

# Khulna leaders for int'l airport in Bagerhat

## Chandpur also raises demand

STAR NATIONAL DESK

Leaders of Khulna district unit of 14-party grand alliance at a press conference yesterday demanded establishment of 'Bangabandhu international airport' at Faila in Rampal upazila of Bagerhat district.

People of Haimchar upazila in Chandpur district also formed a human chain yesterday demanding construction of the airport at Majher Char in the upazila.

Earlier on Saturday, locals formed a human chain in Faridpur town to press for their demand to set up the airport in the district.

Khulna unit of grand alliance will observe a human chain programme at Picture Cinema Hall intersection tomorrow to press home their demand for airport at Faila in Bagerhat district, reports our staff correspondent in Khulna.

The country needs another airport of international stan-

dard for greater economic interest of the south-western region, Mizanur Rahman Mizan, coordinator of Khulna district unit of grand alliance, said, reading out a written statement in the press conference at Khulna Press Club yesterday noon.

"We wholeheartedly congratulate Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on behalf of the people of neglected south-western region for her recent announcement to construct Bangabandhu international airport anywhere on the other side of the Padma River after the decision to build it at Arial Beel was changed," said Mizan, also general secretary of Khulna city unit of ruling Awami League (AL).

"We also strongly demand reopening of closed Daulatpur Jute Mills, Dada Match Factory, Khulna Newsprint Mills, removal of various complications regarding acquisition of land required for supply of gas

through pipelines, extending financial support required to keep production on in Khulna Hardboard Mills.

"Effective measures are urgently needed to resist release of saline water and fight out adverse impact of climate change to save agricultural land from going barren in course of time.

"We also demand all positive measures by the government for meeting crisis of safe drinking water which is prevailing in the south-western region of the country," Mizanur Rahman said.

Considering growing importance of Mongla port, short distance between Khulna to Dhaka via Bagerhat by road, construction of 1300 MW power plant and transit facilities to India, Nepal and Bhutan through Mongla port, there is a good logic behind the demand for Bangabandhu international airport at Faila in Bagerhat district, said AL leader said in the press conference.

# SNAPSHOTS OF BNP-CALLED HARTAL



1) Otherwise a busy area, GEC intersection in Chittagong city sees very few vehicles and pedestrians, 2) Injured by picketers' stones, The Daily Star correspondent Benazir Ahmed Benu groans on a road in Narsingdi town, 3) buses lie stranded at the main bus terminal in Chapainawabganj town, 4) tree trunks put on the road to obstruct vehicular movement in Noakhali town, 5) pro-hartal activists burn tyres on a man road in Barisal city, 6) three-wheelers become the only means of transport in Natore as buses stay away from roads.

# Illegally lifted sand seized

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A mobile court in Chuadanga seized a huge quantity of illegally lifted sand on Wednesday.

The court also fined the sand lifter Tk50,000, in default, to suffer three months imprisonment.

Sources said, a team led by Alamdanga upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) Abdus Salam raided Harikandi Beel (waterbody) at about 3:30pm on Wednesday where one Zillur Rahman was lifting sand with the help of a locally made dredger.

The mobile court seized about 3 lakh square feet sand from his possession.

The court then fined Zillur under the newly enacted Sand Query and Soil Management Act-2010.

According to sources, vested and influential groups were lifting sand from several water bodies and arable lands at Dhaturhat village under Sadar upazila and Harikandi village under Alamdanga upazila of the district for the last two years.

This has severely affected fertility of the adjacent lands including 200 bighas in the water bodies, locals said.



Worn-out vehicles still ply the roads in different cities across the country. Photo shows such an outmoded bus on the road in Chittagong city's Agrabad area.

## KAROTIA SADAAT COLLEGE

# BCL ransacks 10 hostel rooms of Shibir men

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Bangladesh Chhatra League (BCL) activists ransacked at least 10 rooms of Islami Chhata Shibir (ICS) men at Government Sadaat College hostels at Karotia in Tangail and at messes adjacent to the campus on Sunday night.

The BCL men also beat up Shibir college unit General Secretary Abu Naser who is undergoing treatment at a private clinic in Tangail town.

Campus sources said some BCL and Shibir activists had an altercation on Saturday over damaging Shibir posters on the campus allegedly by BCL men. Shibir pasted posters on walls on the campus on the occasion of its 34th founding anniversary.

As a sequel to Saturday's incident, BCL men ransacked four rooms at CM Hostel, two rooms at Uttara Hostel, and four rooms at Shibir messes in nearby Karatipara and Collegepara areas at around 11:00pm on Sunday. They also set fire to books and bedding of the rooms, sources said.

Rafiqul Islam, vice principal of the college, said no complaint was lodged with the college authorities as of 6:00pm yesterday.

Police yesterday picked up a Shibir activist named Mohammad Touhidul from the

campus and took him to Tangail Model Police Station. In Narail, a faction of BCL district unit yesterday took out a procession in the town demanding release of 10 party activists arrested in connection with a case filed by their rival faction on Sunday, reports our correspondent.

District BCL General Secretary Somen Basu-led faction filed the case following assault on one of their activists, Sajib, by president Mostafa Kamruzzaman Kamal-led faction at Muslim Hostel of Narail Victoria College at 6:00pm on Sunday.

After filing of the case, police arrested former VP of the college students union Gausul Azam Masum, Victoria College BCL leader Baharul Islam, Rased, and activists Nahid, Sohel, Mintu, Harun, Rupesh, Light and Naoyon.

Kamruzzaman faction demanded withdrawal of the case and release of its activists. They also chanted slogans against the Officer-in-Charge of Narail Sadar Police Station Md Alamgir Sheikh, alleging that he is giving shelter to the criminals. They urged the authorities concerned to put the OC under suspension. The BCL men later held a rally in Rupganj Bus terminal area.

# Verdict in case against 42 mutineers on March 16

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The special court-17 will deliver judgement in the mutiny case against 42 jawans of BGB Mymensingh sector headquarters and 45 Battalion under the sector on March 16.

The court, headed by Kushtia Sector Commander Col Md Nazrul Islam Sarker fixed the date yesterday. Of the accused, 14 are from the sector headquarters and 28 from the battalion.

Manwhile, the special court-15, set up at Kharachhari sector headquarters, framed mutiny charges against 69 members of 11 Battalion under the sector same day.

Our Mymensingh correspondent quoted prosecutor Major Ahmed Yusuf Jamil as saying that three of the accused--Lance Nayek Mustafa Zaman, sepoy Md Munayem Hossain and Md Shafiqul Islam confessed to their involvement in the mutiny while the rest 39 claimed innocence.

In the case statement, the complainant alleged that the accused took part in the mutiny at their

respective units on February 26 in 2009, expressing solidarity with the rebels of BDR, renamed as BGB, headquarters.

They took control of the sector and battalion headquarters, looted firearms and ammunition from armouries and fired blank shots, he stated.

A total of 28 witnesses gave their statements before the court. Arguments between the witnesses and the accused were held during the trial proceedings.

In Khagrachhari, BGB special court yesterday framed charge against 69 mutineers of 11 Battalion headquarters under Khagrachhari sector, reports a correspondent.

The court, headed by Sector Commander Lt Col Abu Wahab Mohammad Hafizul Haque, will start recording statements of the prosecution witnesses today.

The court started trial proceedings at 10:00am and continued until 2:00pm. At the beginning, Prosecutor Lt Col Abdul Gaffar read out the charges against the accused.

After hearing, the court framed charges against

69 accused and asked the prosecutor to produce them in the court at 9:00am today.

Of the accused, sepoy Md Abu Salah, Md Monir Hossain, Azizul Islam, Mahmudul Hasan and Nur Uddin confessed to their involvement in the mutiny while the rest claimed innocence.

Our Satkhira correspondent adds: Six more prosecution witnesses in the mutiny case against 105 members of 41 Battalion gave their statements before the special court - 1 yesterday.

The special court, set up at the battalion headquarters in Satkhira, framed charges against the mutineers on Sunday.

Of the accused, 20 confessed to their involvement in the mutiny at the battalion headquarters on February 26 in 2009 while the rest claimed innocence and begged for mercy.

The special Court, headed by Rajshahi BGB Sector Commander Lt Col Yahiya Azam Khan, adjourned proceedings until 10:00am today. Two other members of the court are Lt Col Khalid Hossain and Major Touhidul Islam.

# Burglary in Jhalakati

UNB, Jhalakati

Burglars took away cash, jewelry and other valuables worth Tk 13 lakh from two apartments of a three-storey building in Masjid Bari area of the district town Sunday morning.

Police said a gang of burglars at first entered the rented second floor flat of Russell Molla at around 11 am and took away cash Tk 70,000 and 22 tolas of gold ornaments in absence of the house members.

Later, the same gang entered the adjacent apartment of Nur Ahmed breaking open the lock of the door and looted Tk 20,000 in cash and eight tolas of gold jewelry. Nur Ahmad and his family members were not at home.



Jugantor Sangskritik Sangathan, a cultural organisation, and The Daily Star jointly arrange a street drama in Narail town yesterday marking the 40th anniversary of Bangladesh's independence as well as the 20th anniversary of the newspaper.