

SNAPS

Road mishap claims youth

UNB, *Khulna*

A newly married youth was killed and three others, including his wife, were injured in a tragic road accident at Jugipasha on Khulna-Jessore road on Friday.

Police said the mishap took place at about 8pm when a Khulna-bound bus crashed into a private car leaving Moin Sheikh, 20, dead on the spot and injuring others.

The injured wife, Chameli, car driver Alauddin and Jhenidah thana ASI Azhar Ali were admitted to a local hospital.

All the victims were travelling in the car. Police seized both the bu

Hotel owner shot dead

UNB, *Faridpur*

A hotel owner was shot dead at Gangabardi, on the out skirts of the town, on Tuesday.

Police said unidentified assailants sprayed bullets on Mujibar Gazi, 30, when he was going home from his hotel at Gangabardi. Later, police recovered the body was sent it to Faridpur Medical College Hospital morgue for autopsy.

4 held for attack on transport leader

UNB, *Faridpur*

Four people were arrested for their alleged involvement in the attack on Kamrul Islam Siddique, secretary of the district bus owners' association, on Wednesday.

The arrested were identified as Salam, 21, Enayet, 20, Anis, 20, and Sagar, 20.

UP complex work going on

UNB, *Khagrachhari*

The Gumti Union Parishad complex in Matiranga upazila is being constructed at a cost of Tk 29.67 lakh.

Chairman of Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board Wadud Bhuiyan MP laid the foundation stone of the complex on Friday.

Local Government Engineering Department is constructing the complex.

# Sylhet Osmani airport a nightmare for passengers

IQBAL SIDDIQUEE, *Sylhet.*

Hassle and harassment of passengers at Sylhet Osmani International Airport by a section of airport employees go unabated.

Incidents of virtual snatching of passport, money and valuables and loss of luggage in a everyday affair, sources said. Sometimes they misbehave with passengers in presence of officials, who play the role of spectators.

In the last one year, three inquiry committees suggested steps against an organised group of CAAB (Civil Aviation Authority of Bangladesh) employees to stop the hassle and harassment, but nothing has been done, the sources said.

There has been no improvement in passenger service three years after upgrading it to an international airport though revenue earning from this station has gone up considerably with increased number of passengers from abroad.

The national carrier Biman Bangladesh -- earns 60 per cent of its revenue from this station. Biman operates at least five flights a week to this airport from destinations like Kuwait, Dubai and London.

The organized group of CAAB

employees are working at the airport for at least 15 years.

They swoop on incoming passengers within minutes of their arrival at the Customs Lounge on the plea of assisting them. They also harass outgoing passengers at the checking counter.

Though several departmental enquiries were done by officials from Dhaka, nothing could be done as the "gang is very strong and has links with influentials", one source said.

A number of confidential reports said that a gang of 16 CAAB employees are directly involved in different crimes.

In June 2002, the then Officer-in-Charge, Immigration, in a written complaint to the Airport Manager said that 16 CAAB employees were directly involved in "unwanted activities" at the customs lounge, immigration and checking counter. In the report he also listed the employees and suggested "punitive measures" against them to stop passengers' harassment.

"At times the situation goes beyond the control of police officials and others due to wrongdoings by members of the group", the report had said.

In November last year, another official in charge of airport immi-

gration police in a confidential report to the Superintendent of Police, Special Branch said that 16 CAAB employees from Security Supervisor to trolley men were directly involved in cheating passengers in different ways.

He also alleged that the Airport Manager ignored the allegations when the matter was brought to his notice.

Besides, the OC, Immigration sent two other confidential reports on July 8 and July 19 last year elaborating some incidents of harassment of passengers.

In May this year, an Assistant Director from CAAB head office in Dhaka did an inquiry into the allegations against the CAAB employees. "But things were managed after the inquiry" another source said. There are 52 CAAB security men at the airport.

There is no sitting arrangement in the concourse hall for the passengers.

Suffering of an overseas passenger starts as he enters the lounge and puts the luggage on the scanning machine, which is almost inoperative. The CAAB security guards, in the name of security checking, charge tips at high rates. A security guard looks after the scanning machine though there is

an operator for it. It is very easy to harass a passenger in the name of overweight of the luggage and unauthorised items in it.

A new scanning machine brought for the airport about eight months back is in Dhaka for unknown reasons. The sources said the organized group does not want it to be installed here.

An official seeking anonymity said the situation can not be brought under control until the 'listed employees', who had been here for long over 15 years are removed.

There is no good canteen in the airport. Water supply system and toilet facilities are not up to the mark.

"We are paying Tk 300 as airport tax, but not getting the minimum facility", Alauddin, a passenger from Kuwait said on Sunday last.

"The moment I entered the Customs area, two young men, who identified themselves as airport employees came to me and asked whether I needed any assistance. At one stage, they tried to take my passport and ticket to get things cleared from the Customs counter. They also proposed for arranging a transport for me", Alauddin added.



PHOTO: STAR

This is a regular scene at the Sylhet Osmani International Airport. Visitors who come to see off or receive friends and relatives have to wait outside the passenger lounge for hours in unpleasant conditions as there is no sitting arrangement for them.

## Tk 15cr loss in Thakurgaon Sugar Mills

BSS, *Thakurgaon*

The Thakurgaon Sugar Mills incurred a loss of Tk 15 crore this year, mill sources said.

The mill crushed 1,100 tonnes of sugarcane a day this year against its capacity of 1,500 tonnes due to mechanical trouble and alleged mismanagement.

It produced 10,604.50 tonnes of sugarcane in the season against a target of 13,950 tonnes by crushing 1,80,000 tonnes sugarcane.

Since its inception the mills

incurred a total loss of about Tk 100 crore.

At present 3,270 tonnes of sugar worth over Tk 8.66 lakh is lying unsold in the mill as the market has been flooded with huge imported and smuggled sugar.

It is facing serious problems in paying regular payment of workers and employees and pensions of 125 staff amounting to Tk 1.40 crore.

The government has decided to offer golden handshake to 200 workers and employees of the mill.

## Bank manager faces legal notice for client 'harassment'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Moulvibazar*

A client has issued a legal notice on the manager of a private bank here for harassing him on "false" charge of money laundering.

Nesar Ahmed, a contractor, deposited Tk five lakh to the bank's Moulvibazar branch for Telegraphic Transfer (TT) to an account of an assistant manager of GEC Company Ltd. at the foreign exchange branch of the same bank in Dhaka. He also deposited Tk 605 as TT fee, Nesar told newsmen recently.

After a few minutes, he was asked to meet the manager.

The manager claimed that the money was deposited for laundering and demanded Tk 10,000 from Nesar for its transfer "without any trouble".

Nesar declined, saying that the money was being transferred for supply of electric equipment for construction of a power sub-station at Moulvibazar district jail and that he had documents.

The manager said Nesar would be handed over to police on charge of

money laundering and the deposited money would be seized.

After an exchange words, the manager refused to transfer the money but agreed to return it.

Later, a legal notice was issued on the manager on behalf of Nesar for alleged harassment.

When contacted, the manager said the allegation is false and no such incident happened at his bank.

## Housewife commits 'suicide'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Brahmanbaria*

A mother of four children allegedly committed suicide by taking poison at Bhatamatha village under Akawra upazila recently.

Police said Anwara Begum, 35, wife Rafique Mia, took poison Monday night following a family feud. Autopsy of the body was done at Brahmanbaria Sadar Hospital.

### Dowry

## One to die, another gets life term

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Sirajganj*

One person has been given death sentence for killing his newly married wife for dowry.

Three others have been given life term for abetting the murder.

Sirajganj Additional District and Sessions Judge Abu Ahmed on Thursday sentenced Feroz Sheikh, 25, of Rajganj upazila to death for killing his wife Sahida Khatun, 18, in September 1998.

The judge gave life imprisonment to Montu Sheikh, 25, Joyanal Sheikh, 26 and Hossen Ali 27 for abetting the murder.

Firoz took his wife to a filed at night and killed her with the help of the three.

A BSS report from Jamalpur said the Women and Child Repression Prevention Tribunal sentenced one person to life imprisonment in absentia for attempting to murder his wife for dowry.

Judge Helal Uddin convicted Suja Mia, of Aranghati village in Jamalpur Sadar upazila for torturing and trying to kill his wife Khodeza Begum for Tk 10,000 dowry.

## Tempo driver killed in road accident

UNB, *Habiganj*

One person was killed in a road accident in Habiganj on Thursday.

Police said a tempo driver was killed when his goods-laden vehicle overturned on Shayestaganj-Zagadishpur road here in the afternoon.

Tempo driver Salek Miah, 30, of Zagadpur village in the upazila was critically injured in the accident and died at Sadar hospital after admission.

## One killed, 18 injured in clashes over land

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

One person was killed and 18 people were injured, three of them seriously, in two separate clashes on Friday over land dispute at Debnagar village in the Sadar and at Assassum upazila.

Anowarul Islam, 32, was killed and six persons were injured when villagers clashed at Debnagar over possession of a disputed land, police said. Of the injured Jahangir Hossain, Hazrat Ali and Akbar Ali were taken to Satkhira hospital in critical conditions. Police arrested two persons.

At Assassuni upazila, 12 people including four women were injured when two groups clashed over possession of a disputed land, police said.

## Jute Mill arms looting 6 rifles are with an 'influential' in Khulna

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

A cadre of outlawed Purba Banglar Communist Party (BCP) -- Zinnat Shaikh-- has admitted to police that the rifle along with eight bullets recovered from his possession was among 19 others looted from the store of state owned Daulatpur Jute mill at Khalishpur on the night of April 24 last year.

Jinnat, arrested on July 2 from Nehalpur village in Rupsha upazila, confessed to police during interrogation that he took part in looting. He has been shown arrested in the DJM arms looting case following his confession.

Zinnat told police that six of the looted rifles are now with an influential man in Chandmari area under Khulna thana. The influential man who allegedly harboured BCP cadres felt Chandmari soon after the arrest of Zinnat, the OC of Khalishpur thana said.

## BCCI wants Padma Bridge at Mawa point

UNB, *Barisal*

The Barisal Chamber of Commerce and Industries (BCCI) has demanded construction of the proposed Padma Bridge at Mawa point.

BCCI leaders at a meeting at its office on Thursday said the bridge at Mawa point will benefit people of 17 districts in Barisal, Dhaka and Khulna divisions. A bridge at any other point will not benefit so many districts.

They also threatened to go for an action programme if their demand is not met.

Presided over by BCCI President Obaidul Huq, the meeting was also addressed by Nazir Ahmed, Nurul Alam Farid, Mintu Bose, Farid Ahmed, prof MA Satter and Hafiza Nasrin.

admitted to Kaligonj hospital.

Police and local people said, 30 to 40 armed miscreants launched the attack at dead of night.

When contacted, Samsul Huda, ASI of Kaligonj thana, confirmed the incident. He said injured Radha Rani who is under treatment at Kaligonj hospital complained to him that she was violated during the attack.

A case was lodged with Kaliganj thana.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Saikhira*

At least five persons including four women were injured when miscreants evicted some families, demolished their houses and occupied 1.6 acres of land at Biswanath Pur village in Kaligonj upazila recently.

They turned the land into a football field by erecting goal posts.

The injured are Aduri Sarkar, 50, Banalata Sarkar, 40 Radha Rani Sarkar, 35, Sabitri Sarkar, 34 and Buddha Dev Sarkar. They were