

## 'Blind eye' turned to exam cheats

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

It was virtually a festival of cheating. From the beginning till the end of the English 2nd paper exam yesterday, students wrote answers with cheating sheets beneath their answer scripts. Once done, they exchanged cheating sheets among themselves. All these happened in presence of the teachers and invigilators.

The teachers acted as facilitators. They also told some answers to students and wrote a few on blackboards. This was the scene at Adakhola High School in Rajapur of Jhalakathi during the Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) and equivalent exams.

A total of 257 Business Management (BM) students under Bangladesh Technical Education Board appeared for the test in eight rooms of the school, which is being used as an examination centre for the last six years.

The examinees are from Baria Degree College, Rajapur Degree College, Rajapur Technical College and Rezaul Karim Technical College, all located in Rajapur upazila. The students of the four colleges usually take their public exams at this centre, some seven kilometres away from the upazila town.

Hearing the news of cheating, this correspondent went to the centre at 11:30am and found many teachers standing just outside the doors of the exam halls.

As soon as this correspondent walked towards a room, the teachers asked the students to hide their cheating sheets. Yet some examinees continued copying from the sheets.

When this newspaper was taking photos, a teacher tried to erase the answers he wrote on the blackboard in room-8.

Seeking anonymity, some students said they paid the teachers during the form fill-up in order to avail the "facility". "Everything is managed here," said an examinee of Baria Degree College, after the exam.

Another examinee said he was taking the exam for a certificate which was essential for his promotion.

An official from the local administration was tasked with overseeing the exams by the upazila nirbahi officer. The official, who has magistracy power, was seen sitting idle in the office room most of the time during the exam hours.

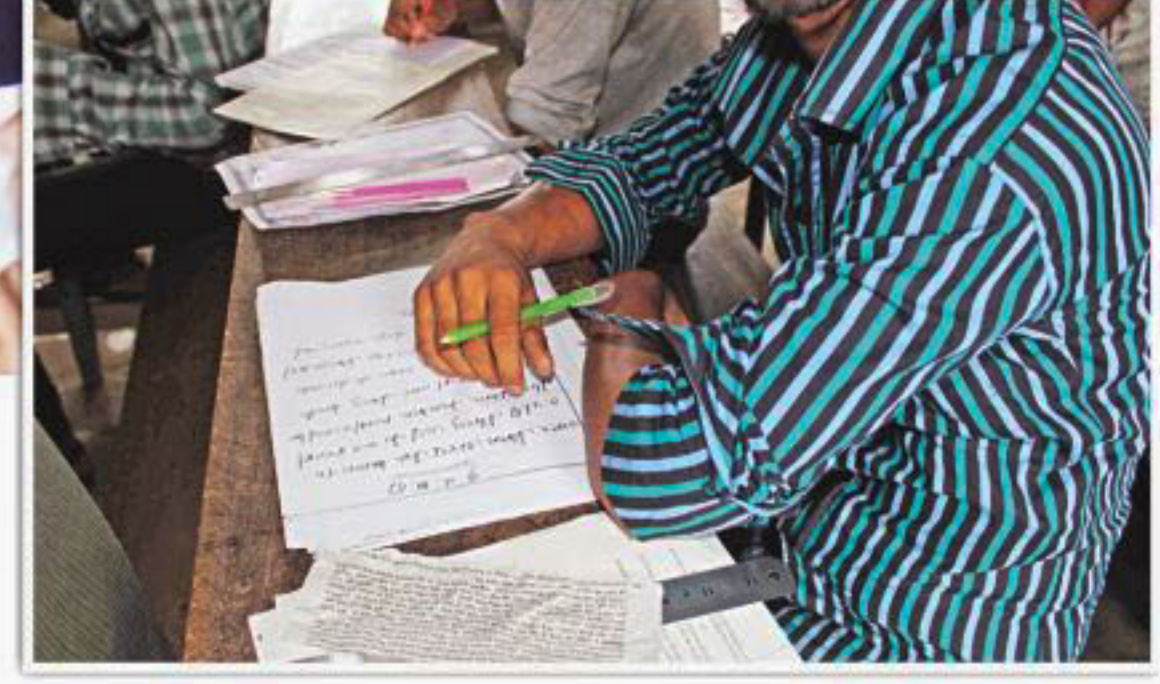
Rezaul Karim, centre secretary, refused to make any comment on the issue.

"How did you get my phone number? What would you do with the information?" he questioned and hung up the phone.

Despite making repeated attempts, this newspaper could not reach ABM Sadiqur Rahman, upazila nirbahi officer of Rajapur, over the phone for this comments.



With answers written by a teacher on the blackboard in the exam hall, students take the English 2nd Paper exam at Adakhola High School in Rajapur of Jhalakathi yesterday. Inset, a student copying answers from a sheet. Although The Daily Star does not run photographs of exam halls, we are publishing the photos to expose this cheating.



## Locals see bleak days ahead

FROM PAGE 1

would bring an environmental disaster to the area.

"We will even sacrifice our lives to stop [the establishment of] the power plant," said Nurul Kader, who produces salt using seawater.

Shamsher Alam, a worried farmer, echoed Nurul.

Chittagong Mohsin College Associate Professor Edris Ali, also vice president of Chittagong chapter of the Bangladesh Poribesh Andolon (Bapa), said such power plants usually run on low-quality coal and emit a huge quantity of Sulfur, making the air, soil and water in the area acidic.

The biodiversity of the locality could be harmed, he said.

Talking to The Daily Star, former UP chairman Liakat Ali, who is leading the protests, alleged that S Alam Group started buying plots in the area around two years ago, promising the locals of setting up an industry that could create local jobs.

"But now, they are constructing the coal-based power plant that would ultimately destroy our land."

He also alleged that "the law enforc-

ers and local administration were acting as if they were hired goons of S Alam Group". The allegation was rejected outright by the police and the company.

Also, Bahadur Alam Hiron, assistant coordinator of the project, said, "It is Liakat who is instigating the locals. The protesters are not even the actual owners of the land."

Two years ago, Liakat took Tk 1.3 crore from the company in exchange for his land, and then went into hiding. Recently, he had appeared once again and asked for another Tk 1 crore, alleged Hiron. "But we refused him to give the money."

He, however, said they did not file any case against Liakat over the matter.

Rejecting the allegation, Liakat said, "S Alam Group had offered me a lot of money so that I don't speak up. But, I did not accept their offer."

The clash on Monday took place after two groups -- one in support of the installation of the power plant and the other against it -- were about to hold rallies at the same venue --

Pashchim Gondamara Government Primary School -- at the same time,

ignoring a ban on gatherings (section 144), said police.

However, some of the locals alleged that there was no prior declaration of any ban.

"All of a sudden, police started hurling tear gas, charging truncheons and shooting," said Mohammad Shoyeb, a local farmer. "They were out to thwart a peaceful demonstration."

Contacted, Habibur Rahman, additional superintendent of police (Chittagong south zone), refuted the allegation, saying they had been attacked and compelled to open fire on the protesters.

Three cases were filed with Banshkhal Police Station yesterday in connection with the clash.

Moulana Bashir Ahmed, brother of deceased Anwarul Islam and Mortuza Ali, filed one of the cases, accusing six named, including Liakat, and 1,400 to 1,500 unnamed people.

Monowara Begum, wife of another deceased Zaker Ahmed, lodged the second case against 1,400 to 1,500 unnamed people, while the third one was filed by Sub-inspector Bahar Miya

against 57 named and 3,200 unnamed people.

Three people have been arrested, said police sources.

Locals said they were passing their days fearing "police harassment and indiscriminate arrest".

Some of them alleged that they had "sold" their land to the company but were yet to be paid the "promised amount".

Project Assistant Coordinator Bahadur said, "We paid every single penny to the rightful owners."

S Alam Group Chairman Saiful Alam Masud claimed that the power plant would not harm the locals as there is no "locality on the project site".

Meanwhile, Banshkhal Chhatra Oikya Forum called for a dawn-to-dusk hartal in Banshkhal today, demanding arrest and trial of those who killed four people during the clash on Monday.

Shah Newaz Chowdhury, convener of the upazila-based student front, made the call from a human chain organised in front of the Chittagong Press Club yesterday afternoon.

## CLASH IN BANSHKHALI

### Family stunned

### losing 3

### Claims to be unaware of rally ban

ARUN BIKASH DEY and MINHAJ UDDIN, from Banshkhal

The air in the home of the Ali's in Char Para of Gondamara union was heavy. The family lost more than any other family in the area during Monday's clash in Banshkhal.

Anwar Ali, his brother Mortuza Ali and Mortuza's son-in-law Jaker Ahmed were killed during the protest against a proposed power plant.

Afsa Begum was speechless. She lost her husband and father in one day. Mother of four sons, Afsa did not know what to do. He eldest child is just 12.

Mortuza's wife Nurunnahar was crying in front of the house built with corrugated iron sheets.

She cannot believe what happened on Monday evening. "I have lost everything ... I have lost my husband, and also the husband of my beloved daughter."

Nurunnahar said her husband was a farmer and worked hard to earn a living. She said, "He rushed to attend the rally as he was dead against the establishment of a coal-fired power plant in the area. He thought it would have an adverse impact on the environment threatening the livelihood of the locals.

"We did not know that the administration had imposed a ban on holding rallies in the area," she said, adding, "If I knew about it, I would not have let him go."

Kanij, another daughter of deceased Mortuza, was seen crying holding the shirt of her father on her chest. "Where have you taken my father?" she was asking repeatedly.

Neighbours said Mortuza was supposed to sit for a meeting in two to three days to fix the date of Kanij's marriage.

Kohinur Akter, wife of deceased Anwar, was holding her only son close to her chest. When she saw journalists, she asked them to get her husband back.

"My husband told me that he was going to attend the rally as he heard that it would be a peaceful rally to protest against the arrest of some locals," she said, adding, "I never imagined he would not return home."

"Where will we go now? How would we survive with four little children?"

"I want punishment of the killers," she said.

## Big trio from subcontinent

FROM PAGE 1

four offshore shipping companies.

Records of international law firm Mossack Fonseca, reviewed by The Indian Express, and subsequent inquiries show that the four companies were registered in tax havens -- one in the British Virgin Islands and three in the Bahamas in November 1993.

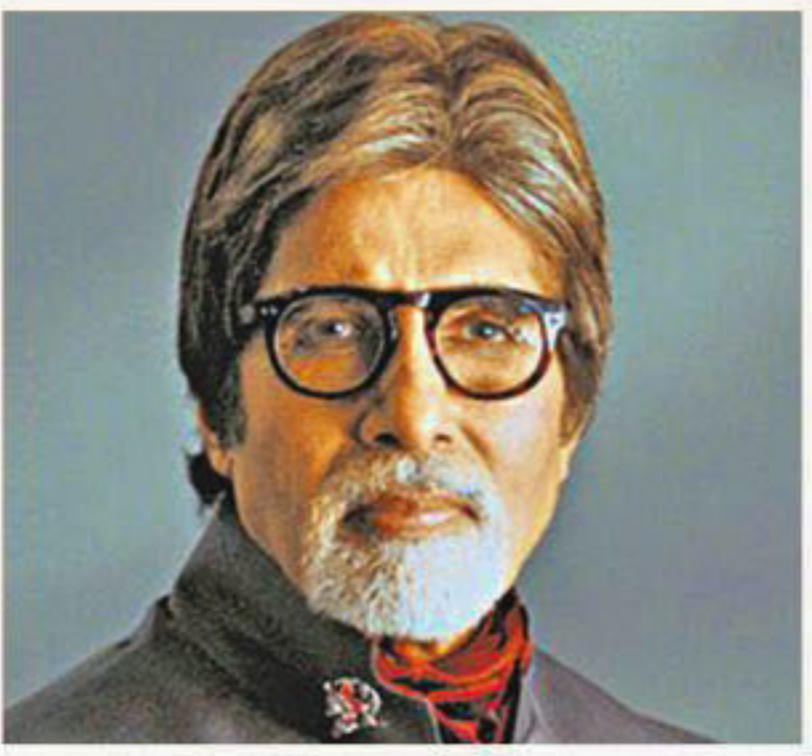
The authorised capital of these companies -- Sea Bulk Shipping Company Ltd (BVI), Lady Shipping Ltd, Treasure Shipping Ltd and Tramp Shipping Ltd (Bahamas) -- ranged between a modest \$5,000-50,000 but they traded in ships worth millions of dollars.

Bachchan was also managing director of all four companies. The other directors were representatives of firms that provide corporate and financial services.

On December 15, 1994, Tramp Shipping Ltd (Bahamas) signed an investment agreement -- deed of covenant -- with Dallah Al-Baraka Investment Company Ltd (DAICO) of Jeddah-based Dallah Al-Baraka Group. A Fonseca entry dated January 6, 1995 shows that a total of \$1.75 million was advanced by DAICO to Tramp.

Along with the deed of covenant, the two companies also signed "a first priority deed of assignment of freight and earnings" and a "pledge and deposit agreement".

The latter was also signed by Constellation Ship Management (Bahamas) Ltd, owned by Captain Mehernooosh R Khajotia, as warrantor. The same day, on December 15, 1994, all 1,000 shares of Tramp Shipping Ltd



Amitabh Bachchan



Aishwarya Rai



Nawaz Sharif

was transferred to Constellation Ship Management Ltd (later renamed Constellation Shipping Ltd).

Khajotia shifted his base to India in 1998 and died in 2006. But a dispute between his Mumbai-based Polaris Group and DAICO reached the Bombay High Court in 2008.

Admitting a petition on December 17, 2009, the High Court noted that Khajotia owned Constellation Shipping (Bahamas), which "some time prior to 2000" was financed by DAICO for acquiring five ships.

According to the petitioner, a group company of DAICO, the loans for three vessels were repaid and the outstanding debt of Constellation was \$2.5 million. Tramp Shipping Ltd had an authorised capital of \$5,000. In September 1997, records show, Bachchan along with other directors of Tramp Shipping, resigned from the board.

The company replaced them with directors provided by Fonseca and, in November, sold a ship -- MV Mattz

Tramp -- for over \$2 million.

Amitabh Bachchan and family did not respond to repeated emails sent to them and phone calls made to their mobile numbers, Mumbai residences and the AB Corporation office for over a week. An AB Corp executive confirmed receipt of the email from The Indian Express on March 28.

'A RAI' Records show that for at least three years, Aishwarya Rai and her family were part of a company incorporated in the British Virgin Islands, a tax haven.

The Indian Express accessed Fonseca documents which show that Rai, her father Kotedadi Ramana Rai Krishna Rai, mother Vrinda Krishna Rai and brother Aditya Rai were appointed on May 14, 2005, as directors of Amic Partners Limited -- with an initial authorised capital of \$50,000.

On June 18, 2005, an Amic board resolution changed Rai's status to shareholder. And on July 5, 2005, internal

instructions exchanged between Fonseca staff stated: "One of the shareholders requested to shorten her name from Ms Ashwarya Rai (sic) to Ms A Rai for reasons of confidentiality. The same was mutually agreed and consented by all directors and shareholders."

When the company was set up, each share had a par value of \$1 with the Certificate of Incumbency stating that the four directors had an identical holding of 12,500 shares each.

Also, a resolution passed by the Rai family on June 18, 2005, shows that all four members were present in Dubai for a board meeting when it was decided that the star and her mother would step down as directors but remain as shareholders.

The resolution was signed by all four directors, and the meeting chaired by Rai's father.

Records also note banking instructions issued during that meeting -- that the Dubai branch of ABN-AMRO bank would hold the company's

accounts and be its Non-discretionary Investment Managers. The resolution clarifies that any of the listed directors may operate these accounts.

Archana Sadanand, the media advisor to Aishwarya Rai, said: "What is this consortium (ICIJ) and what does it do? Is this an authorised entity and how do we know that the information they get is authentic? All information that you have is totally untrue and false."

About 11 million documents held by the Panama-based company were leaked to German newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung. The files were then shared with the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists (ICIJ), a nonprofit network of based in Washington, DC.

SHARIF AND HIS CHILDREN The sons and daughter of Nawaz Sharif reportedly set up at least four offshore companies in British Virgin Islands (BVI).

These companies owned at least six upmarket properties overlooking London's Hyde Park, The Indian Express reported.

"Thousands of Mossack Fonseca (MF) documents reviewed by The Indian Express and subsequent enquiries reveal that the Sharif family mortgaged four of these properties to the Deutsche Bank (Suisse) SA for a loan of GBP 7 million and the Bank of Scotland part financed the purchase of two other apartments," it said.

The ICIJ reports said, "Three children of former and current Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif -- Mariam, Hasan and Hussain -- were owners or had the right to authorise

transactions for several companies."

"Mariam Safdar was the owner of British Virgin Islands-based firms Nielsen Enterprises Limited and Nescoll Limited, incorporated in 1994 and 1993," it reads.

The report said that the daughter and sons of Nawaz Sharif "did not respond to repeated requests for comments".

Sharif, who is believed to be a billionaire twice over, is now being probed by Transparency International as a result of the leaked documents.

The anti-corruption organisation is calling for the Pakistani leader to explain how his family maintains and manages their fortune.

But Sharif's son Hussain told the country's largest private broadcaster Geo that his family had done "nothing wrong".

"Those apartments are ours and those offshore companies are also ours," he said in comments aired by the channel on Monday.

"It is according to British law and laws of other countries that it is a legal way to avoid unnecessary tax via offshore companies."

Meanwhile, Nawaz Sharif yesterday announced his decision to set up a high-level judicial commission, headed by a retired judge of the Supreme Court, to investigate the allegations.

"This commission will investigate all the allegations and reveal facts before the nation," Sharif said in a televised address.

[From The Indian Express, Dawn, Times of India, abc.net.au and Samaa.tv]

## Rain eases dust menace

FROM PAGE 1

day last year and 223 (regarded as very unhealthy) the year before.

However, the level of air pollution in the capital started falling in the middle of last month, and the index value dropped to 142 on April 4 following intermittent rain.

Prof Atiqur told The Daily Star that if one inhales dust, it can severely damage his respiratory system, and cause various lung diseases as well as viral and bacterial infection.

During visits to different parts of the

capital last month, it was found that battered roads and construction sites were major sources of dust particles.

"Dust from road trenches and construction sites smears us all over, and it is difficult to breathe while moving outdoors," said Moumita Sarkar, a college student and Wari resident, who was passing by the road under Mayor Hanif Flyover near Joy Kali Mandir.

Rasheda Islam, who was taking her fifth-grader son to school along the same road, said, "Dust level in the air is horrendous. And my kid has to inhale

it every day while going to school and wayback."

Iteza Ahmed, a Banani resident, said, "We can tolerate the misery caused by road digging, but children and elderly people cannot bear it."

Builders and agencies implementing development projects are supposed to contain dust with water spray and covers at construction sites in line with environment conservation laws to prevent air pollution from worsening further during winter, said Masud Iqbal Mohammad Shameem, deputy

director for air quality management at the DoE.

Talking to this correspondent, DoE Deputy Director Farid Ahmed said it was not possible to enforce the laws properly due to shortage of manpower.

Dhaka South City Corporation is currently doing repair, restoration and improvement of a two-kilometre-long road and footpaths and drains of the same length stretching from Jatrabari roundabout to Joy Kali Mandir.

It is also working on 175km of roads, 192km of drains and 25km of

footpaths in all its 57 wards.

On containing dust, DSCC Mayor Mohammad Sayeed Khokon said, "We will take care of it."

Dhaka North City Corporation is also implementing a project to improve roads, footpaths, drains, and lay storm sewer lines in different areas, including Gulshan, Banani, Baridhara and Uttara.

Uncontrolled dust pollution was all the same in Uttara, said Russell Mahmud, a resident in Sector-5.

DNCC Mayor Annisul Huq said

they had set a target of improving 18km of roads, 46km of drains and 27km of footpaths in the current fiscal year.

The DNCC is implementing a Tk 120-crore project for widening roads and reconstructing surface drains in various sectors of Uttara Model Town.

On dust control measures, the mayor said, "Let's see what can be done."

Apart from dust particles, industrial smog and smoke from vehicles and brick kilns remain other major sources of air pollution.