

ALLAH KARIM JAMEY MASQUE

Controversy over leasing a market

KAUSAR ISLAM AYON

One hundred and four shops of the market on Waqf estate of Allah Karim mosque at Mohammadpur have been given permanent lease without permission from the Office of the Administrator of Waqfs Bangladesh, (OAWB) alleged some member of mosque committee and locals.

The shops have been leased out for 99 years violating act 56(1) of the Waqf law, said the mosque committee members.

As per the law, no Waqf estate is subject to sale. It could be leased out for a maximum period of 4 years by the committee and for permanent lease Waqf administrators' permission is compulsory.

Waqf Administrator Nepur Ahmed told Star City that he did not grant permission for permanent lease to the mosque committee.

When asked, Mohammad Shahidul Islam, general secretary Allah Karim Jamey Masque Waqf Estate Committee (AKJMWEC) said he was not aware of any such rules.

"I didn't know that such rules existed, and if it is so, we will terminate the contract," said Islam who is also the president of BNP ward no 46.

The secretary has taken lease of seven shops while the joint secretary and treasurer have taken five each.

The committee has also violated the OAWB order by constructing market on plot designated for the mosque.

In September 2001, OAWB allowed the previous mosque committee to demolish the old

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structure and construct a new one, on condition that no other establishment would be built on that plot.

But the existing 21-member committee that took office on April 14, 2004 for three years extended the market alongside the plot of the old mosque.

The general secretary also said that they did not violate OAWB's order.

"A very small part of the plot of the old mosque has been taken under the market. Only the stairs and few shops have partially fallen on that plot," said Islam.

The lessees said they were not ready to give up ownership.

"We have the contract and they cannot terminate it according to their whims and fancies. We will not stand to lose for their misdeeds," said a lease owner of a shop.

It is alleged that the committee's general secretary, joint secretary and treasurer are running the committee on their own with no involvement of the president, vice-president and most of the other

committee members.

Ten members including the president of the existing 21-member committee brought a 'no confidence' motion against the general secretary, but it could not be passed due to lack of one vote.

"The committee have had three meetings in two years and I was not informed about them," said Dr. Sarafat Ali, president AKJMWEC.

"I submitted my resignation in May this year protesting the irregularities, but it has not been accepted as yet," said Ali.

Another committee member alleged that the general secretary, joint secretary and treasurer embezzled a huge amount of money from the mosque account.

Islam denied this allegation and said that since the committee did not have official bank account, they used their personal accounts to maintain the mosque funds until May 19, 2006 and have transacted more than Tk 1 crore during the construction of mosque and market.

The committee has not yet submitted the final account for 2003-04 fiscal year.

Office secretary of the existing committee, Mohammad Zahir Hossain filed a complaint with OAWB against general secretary Mohammad Shahidul Islam, joint secretary Mohammad Abdul Kader and treasurer Mohammad Sirajul Islam regarding irregularities by the committee.

"The quorum required of two-thirds of the members to pass a motion on leasing, but only seven were present," said Mohammad Zahir Hossain, office secretary of existing AKJMWEC.

OAWB is now inquiring into the matter following his complaint.

"Our inspector has submitted the report after inspection. We have issued show-cause notices to the concerned persons. A hearing will take place after we receive their reply and out next course will follow accordingly," said the Waqf Administrator.

LIFE GOES ON



Several roads in the city were blocked to thwart the 14 party programmes to besiege the Election Commission (EC) secretariat, but life went on as normal. A mother was taking her ward to school along Mirpur Road yesterday morning while police were blocking the demonstrators on their way to EC secretariat.

MULTI DRUG RESISTANCE TB Awareness strategy helps in combating disease

MAHBUBA ZANNAT

Multi Drug Resistance (MDR) an advanced level of Tuberculosis (TB), that is less responsive to curative treatment, can proliferate in the country because of patients' reluctance to complete the two-year treatment course, experts feared.

Most TB patients are unaware of the disastrous effects of MDR-TB and they just give up taking medicine after few days without completing the six-month course, said Dr Asif Mujtaba Mahmud, an Associate Professor at the National Institute of Diseases of the Chest and Hospital (NIDCH&H).

He said the government is providing TB treatment free of cost.

"Treatment of the MDR-TB is very expensive and no government allocation is fixed for advanced treatment. Besides, the rate of cure is 70 percent at this stage, and 100 percent if the TB treatment is completed," he said. He added that it takes two years for a MDR-TB case to be cured.

Of the total TB patients, 15.4 percent are at MDR-TB level and they can spread germs to 10 percent more, which is dangerous. He said that the government and NGOs have started TB resistance work with advanced technology and if it is implemented properly, the vulnerability will reduce considerably.

MDR-TB is a man made phenomenon caused by the ineffective administration of the drug meant to fight TB and could be treated even from home.

DOTS is a comprehensive strategy that ensures cure to majority of TB patients under the direct observation of service providers. It is initiated at 319 upazilas in the country and the detection rate of TB that was 31 percent in 2001, is now 61

The side effects of the MDR-TB medicine is very strong. But because of its unavailability in the market and high price, the treatment is not possible. A total of 51 patients had been admitted to the NIDCH&H. The case of 18-year old Rafia (not real name) was really heart breaking. She was forced to stop her education after passing class seven as she developed MDR-TB only because of ignorance and negligence when she suffered from TB.

"I want to continue studying. When I felt a little better, I went back to school, but had a relapse and was admitted to hospital again," said Rafia.

Rafia lost her father -- a grocer at Shatkania thana in Chittagong, six years ago. He too was a TB patient. Her little 10-year-old brother died three months ago because of MDR-TB. Fortunately her mother is out of danger after receiving treatment for two years at NIDCH. Programme Manager (PM), National

Tuberculosis Control Programme Dr Vikarunnessa Begum said it is a relief that the rate of MDR-TB affected people is negligible yet, and if the Directly Observed Treatment Short Course (DOTS) is implemented successfully, chances of MDR-TB will diminish.

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"Bangladesh was in fifth position in 2004, but as the detection rate increased it now ranks six," she said adding that the most important work is now to make people aware of the disease.

"The programme was initiated in 1993, and because of lack of funds the programme could not be implemented on a large scale, but the support of USAID will help combat TB and create awareness at grassroots level," she said.

DU students earn

FROM PAGE 25 said Tarannum Shabnam, a student of Rokeya Hall.

"I have started the phone business with a small capital saved from the money I receive from my family," said Mushfiqur Rahman at Shahidullah Hall.

'Advertisements' are found on the walls and gates of hall buildings, elevators, staircase landings and even inside the toilets on what types of services are available. The ads contain call rates, card prices and connection rates.

"The connection rates are much lower than in the market," Mushfiqur added.

Some students have put their money to become commission agents of magazines, periodicals or books on general knowledge and current affairs, which are sources of information for senior students preparing for competitive examinations.

An English daily newspaper has also its commission agents from among the students. "We help in increasing the newspaper circulation for a commission ranging between 10 and 30 per cent," said Rakib and Tuhin, students of Jasimuddin Hall.

Many girl students have also opened

mini, makeshift batik plants, printing and designing dresses for a handsome amount of income.

"I buy cloths, design the dress, tailor them and have then sewed by run-of-the-mill tailors," said Sumaiya Shimu, a student of Rokeya Hall who has been related with this business for about one year. "I make fatua, panjabi and sari with embroidery, applique, patchwork or hand-paint," she said.

Some of them also make block-printed dresses. "The products are usually sold to friends and acquaintances," said Raisa Alamgir of Bangladesh-Kuwait Maitree Hall.

When contacted for his comments on such kinds of business, Md Mahfuzul Islam, provost of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall, expressed his ignorance about it and said he would take necessary steps if he found it true.

However, a house tutor of Salimullah Hall requesting anonymity supported the business. "Many students come from not-so-well-off families and from rural areas. They need money. I appreciate if they are trying to help themselves."

gruesome crime

FROM PAGE 25 why are the dailies reporting such news?" asked Badhon's mother.

"A sense of insecurity is hovering over us as some individuals are demanding that the case filed against the teenagers be withdrawn," said Abdul Hamid, Badhon's father.

Dr. M. A. Mohit Kamal, a psychiatrist and assistant professor of National Institute for Mental Health said: "The parents must be held responsible for the crime committed. They are at work leaving their only son alone, not knowing about the companions of their son and what they do in their absence."

On June 18, Jahan, in police remand, confessed to the crime to a metropolitan magistrate Nani Gopal Biswas. Jahan's statement said that he along with his two friends, Rajib and Masud, attacked his three classmates Badhon, Tonmoy and Niluv.

He added that his friend Rajib had promised him Tk 5,000 if he could get a CPU.

Meanwhile, Rajib and Masud were placed on a two-day remand and are being interrogated to find more about the incident.

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