communication Department of Rajshahi University Dulal Chandra Bishwas, CARE representative Dr Najmul Hussein and Journalist Saleem Samad took part as resource persons in the workshop.

Around 40 journalists from different parts of the region participated in the workshop and the open discussion.

They said HIV infection is still

very limited in the country because of religious values and family discipline.

But it can spread quickly through smugglers, truck drivers, illegal immigrants and travellers from the neighboring country.

They urged the government and other authorities concerned to increase screening measures at blood transfusion centres. They suggested drastic action against abuse of drugs and their smuggling, proper rehabilitation of floating sex workers and also called for creating awareness among people about the danger of HIV infection.

# 100 killed in Bagerhat since takeover by alliance govt

AL leader Khaleque claims

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna**

Awami League leader and former state minister Talukder Abdul Khaleque MP has said over 100 murders have been committed in Bagerhat district after the four-party alliance came to power.

The murders were committed by "goons" belonging to BNP, he alleged and claimed that he and police have evidences for those.

Addressing a press conference on Sunday Khaleque alleged that goons hired by Bagerhat district BNP president MAH Selim MP killed Rampal thana AL leader Noor Mohammad Mallick. Thirteen people have been chargesheeted in the murder case.

The AL leader said Fakir Tariqul Islam, a leader of BNP's youth front Jubo Dal, is the "prime accused" in BNP district vice president MA Awal murder case.

He further alleged that local BNP leader Abul Bashir is among the accused in the case for raping AL leader Chabi Rani Mondol.

Besides, all the accused in the rape and murder at Thakurbari in Komorpur village under the Sadar thana are BNP activists, claimed Khaleque, general secretary of

Khulna city AL.

Blaming BNP leader Selim for harbouring armed terrorists, Khaleque said Awami League leaders and activists are not being allowed to hold any meeting in open space.

He alleged that "BNP goons" have "captured" almost 90 percent of fish farms.

Khaleque, however, said that he has no objection in forming an alliance with BNP if its leaders really want peace and development in Bagerhat.

# One gets life term for possessing heroin, another for abduction

STAR NATIONAL DESK

One person has been sentenced to life imprisonment in Moulvibazar for keeping heroin for commercial purpose and another for kidnapping a teenaged girl in Habiganj.

Our Staff Correspondent reported from Sylhet that Judge Shah-e-Alam Chowdhury of the Speedy Trial Tribunal sentenced Zahid Miah of Paguria village in Moulvibazar Sadar upazila to life imprisonment for keeping heroin for commercial purpose.

The verdict was passed in absentia as Zahid Mia, who was granted bail by Moulvibazar District Judge Court, is absconding, sources at the Special tribunal and Sylhet police said.

A task force comprising BDR personnel and narcotics department officials raided Zahid Mia's house on August 8, 2002 and recovered 40 grams of heroin worth about Tk 40 lakh, police said.

Our Habiganj Correspondent reported that Judge Biplob Goswami of the Children and

Women Repression Prevention Special Tribunal, Habiganj sentenced Askir Mia of Titukhai village under Habiganj Sadar Upazila to life imprisonment for kidnapping and attempting to marry a teenaged girl against her will.

Askir Mia along with three others kidnapped the girl of the same village on the night of October 13, 1999 when she came out of her house to respond to nature's call.

The court after examining eight witnesses found Askir Mia guilty and acquitted the three.