

# Set up deep sea port in Ctg to boost economy

Economists tell Ctg Forum discussion

## STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Economists and civil society members at a discussion yesterday demanded that the government pay special attention for development of Chittagong, especially its port and set up a deep sea port, saying this will boost the economy and check smuggling significantly.

They also demanded establishment of a mega airport, development of communications infrastructure and administrative decentralisation to facilitate the export-import of the neighbouring landlocked countries.

But unfortunately, lack of legal business facilities, including ports and infrastructure, between the neighbouring countries increased smuggling, which also contributed to the criminalisation of politics in the country, they said.

Chittagong Development Forum-Dhaka organised the discussion on 'Development of Chittagong is supplementary to national development' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday. Fortune Shopping Mall, Dhaka and Roots Doors and Furniture, Chittagong sponsored it.

"We strongly demand opening up the Chittagong port and setting up a deep sea port. We are not against the privatisation of ports, but that must be through transparent process and the state must not lose its ownership," said Professor Dr Moinul Islam of Chittagong University.

"But unfortunately, we are not using the golden goose (Chittagong Port)," he said, adding that Chittagong is located in such a strategic location that it can be more developed than that of Singapore.

Major Gen (Retd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim in his keynote



PHOTO: STAR

Major Gen (Retd) Syed Muhammad Ibrahim speaks at a discussion on 'Development of Chittagong is supplementary to national development' at the National Press Club in the city yesterday.

presentation said large ships with more load capacity are used in the globalised world, and "if our port fails to cope up with these large ships in loading and unloading, ship owners will divert their attention to other ports."

"If such things happen due to our incapacity, it will be like disasters for our employment, export-import business and earning foreign exchange," he said emphasising the establishment of a deep sea port and modernising the Chittagong Port.

Muhammad Ibrahim also suggested establishing Chittagong and Kunming of China as twin-cities for strengthening the business relations with China.

Atau Karim Chowdhury, consultant of Chittagong Port Computer Management System, said deep

sea port has now become an essential for commercial activities for reaching the ships to the doors.

Former government official Abdul Mobarak said the government should initiate development of Halda river, which is the breeding zone of fish and can produce fish of hundreds of crores of taka every year, and development of the coastal area for attracting the tourists.

City University Vice Chancellor Professor Borhanuddin said more facilities of education and medical should be developed in Chittagong so that the high officials of both the government and non-government sectors are encouraged to go there.

Former navy official AZM Nizam and Brigadier (Retd) Mahmudul Haque also spoke.

## Janakantha editor held by mistake

UNB, Dhaka

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday detained mistakenly the Janakantha Editor Atiquallah Khan Masud from Bangla Motor in the capital and released him after a while.

The incident occurred when the editor of the Bangla daily was coming to his office at New Eskaton from the Dhaka Cantonment area at about 10:45am.

A Rab patrol team suspected the number-plate of his car and followed him up to Bangla Motor where they challenged him.

The Rab members drove him towards the Dhaka University area and released him after they ascertained his identity as the editor of Janakantha.

Rab spokesman Commander Masud told the news agency that the Janakantha editor was 'mistakenly' held. He was dropped at his Janakantha office with due honour after it was confirmed that it was a mistake.

## 2-day music festival begins in city today

BSS, Dhaka

A two-day musical festival will begin today under the auspices of Sangskritik Kendra, a centre for education, creative and performing arts, in cooperation with Unesco.

The festival will be held at the Shaheed Ziaur Rahman auditorium of the Bangladesh National Museum in the city where renowned artistes of the country will take part.

Classical, vocal and instrumental music will take place on the inaugural day where celebrated artistes like Ustad Yasin Khan, Ustad Shahadat Hossain Khan, Dr Asit Roy, Dr Harun-ar-Rashid, Shamima Parveen, Rozana Azad, Afsana Khan and Rokshana Khan will take part.

Mustafa Zaman Abbasi, Abdul Karim Khan, Chandana Majumder, Bipul Bhattacharya, Monohor Shah and Karim Shah will perform on concluding day.



PHOTO: STAR

Children spray coloured powder and water over each other celebrating the Hindu festival of Holi in the old city yesterday.

## Valuables worth Tk 1 crore gutted

BSS, Narayanganj

Cotton, yarn and machinery worth of Tk about one crore were gutted by fire in Shohagpur Textile Mill at Lakhon Khola under Bandar upazila in the early hours of yesterday.

Mohammad Alam, 45, a security officer of the mill, was injured while fighting to extinguish the fire and was admitted to Khanpur hospital for treatment.

According to Bandar fire service sources, the fire originated from the finishing section of the mill due to the friction of machinery at 3:00am.

The fire spread in the adjacent godown and damaged dyes and chemicals, stockpiled raw cotton, yarn and machinery.

The fire service rushed to the spot at 3:30am and brought the fire under control after three hours at 5:30am.

A three-member inquiry committee was formed to inquire the causes of the fire.

## Form election caretaking council to assist EC

Speakers say at BMSP seminar

### STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Manobadikar Samannaya Parishad (BMSP) yesterday proposed to form an Election Caretaking Council (ECC) which will assist the Election Commission (EC) in carrying out its election-related activities as a supporting force.

The proposal was made at a seminar titled 'Election Caretaking Council for a free, fair and meaningful election' organised by BMSP at WVA auditorium in the city.

Speakers at the seminar said the EEC could be formed comprising the members of civil society, political parties, professional bodies and people's representatives.

Since the EC does not have any supporting organisation, the ECC will perform the supporting works from the time of processing the nomination papers till the announcing of the election results, they said.

In a keynote paper, BMSP President AHM Noman said it is the appropriate time to form the ECC as discussion about the electoral reforms

has been going on now.

The tenure of the EEC will be of total 12 months including nine months before the election and three months after the election, he added.

M Hafizuddin Khan, former adviser to caretaker government, said the Representation of the People Order (RPO), 1972 which is the primary law for holding the election, is not observed properly.

He also expressed concern over the corruption and nepotism in the Public Service Commission (PSC) which will affect the whole country for long after five to six years.

Laying emphasis on holding the election within the quickest possible time, Hafizuddin said the corrupt elements must be punished and the 'cleansing operation' should be completed before holding the polls.

Members of BMSP executive committee Babul Kumar Adhikary, AKM Abul Kashem, Nilufar Quader and Binoy Krishna Mallik also spoke on the occasion.

## Govt plans 5-yr Hajj policy

BSS, Dhaka

The government is formulating a five-year Hajj policy this time instead of yearly basis. Adviser for Religious Affairs Major General (Retd) Dr ASM Matur Rahman said yesterday.

Speaking at a roundtable organised here to find ways for ensuring proper and well-controlled Hajj management, Matur questioned the justification for formulating the Hajj policy every year.

He said corruption and deception are not desirable in the significant affair like Hajj management.

Matur underscored the need for removing various problems in the Hajj management. He said the government would make all-out efforts to arrange permanent accommodation in Saudi Arabia for Bangladeshi Hajj pilgrims.

The adviser stressed the need for recommendations from all concerned, including HAB (Hajj Association of Bangladesh), in formulating the Hajj policy.

Presided over by Religious Affairs Secretary Ataur Rahman, the roundtable was also addressed by former secretary Abdullah Haroon Pasha, former religious affairs secretaries Saifuddin and Rafiqul Islam, Secretary of the Jatiya Sangsad Secretariat ATM Ataur Rahman, Director General of Islamic Foundation Fazlur Rahman, Prof Hasan Abdul Quiyum and HAB President Omar Faruk.

## Supreme Court Ainjibi Samity polls Mar 28-29

BSS, Dhaka

Election of the Supreme Court Ainjibi Samity for the year 2007-08 will be held on March 28 and 29.

According to a press release signed by its General Secretary Advocate AM Aminuddin, here yesterday, the sale and submission of nomination papers started on March 1 and would continue up to March 11 everyday from 10:00am to 5:00pm.

The nomination papers would be scrutinised on March 11 at 5:30pm and could be withdrawn on March 14 within 5:00pm, the press release said.

The election will be held for 14 positions, president, two vice-presidents, secretary, two joint secretaries, treasurer and seven members.



PHOTO: STAR

Wife of Constable Phool Mia, one of the Rab members who were shot dead at Amin Bazar in the city on Saturday, wails in despair beside the body of her husband on Rab-1 premises in the city yesterday.

## Appointment of Gen Mashhud as ACC chief hailed

BSS, Chittagong

Bangladesh Muslim League (BML) leaders in a statement yesterday congratulated Lt. General (Retd) Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury for his appointment as the chairman of Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

"The decision to appoint him as the chairman of ACC is very timely and effective one" the BML leaders, including Acting President of south district unit Alhaj Mohammad Khalilur Rahman, Senior Vice-President MA Momen and North District Unit President Advocate Abdus Sukkur said.

In the statement, the BML leaders hoped that General Hasan Mashhud will be able to remove the disrepute on Bangladesh as "most corrupt country" by turning the ACC as an effective and dynamic institution what he did in leading the Bangladesh Army as its chief during his tenure.

## DU English Deptt Alumni reunion on Mar 9

The English Department Alumni Society of Dhaka University will hold its Annual Alumni Reunion on March 9 from 3:00pm to 8:00pm at the Nabab Nawab Ali Chowdhury Senate Bhaban (adjacent to Administrative Building), says a press release.