

Hundreds in Ctg denied degree exam

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Faulty announcement of the rescheduled degree examinations under National University denied several hundred examinees in the city yesterday.

The aggrieved candidates drew attention of the education minister and National University authorities to the matter and appealed for providing them with an opportunity to sit for the examination they missed.

They said the authorities suspended examinations of three papers scheduled for February 12, 14 and 16 over the call of general strikes and fixed new dates on three Fridays on February 13, 20 and 27.

National University authorities announced the dates on the television and in newspapers but did not mention the time, examinees at Chittagong City (Govt) University College centre alleged.

Directed by authorities of the concerned exam centres, they arrived at the centres according to the previous time of February 14 exam at 2:00pm to find that the exam began at 9:30am and was over.

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Members of Bangladesh Cultural Activists' Group bring out a colourful procession yesterday on the eve of International Mother Language Day.

BCL leader, former UP chairman murdered in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A leader of Bangladesh Chhtra League (BCL), a former union parishad chairman and an alleged criminal were killed in the city yesterday.

Hasan Shimul, 34, general secretary of Jubo League ward no 77, was shot dead by a gang near Narinda police box at 10:45am.

Family members said Shimul came out of his residence to buy groceries from Narinda Bazar. When he approached the police box, a gang of 12 led by 'Dakat' Sahid sprayed bullets on him.

Shimul received bullets in different parts of the body and died instantly. Police recovered the body and sent it to Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH) morgue for autopsy.

Several Awami League leaders, including Abdur Razzak, Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya and Mirza Azam, went to the hospital morgue to see the body of the BCL leader.

Sutrapur police said Shimul was

a listed criminal and an accused in three cases including two for murders. He was killed due to rivalry among local criminals, they added.

His wife, Iva Hasan, said the hoodlums killed her husband as he protested their criminal acts in the locality.

No case was filed till 8:00 last night, Sutrapur police said.

Badda police recovered the body of B M Khalek, 50, former chairman of Idilpur Union Parishad under Goshairhat upazila of Sariatpur, from Khilkhet Namapara yesterday noon and sent it to the DMCH morgue for autopsy.

Family sources said Khalek came out of his residence at C/9, Block-E, Zakir Hossain Road in the city's Mohammadpur area Thursday morning and went to his son's Sonia garment at Gazipur. After meeting his son, Khalek went to another office of his son at Kuril Badda and came out of the office in the afternoon. Since then he could not be contacted.

Police said they are investigating

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THE STRENGTH WITHIN

Way out of woes



ASHFAQ WARES KHAN

Tears rolling down Ambia's cheeks testified to her resilient struggle that saw her rise out of the depths of despair over the paralysis of her husband, her family's only breadwinner.

The tears testified to the pangs of sacrifice when she had to send her son to sell cattle when he was about to sit his HSC exams.

She wiped her tears with her sari, her betel-reddened teeth widened into a smile that testified to a son comfortably married off, another sent overseas, a comfortable home fitted with several amenities and the pride of holding her own.

The journey out of despair for Ambia and her sons began when she first took microcredit 14 years ago and sent her son to invest the money in the Gabtali cattle market. Although she lost her paralysed husband five years later, she has not looked back since.

Two or three kilometres away from Madhabpur in Manikganj, without assets or any stable base income at that point, Khadja in Noya Jamirata was malnourished and was lucky if she got two meals a day for herself or her children.

Not only did the wider society abandon her when she asked to borrow money, but she was also shunned by her own family. "My own brother humiliated me in front of everyone because I asked him if he could loan me Tk 100. I couldn't let my children starve so I had to bear it," she said.

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Women once living on the outermost margins of society find their way out of poverty by working at a rice mill at Madhabpur in Manikganj.

BNP MEN HOLD BIG RALLY

Vow to keep Ctg port operational during hartal

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

The ruling BNP high-ups from Chittagong, including ministers, have vowed to ensure at any cost that normal operation of the country's premier port here is not affected by any hartal and strike in future.

They have initiated a series of steps to this end and launched a massive campaign that includes holding of rallies, meetings and exchange of views to mobilise

public opinion.

As part of the process, Commerce Minister Amir Khosru Mahmud Chowdhury and State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Mir Mohammad Nasiruddin addressed a huge rally in front of the Bandar Bhaban yesterday. They urged the port employees and workers to guard against any disruption in activities at Chittagong Port, ignoring hartal.

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Bogra Jubo Dal leader shot dead

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Bogra

A Jubo Dal leader was gunned down by unidentified miscreants in the town last night.

Locals said the miscreants entered Jubo Dal office at ward no 4 at about 7:30pm when Abu Talha Thandu, 32, general secretary of Jubo Dal town unit, was playing carom with some of his friends.

They shot Talha point blank and left the scene, firing blank shots and exploding crackers. Talha died instantly.

The reason behind the killing could not be known immediately. Police sent the body to Bogra Mohammad Ali Hospital for autopsy.

A tense situation is prevailing in the town. No case was filed till 9:00pm yesterday.

BJMC GOLDEN HANDSHAKE

Interested staff get 3pc less than due

REJAUJ KARIM BYRON

A total of 5,690 workers and employees voluntarily retiring from Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) are getting at least three percent less payment than their due.

Last year the government devised a new golden handshake formula for voluntary retirement from state-owned enterprises (SOEs), increasing voluntary retirement benefits three percent.

The previous payment formula was last applied during closing down the Adamjee Jute Mills while the new one has not yet been used.

The BJMC is set to get rid of the workers to become profitable, but the finance ministry has turned

down its request for financial allocation to implement the increased payment.

The ministry said the new formula is only applicable to privatisation of the SOEs through the Privatisation Commission (PC). All other SOEs being trimmed, closed down or privatised will have to follow the previous benefit formula.

"This is really puzzling. The SOEs under the BJMC are government organisations and there cannot be any logic behind two separate benefit packages," said a BJMC official.

The previous formula provides that an employee serving for a year will get two months' basic salary as gratuity. If he serves for five to 15 years, he will get 27 percent more in gratuity. If he serves for 15 to 20 years, he will get 22 percent more and in case of 20 to 25 years' service, one will get an additional 18 percent and one serving for more than 25 years, 15 percent. The new formula adds another three percent for all voluntarily retiring people who served for more than five years.

All of the 5,690 BJMC workers and employees belonging to 29 jute mills across Bangladesh have

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AL men of Bhola, Barisal under surveillance prior to Hasina's tour

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

About 200 Awami League (AL) leaders and workers of Barisal and Bhola are reportedly under police surveillance ahead of AL President Sheikh Hasina's upcoming visit to the districts.

Hasina is scheduled to tour the two districts from February 24 to 26, party sources said.

Police suspect a large number of AL leaders and workers of Barisal and Bhola who went into hiding after the general election of 2001 might try to stage a comeback on the occasion of Hasina's visit, posing a threat to law and order in the region.

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Army-police divide dampens Rab mood

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The placing of police officers under army officers in the elite anti-crime Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) has dampened the mood of the law enforcers, policemen said.

According to the Rab makeup, an army officer will lead a battalion while a superintendent of police (SP) will be the second-in-command.

The police force in a district is under the command of an SP, but when the SP will be placed in a Rab battalion he will be the second in command, which some policemen felt would undermine his dignity and authority.

Dismissing the police sentiment, a home ministry official said the

roles of police officers were much more defined and they would not be overlapped in Rab.

"It's a rare opportunity for better policing," the official said.

"We know we've a shortage of policemen, logistics and facilities for the mainstream police force, but Rab will be equipped with everything."

Policemen placed in the Rab will be provided with on-service training and necessary facilities to help ensure better policing.

The government in a notification on Wednesday transferred 10 police officers to Rab. They are Additional Inspector General A n w a r u l I q b a l

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Prayer Timings		
February 21		
	Azan	Jamaat
Fajr	5-30	6-00
Zohr	12-45	1-15
Asr	4-30	4-45
Maghrib	6-00	6-05
Esha	7-30	8-00

Source: Islamic Foundation