

# RU BCL activist threatens provost with machete

RU CORRESPONDENT

An activist of Bangladesh Chharta League yesterday allegedly threatened the provost of a Rajshahi University hall with a machete while police stood by as spectators when the teacher tried to search a room for six routers stolen from the hall on Thursday.

Muhammad Hafiz, a third year student of Islamic history and culture, is not attached to Nawab Abdul Latif Hall but has been living alone in room 206, which is meant for two, for long, said hall sources.

Provost Prof Biswanath Sikder, who has the authority to search rooms, told The Daily Star that, on information, he had been searching some rooms and wanted to enter room 206 when the incident occurred.

Instead of arresting the accused or seizing the weapon, police, alongside the hall's tutors and other BCL men, restrained Hafiz, said hall sources.

Though he has the jurisdiction to evict or ask police to take legal action against anyone found illegally staying in the hall, Provost Prof Biswanath Sikder said he has urged the vice chancellor to take measures.

Hafiz apologised later, he added. Denying the threat allegation, Hafiz admitted to have stopped the provost from entering the room. Similarly, Motihar Police Station Officer-in-Charge Alamgir Hossain claimed that only an altercation took place.



Garment Sramik Trade Union Kendra holds a rally in front of Jatiya Press Club in the capital yesterday pressing home several demands including fair wages.

PHOTO: STAR

# Road accidents kill three

CITY DESK

Three people were killed and two others injured in road accidents in Chapainawabganj and Kurigram yesterday.

Our Chapainawabganj correspondent reports, two motorcyclists were killed and their co-rider was injured as a truck hit their motorbike from the opposite direction at Swarupnagar in the town yesterday, said police.

The deceased were Halima Khatun Sima, 20, daughter of Harunur Rashid of the sadar upazila; and her cousin Mohammad Milon, 16, son of Ekramul Haque of Berekbar in Shibganj upazila.

The injured, Abdul Alim, 28, of Naogaon, also Sima's husband, was undergoing treatment at Chapainawabganj Adhunik Sadar Hospital.

Sima succumbed to her injuries on the way to the hospital and Milon died at the hospital.

Our Kurigram correspondent adds, a motorbike rider was killed and his co-rider injured after the vehicle and a tractor had collided head-on on Chilmari-Shundarganj road at Machhabandha village in Chilmari upazila yesterday morning. The victim was Ashraf Ali, 30, of Lahkierpara village in Shundarganj upazila of Gaibandha.

The injured, Angur Mia, was taken to Chilmari Upazila Health Complex.

Locals vandalised the tractor while driver fled the scene after the accident.

## Sust plunges

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Bhuiyan, while pro-AL teachers made the same call. Earlier, BNP-backed teachers submitted a memorandum to the VC in this regard.

On Wednesday, Sust Teachers Association demanded its reopening by January 1, in a memorandum handed over to the VC.

VC Aminul Haque told The Daily Star, "We are discussing the issue with senior teachers, officials and others to ensure a congenial atmosphere first."

He could not give any specific time, but said a decision would come from a syndicate meeting in the first week of January.

On November 20, a gunfight broke out between the supporters of Sust BCL President Sanjibon Chakrabarty and Vice President Anjan Roy.

The hour-long clash killed Sumon Chandra Das, a third-year BBA student of Sylhet International University, and injured 20 others.

Both the factions, trying to overpower each other on the campus, brought in reinforcements from outside. Sumon fought on Anjan Roy's side.

Meanwhile, a probe committee of the university formed on November 21 to investigate the incident could not submit its report yet. It was not given any time limit.

Prof Ilias Uddin Biswas, the committee convener, said they could not talk to the students who witnessed the incident because of the closure. They have only recorded statements of some teachers and officers, he added.

## Remove visa hassles

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commission there and Saudi Arabia accusing Bangladeshi mariners of disembarking and starting to live there illegally, he said.

"Until 2001, Bangladeshi mariners did not require any visa to work in Singapore," Kamrul said, adding that Bangladesh lost its job market in the Middle East in 2006.

Some local agencies are providing fake "Continuous Discharge Certificates", a type of experience logbook of mariners issued under the shipping ministry, which is ruining the country's goodwill, he said.

"As a result many of these countries are turning away from hiring Bangladeshi mariners."

"Besides, the Department of Shipping often gives NOC (No Objection Certificate) in plain paper instead of SID (Seafarers' Identity Document) to mariners. "The NOC can be forged easily and some fraud mariners could easily cross immigration with these NOCs," he said.

When these fraudsters get caught, foreign agencies stop recruiting mariners, he said.

Another graduate, Imran Wahid Emon, said a mariner must complete one year's internship in a ship on completion of the two-year programme and only four students can do internship in a sea vessel at a time.

"But there are only 38 ships in Bangladesh. A large number of students could not get the opportunity to complete internship," he said, adding, "In 2015, around 1,500 students will be searching for internships."

Around 400 junior officers who had completed 12 months of service at sea and some 600 fresh graduates were currently unemployed, he added.

"Even two years ago more than 3,400 Bangladeshi mariners worked in ships of different foreign companies but now the number has dropped to 1,200," he said.

RR Industries Limited Managing Director Ashraf Ibn Noor, who was a cadet of the fifth batch of Bangladesh Marine Academy, said the government should increase its diplomatic efforts to maintain warm relations with countries engaged in world shipping and to find new job markets.

# Mash kalai yield makes farmers happy

BSS, Rajshahi

Farmers are happy as they have cultivated a high yielding mash kalai (black gram) variety on fallow pieces of land in char areas in Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj districts during the last couple of years.

Acreage of the variety, BARIMASH-3, released by Bangladesh Agricultural Research Institute (BARI), is gradually increasing as per acre yield of the variety is greater than those of the existing indigenous varieties.

Huge pieces of char land of the Padma and Mohananda rivers, which remain fallow after monsoon for a long time, are being used for mash kalai farming with initiatives of Barind Station on Farm Research Division (OFRD) of BARI.

Farmers, agricultural scientists and researchers revealed this in a ceremony styled "Farming Expansion of BARIMASH-3 in Char Areas", held at Mohanpur in Chapainawabganj Sadar upazila on Wednesday.

OFRD organised the event in association with Sustainable Crop Innovation in Drought-prone Barind Area to Mitigate Climate Change Impact Project and Bangladesh Climate Change Trust Fund.

Sharing his experience, Golam Mostofa, a local farmer, said previously, farmers used to cultivate indigenous mash kalai varieties in a scattered way and many pieces of land remained fallow.

Besides, the yield of those varieties was very poor -- hardly one to one and a half mounds per bigha, he added.

However, the new variety yield is about four to five mounds per bigha, he said.

The cost of farming one bigha land is around Tk 750, but revenue is between Tk 7,000 to Tk 8,000.

Speaking at the programme, Dr Abdus Salam, senior scientific officer and head of OFRD Barind Centre, said land of the char areas remain fallow after floodwater recedes every year.

So, the best use of these fallow pieces of land would be if they were brought under BARIMASH-3 farming, he said.

He referred to various salient features of the cash crop. He said, "No additional cost for fertilisers, pesticide and irrigation is needed to cultivate this short-term cash crop."

Traditionally, Rajshahi and Chapainawabganj districts along with their vast char areas were very popular for mash kalai farming and its production.

## Huge Yaba haul

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contraband item to clients.

On information provided by the two, the elite force raided several houses in the area and recovered 190, 314 pieces of Yaba tablets, the cash, 37 mobile phones, three cameras and three laptops.

Three others -- Md Abdul Malek Russel, Md Shahed Md Javed and Md Zakir -- were picked up during the drives, he said.

In Gazipur, Rab officials conducted a drive at a residence in Tongi and recovered 5,000 pieces of Yaba tablets.

Khan said the detainees smuggled the pills from Myanmar and then sold those to clients in the country.

## SCCI election on Dec 31

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The election to the board of directors of Sylhet Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI) will be held on December 31, said its administrator yesterday.

The election, scheduled for October 2, 2013, was stayed following a writ petition. On December 18, the HC asked the administrator to hold the election after the two petitions were withdrawn.

## Ex-UP member

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not ascertain the reason behind the killing.

Meanwhile, Suruj Ali, 80, died instantly as his grandson Nurul Haque hit him with a stick in the head after an altercation at a Horipur Bazar tea stall yesterday morning, the OC quoted witnesses as saying.

The two had a long standing feud as both the families sued each other following a dispute over a deep tubewell set up beside their residences, he said.

Nurul is on the run, he added.

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