

# PSTU in deep crisis as UGC stops funding

VC's alleged corruption, violation of UGC order blamed

SOHRAB HOSSAIN, *Patuakhali*

The Patuakhali Science and Technology University is facing a serious financial crisis as the University Grants Commission (UGC) stopped fund disbursement due to alleged corruption and irregularities by its Vice-Chancellor.

The UGC decision was taken at a meeting on July 3 after a two-member audit team submitted its report following a visit to the university.

The team during audit from March 1 to June 30 detected corruption and financial irregularities by VC Prof Dr Wahid-uz-Zaman, sources at PSTU said.

During the visit, the team asked the VC to operate all PSTU bank accounts with joint signature of himself and treasurer Dr. Prof. Abdul Latif Masum. As the VC did not abide by the instruction, the UGC stopped disbursement of 2nd, 3rd and 4th installments of annual allocation, amounting about Tk 7

crore, the sources said. The audit covered 15 months' accounts of PSTU from March 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005, the sources said.

The audit team in its report to the UGC submitted a nine-point objection involving Tk 53,90,414. These included Tk 4.73 lakh undue expenditure without voucher, Tk 8.02 lakh excess expenditure on house rent, Tk 3.30 lakh expenditure on purchase of cell phones, Tk 2.88 lakh excess expenditure as festival bonus, Tk 2.28 lakh on repair of vehicles, Tk 1.14 lakh excess expenditure in the name of allowance and Tk 34, 353 as VAT, the sources said.

When contacted, PSTU Treasurer Dr. Abdul Latif Masum said yesterday, "I hope the UGC will release funds soon in the interest of the university". He returned here on Thursday after staying about a week in Dhaka, meeting UGC officials, sources said.

This correspondent went to the university twice yesterday to meet the VC. His secretary Asadul Haq

Tarique said the VC will not meet the press. Earlier, attempts were made to contact the VC on his cell phone and land phone but Tarique failed to fix any appointment for the correspondent.

Because of the financial crisis, the university authorities paid staff salaries for the month of July by borrowing from the retirement fund, the sources said.

Deputy Registrar Imran Hossain said, "Our salary problem has been solved for the time being".

About two months back, some local elite formed a civic body to 'save' the university. It is headed by Patuakhali district BNP vice-president MA Rob.

The committee at a press conference at Patuakhali Press Club earlier demanded removal of the VC for his alleged corruption and financial irregularities.

At the press conference, Prof. Baha Uddin Bahar, member-secretary of the civic body, in a 13-page written statement alleged that since his joining in May 2004, the

VC has been involved in corruption and flouting rules.

Sources at the university said Section 18 of university ordinance provides for 25 members in its Regent Board, the highest decision making body, but the VC formed the body with only 13 members. So, the Regent Board is virtually ineffective, they claimed.

The Regent Board held only two meetings since its formation on February 26, 2002 though as per rule it should meet every three months, they said.

As per Section 29, formation of a finance committee is mandatory for audit of income and expenditure but it is yet to be formed. All accounts are being maintained by an accountant, Jasim Uddin, appointed by the VC. There is a treasurer but the VC is yet to delegate him financial power, the sources claimed. The accountant, appointed on ad-hoc basis, does all accounts work as per the VC's instruction, they said.



A costly mistake by police...Abdul Malek of Gaibandha is in jail for 12 years for no fault. He was arrested in 1994 along with 17 cow lifters from Myanmar as he traveled in the same trawler. Police recorded him as a Myanmar citizen. All 17 were released after serving 2 years' jail term and went home in Myanmar. As there no Maynmar citizen in his name, Abdul Malek was kept in jail. He told his sad story to journalists at Chittagong Medical College Hospital where he is being treated now for leg injury.

Hartal today in Gopalpur to protest murder of AL leader

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Tangail*

Awami League (AL) called a day-long hartal in Gopalpur upazila for today protesting the murder of a Juba League leader. Abu Syeed, convener of Dhopakandi union of Juba League, was hacked by a gang when he was returning to his Bhutia village home after attending a destitute feeding programme on August 15 marking the 31st death anniversary of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. He died at a clinic in Dhaka on Friday. As the death news reached the upazila, Awami League and its front organisations brought out processions and held a rally, protesting the murderer. Speakers at the rally blamed local BNPs for the murder.

Abu Syeed's elder brother Sirajul Islam filed a murder case with Gopalpur police station Friday night accusing 20 ruling party leaders and activists in Gopalpur.

'92 ATTEMPT ON LIFE  
Menon blasts govt as culprits still at large

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

Bangladesh Workers' Party (WP) president Rashed Khan Menon has criticised the government for not bringing to book the culprits who attempted on his life on August 17 in 1992.

The culprits belonging to the same fold blasted serial bombs all over the country on August 17 in 2005, he said.

Menon was addressing a meeting at Uzirpur at the end of a road march on Friday. The road march was organised on the occasion of the 'Anti-terrorism and Anti-militancy Day' marking the day of attack on his life 14 years ago. The march ended at Uzirpur after parading Jalla, Dhamsar, Guthia and Satta.

He said corruption of the Alliance government became an 'open secret' with the acquittal of Ershad of corruption charges in a case recently.

The WP chief lamented that the court had asked the government of Khaleda Zia to punish the attackers on my life in 1992. But they did not punish the culprits even after return to power.

Among others, Uzirpur upazila AL president Abdul Khalek Azad, AL leader and UP chairman Sunil Biswas, AL leader and UP chairman Hafizur Rahman Iqbal, former UP chairman Open Ballav, WP leaders Abdur Rob Bali, Prof Abdus Sattar, Nazrul Hug Nilu, Israq Sharif, Nripendra Nath Baroi, Advocate Tipu Sultan and local leaders of NAP, JSD and Gono Forum addressed.

Suspected JMB man arrested

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Chitalmari Police of Bagerhat yesterday arrested a suspected militant of Jamaatul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) from Bakerganj Bazar.

Moshed Alim Babu Chowdhury, 24, a student of Uttara Shibpur Hafezia Madrasa in Chitalmari upazila was arrested for his suspicious movement, police said.

A cell phone, five SIM cards, ACD, an electric tester, electric wires, a knife and a safety razor were recovered from his possession, police said.

The arrested was being interrogated by a team of officers of the detective branch (DB) of police till filing of this report yesterday afternoon.

Bagerhat superintendent of police (SP) said JMB cadre's associates are hiding in Khulna city.

Moshed Alim hailed from Goalkhali ward of Khalispur Police Station in Khulna.

## Forest expansion to make 400 indigenous families 'homeless'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Rangamati*

At least 400 families of indigenous communities in seven villages in Ghilachhara union in Rajashahi upazila are passing days amid eviction threat as their lands and homesteads are allegedly being taken over by the forest department for afforestation.

The villages are Ducharipara, Moiandangpara, Kishtapara, Thalipara, Aungapara, Barapara and Bhutanapara under Kaptaimouzana-329.

Local Union Parishad chairmen, members, headmen and Karbaries (village chief) from the seven villages on Thursday submitted a memorandum to the chairman of Rangamati Hill District Council (RHDC), seeking his intervention

to stop what they called land grabbing.

In the memorandum, the local leaders said that indigenous people of Marma, Tripura, Tangchangya and Khiyang communities have been living in the lands for about 150 years, doing Jhum cultivation.

They also said the villagers applied for settlement of the lands in their names, which is waiting for approval by district administration for afforestation.

The forest department is expanding plantation in the hills in the seven villages by evicting villagers, they alleged in the memorandum.

The forest department has started clearing the jungles at some of the places to plant saplings, they said.

In the memorandum, they said

## Nilphamari tense as AL, BNP hold programmes

Brickbats, chase-counter chase: 2 injured

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Nilphamari*

Police have been deployed at different points as tension mounted in Nilphamari town following clashes between activists of ruling BNP and opposition Awami League yesterday.

The two parties and their front organisations brought out processions marking separate programmes. BNP observed 27th founding anniversary of Jatiyatobadi Sechchhasebok Dal and Awami League chalked out programmes to press execution of the verdict of Bangabandhu murder case.

Activists of the rival parties were locked in a chase and counter-chase at the Kalibari intersection. A Sechchhasebok Dal procession also reached there from the opposite direction at the same time.

The rival activists chanted slogans against each other and exchanged brickbats, which continued for about half an hour.

Panicked people ran for shelter and shopkeepers downed shutters.

Police lined up in the middle of the road holding hands and made a frantic effort to keep the rival activists away as the two processions crossed the area.

District Awami Juba League secretary Shahed Mahmud later said Sadar upazila Juba league secretary Rafiqul and party activist Manik were injured in the head as Sechchhasebok Dal activists hurled brickbats.

Later, Sechchhasebok Dal held a rally on district BNP office premises and Awami League held another rally on Smriti Amlan premises.

Addressing the rally, Sechchhasebok Dal president Razzaqul Islam alleged that Awami League mobilised 'hoodlums' from outside by trucks to foil their programme.

Awami Juba League handed over a memorandum to the Deputy Commissioner demanding execution of the verdict in Bangabandhu murder case.

4X2

## PCJSS mourns poet's death

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Rangamati*

Parbatya Chattagram Jana Sanghati Samity (PCJSS) yesterday expressed profound shock at the demise of poet Shamsur Rahman.

A press release signed by PCJSS secretary Satyabir Dewan, termed the demise of the poet as an irreparable loss to the nation. Jhum people will remember him forever because of his unflinching support to the historic CHT peace accord, it said.

PCJSS lauded his role in establishing fundamental rights of indigenous people in CHT.

Shamsur Rahman fought against the fundamental, communal and reactionary forces by his pen, the press release said.

He was not only a wise and humanist poet but also a friend of the depressed and deprived people, it said.

Angry people pelting stones at a clinic in Narail yesterday after a patient -- Khokon Das -- died there allegedly due to wrong treatment.

KUSHTIA-4 CONSTITUENCY

## 11 BNP men to seek ticket, but back party nominee

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Kushtia*

A joint statement by 11 BNP leaders regarding party nomination for the coming election has surprised all including grassroots party workers.

The 11 leaders at a press conference Friday evening said all of them would seek nomination for contesting in Kushtia-4 (Daulatpur) constituency.

In the written statement signed by them, the leaders however said once the nomination is announced by the party, all of them would work together for the party nominee.

The press conference was marked by a brawl when one of the leaders local lawmaker Reza Ahmed alias Bachchu Molla said he was the 'fittest' man to get nomina-

tion. The rest 10 leaders who were signatories to the statement and were present at the press conference were industrialist Nasir Uddin Biswas, Daulatpur upazila BNP vice-presidents Ruhul Kuddus, Mozibur Rahman and Rezaul Haq, general secretary Sahid Sarkar Mongol, assistant secretary Akbar Ali, joint secretaries Golam Mustafa and Ramjan Ali, publicity secretary Zohurul Karim, Kushtia district BNP vice-president Altaf Hossain and Kamal Hossain.

Eldest party leader Nasiruddin Biswas read out the statement at the press conference held at Daulatpur Shilpkala Academy Friday evening.

At one stage, Bachchu Molla, lawmaker from the constituency,

claimed that he was the 'fittest' person to get nomination and the only BNP man who could win the election from Kushtia-4 constituency.

No sooner had he said this, activists loyal to Nasir Uddin Biswas protested, ensuing a brawl.

Leaders cooled them down and again told journalists that they would work together for the party nominee, whoever he might be.

As the press conference ended, many party workers were heard saying while leaving: Is it the beginning or an end to rift in the party?

Bachchu Mollah, was elected in a by-election held on January 31, 2004 following the death of his father Ahsan-ul-Haq Mollah, a former minister.

BDR handed over them to Dhubaura police who sent them to court.

The press conference was

marked by a brawl when one of the

leaders local lawmaker Reza

Ahmed alias Bachchu Molla said he was the 'fittest' man to get nomina-

tion. The rest 10 leaders who were

signatories to the statement and

were present at the press con-

ference were industrialist Nasir

Uddin Biswas, Daulatpur upazila

BNP vice-presidents Ruhul

Kuddus, Mozibur Rahman and

Rezaul Haq, general secretary

Sahid Sarkar Mongol, assis-

tant secretary Akbar Ali, joint

secretaries Golam Mustafa and

Ramjan Ali, publicity secre-

tary Zohurul Karim, Kushtia

district BNP vice-president Altaf

Hossain and Kamal Hossain.

Eldest party leader Nasiruddin

Biswas read out the statement at

Daulatpur Shilpkala Academy

Friday evening.

At one stage, Bachchu Molla,

lawmaker from the constituency,

claimed that he was the 'fittest'

person to get nomination and the

only BNP man who could win the

election from Kushtia-4 constitu-

ency.

No sooner had he said this, acti-

vists loyal to Nasir Uddin Biswas

protested, ensuing a brawl.