

# Papia arrested on PM’s instructions

*Says Obaidul Quader*

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Road Transport and Bridges Minister Obaidul Quader yesterday said expelled Jubo Mohila League leader Shamima Nur Papia was arrested as per the instructions of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

“The prime minister herself was aware of the incident and she has given the instruction to arrest her [Papia] and bring her to book following an investigation,” said Quader, also the general secretary of ruling Awami League.

No one will be spared if he or she commits crimes during Awami League’s tenure, Quader said. The government has taken a zero-tolerance policy in this regard and will maintain it in future, he added.

Quader was replying to reporters’ queries about the arrest of Papia, who was placed on a 15-day remand on Monday, and its aftermath after attending a contract signing programme at Setu Bhaban in Banani.

According to Rapid Action Battalion (Rab), Papia -- aided by her husband Mofizur Rahman Sumon -- ran a sex trade and arms rackets.

The couple was arrested from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport on Saturday. Later, Papia, who was general secretary of Jubo Mohila League’s Narsingdi district unit, was expelled from her organisation.

Quader initially declined to comment on the issue.

“I won’t answer this question. I have answered it yesterday [Monday],” said Quader, who had previously told reporters on Monday at his secretariat office that no one would be spared if they committed crimes.

But following several questions regarding the matter yesterday, he commented.

He said AL and its chief Sheikh Hasina has set an example by punishing its own party members who were involved in misdeeds. But BNP, whose leaders and activists have been involved in many misdeeds while in power, had never taken action against its party members for committing crimes, Quader said.

He said AL is a big party comprising both good people and bad, and added, “We never claim that all are good but if anyone is identified for misdeeds, he or she is punished.”

Replying to another question on whether action would be taken against the people who backed Papia and similar offenders, Quader said action would be taken against all. “There are many types of punishments. There are many who are currently behind the scenes, but they would face difficulty in getting party or government posts; that is also a kind of punishment.”

## 13 killed in Delhi unrest

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that his teams were responding to more than a dozen separate calls relating to arson incidents yesterday, as fresh protests flared around Delhi.

“We have sought police protection as our vehicles are being blocked from entering the affected areas. The situation is very grim,” said Delhi Fire Department Director Atul Garg.

He said the violence had not diminished since Monday despite authorities imposing an emergency measure prohibiting any gatherings in the violence-hit areas.

One fire department vehicle was torched by protesters on Monday and a small number of firemen were injured, Garg added.

“We have about 3,500 police and paramilitary deployed,” said Alok Kumar, the joint commissioner of police. “The situation is definitely tense, but we are on top of the situation.”

Police fired tear gas and pellets to scatter demonstrators protesting against the citizenship law in the Jafrabad neighbourhood of northeast Delhi yesterday. A young man suffered a pellet wound to his thigh, while another sustained injuries to his eyes, leaving his face bloodied.

In New Jafrabad, local residents patrolled the street with sticks and metal rods. Two reporters with the local NDTV news channel were attacked and badly beaten by a mob.

“There is a flow of injured people still coming in. There are casualties,” said Dr Rajesh Kalra, the additional medical superintendent at Guru Teg Bahadur Hospital in New Delhi.

“There are all kinds of injuries - many pellet injuries and some from sharp weapons, too,” said Kalra, adding some of the injured brought in on Monday had gunshot wounds. **SCHOOLS SHUT, TRANSIT HAMPERED**

On Monday police used tear gas and smoke grenades but struggled to disperse stone-throwing crowds

who tore down metal barricades and torched vehicles and a petrol pump.

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal appealed for calm.

“Whatever problems people have can be resolved peacefully. Violence will not help find a solution,” he said yesterday.

Home Minister Amit Shah met with Kejriwal and other local officials yesterday and said additional forces were being deployed in affected areas. He urged political parties to avoid provocative speeches that could inflame protesters.

Schools in the northeast of the city were shut yesterday and at least five metro stations closed.

An announcement over a mosque loudspeaker urged protesters to stay non-violent and not attempt to cross police barricades.

“We don’t have a problem with the police, we are against the government’s law,” the male announcer said.

India’s capital has been a hotbed of unrest against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which makes it easier for non-Muslims from three neighbouring Muslim-dominated countries to gain Indian citizenship.

The CAA has sparked accusations that Modi and his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party are undermining India’s secular traditions. The BJP denies any bias against India’s more than 180 million minority Muslims but objectors have staging protests and camping out in parts of New Delhi for two months.

Trump praised India as a tolerant country.

“India is a country that proudly embraces freedom, liberty, individual rights, the rule of law and the dignity of every human being,” he told a rally of over 100,000 people in Modi’s home state of Gujarat. “Your unity is an inspiration to the world.”

## Tigers snap losing streak

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in the second session of the fourth day at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

It came as a relief for the Tigers, who have been struggling in Test cricket for quite some time now, having last won a Test against West Indies at home on December 2, 2018. Despite questions over the opponent’s strength, this win will surely be a breath of fresh air in the Bangladesh camp.

That win against West Indies in 2018 was Bangladesh’s first by an innings in Tests, and yesterday’s win was their second. It was the Tigers’ 14th win in 119 Tests played so far, and half of those wins have come against Zimbabwe.

Much like in the first innings, it was young Nayeem once again who shone bright as the off spinner bagged his second five-wicket haul in his fifth Test, having registered his maiden fiver on debut against West Indies in 2018.

The 19-year-old ended up with figures of five for 82 in the second innings and bagged nine wickets in the game.

Zimbabwe resumed the day on nine for two in overcast conditions suited for seam bowling, and Abu Jayed started off well in his first spell. But it was left-arm spinner Taijul who

picked up the first wicket of the day when he removed Kevin Kasuza.

The other overnight batsman, the experienced Brendon Taylor, looked comfortable until the right-hander lost his cool and his top-edged slog-sweep off Nayeem was caught at short fine leg.

Sikandar Raza and skipper Craig Ervine then tried to build a partnership but the 60-run fifth-wicket stand was cut short when Bangladesh skipper Mominul Haque ran out Ervine for a team-high 43 with a brilliant direct hit, hitting timber when he had only one stump to aim at.

Raza also departed soon for 37 after a magnificent, leaping catch from Mushfiqur Rahim at short-mid wicket off the bowling of Taijul, while Regis Chakabva, who scored 17, was the victim of yet another brilliant catch from Tamim Iqbal.

Tymicen Maruma tried to hang in and scored 41 runs before he became Nayeem’s fifth wicket. Taijul then wrapped things up by trapping Charlton Tshuma leg-before.

Bangladesh will play their next Test in early April against a rather tougher opposition in Pakistan, but they ensured yesterday that they will go into the Test with a positive outlook for a change.



**A team of Rab counting cash seized from safes at a home of siblings Enamul Haque and Rupon Bhuiyan on Lalmohan Saha Street in the capital's Wari yesterday. The two were arrested last month for running illegal casinos.**

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

## ‘Nothing less than a bank of their own’

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Earlier on September 24, Rab conducted a drive in another house owned by the brothers in the capital’s Gendaria and arrested one of their staffers. Later, the elite force also raided the home of one of their friends and recovered Tk five crore in cash, eight kgs of gold and six firearms.

The duo went into hiding after law enforcers launched the crackdown on illegal casinos, bars, and spas last year. But they were finally arrested by the Criminal Investigation Department of police on January 13 this year at a flat in Keraniganj, where they had been living after failing to flee the country with forged passports.

A total of seven cases have been filed against Enu and Rupon, and the CID is investigating four. Law enforcers interrogated the brothers several times after taking them on remand.

Speaking to this correspondent, a grocery shop owner in Old Dhaka said they never heard anything wrong about the brothers until the law enforcers’ drive. They always behaved well in the locality, he said, requesting anonymity.

**INSIDE THE TINY FLAT**

Rab entered the flat after breaking down the main door.

Upon entrance, they walked into a small space with a kitchen and a bathroom. The rusty gas burner there indicated it was unused for a long period.

Inside the flat yesterday morning, this correspondent also found two beds in two small rooms, two three-seater steel sofas, a chair, two old model televisions and an air-conditioner.

But most of the space was taken up by five big steel vaults, from which the elite force recovered the huge sums of money.

At one stage during the drive,



**Enamul Haque Enu Rupon Bhuiyan**

Rab had to bring two cash-counting machines to get an idea of the amount of money recovered from the vaults, according to officials.

Sarwar Alam, executive magistrate of Rab, who was present during the special drive, told The Daily Star that they were not able to arrest anyone during the drive as no one was found inside the flat.

However, they suspect that someone used to guard this money, he said.

Sarwar said Enu and Rupon did not live in the building. They have tenants on the third and fourth floors of the house, he said, adding they did not find anything after conducting drives in the other flats of the building.

As there was a huge sum of money, someone might have been living in the flat but left after the brothers were arrested, added Alam.

Locals said a family member (sister-in-law) of the duo lived in the building and was working as a caretaker of the building and property after the brothers were arrested.

Locals and law enforcers, however, did not give details about the brothers’ family.

A resident of the building said she always found the flat locked. “Sometimes, I heard sounds inside the flat but no activities had come to my notice in the last couple of months.” **AN INTELLIGENCE-LED DRIVE**

The Rab-3 director Lt Col Hasan said

they had earlier recovered money and gold from three houses of Enu and Rupon in Banianagar and Narinda in Old Dhaka and kept the houses under surveillance.

Their surveillance led them to this flat, he said.

A Rab high official said they got information that the brothers owned 24 buildings in the densely populated Old Dhaka. Acting on the tip-off, they traced the building and flat, he said, requesting anonymity.

The official further said they broke the main door and entered the flat suspecting they would find some property-related documents but were surprised to find such a huge stash of money and gold.

They also conducted a drive in another building, which is also located on the lane but did not find anything there, added the official.

**SOURCE OF THE MONEY**

Asked, Lt Col Hasan said further investigation was needed to know when the brothers amassed so much money.

“We will file a case and hand over the recovered money and gold to police,” said the Rab director.

Speaking to The Daily Star, another top official of the elite force said this house is very close to Motijheel, where the brothers used to run their illegal casino.

“We are suspecting they kept the money in the vaults inside the flat after collecting it from the casinos. They used the money to buy buildings...” the official said, requesting anonymity.

As the brothers and the family members went into hiding after the casino drives began, they did not get the chance to move the money from the flat, said the official.

## Politically biased

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The TIB suggested holding public hearing on candidates for ACC chairman and commissioner posts before the final selection to earn trust in the selection process.

The TIB research on the ACC activities is a follow-up of a previous research on the same matter. A research report, titled “Initiatives to Strengthen Anti-Graft Organisation”, was launched yesterday at the press conference at TIB’s Dhanmondi office.

TIB’s Senior Programme Manager Shahzada M Akram and Programme Manager Shammi Laila Islam conducted the research based on interviews, views-exchange meetings and assessment of documents.

While reading out the findings, Shammi said those were based on 50 indicators under six categories -- independence and dignity; finance and human resource; accountability and integrity; enquiry, investigation and case; prevention, education and outreach activities and assistance and external Affairs.

The ACC has scored 60 percent point marks, meaning it lacks seven points to reach “the top stage” from its current “medium stage”. To achieve above 67 percent points, the anti-graft watchdog needs to improve in some of its indicators, she said.

Shammi also said, “People have negative opinions on how the ACC carries out investigations into multiple allegations of similar magnitude. Even ACC officials have said that people lack confidence in them.”

“People believe that the ACC attaches importance to allegations of petty graft while there is no visible success in catching the major players. There is also concern over ACC officials’ skills and professionalism.”

The research report said, “The commission usually fails to complete investigations in time. There are also allegations that ACC officials take bribe.”

The report further said investigations carried out by the ACC were below standard and as a result, the success rate compared to the number of cases filed with the graft watchdog was not satisfactory.

The TIB recommended amending Anti-Corruption Act 2004, Money Laundering Prevention Act, 2012 and Sarkari Chakri Ain 2018 for proper empowerment of the ACC.

Prof Dr Perween Hasan, chairperson of TIB trustee board, and Sumaiya Khair, adviser, executive management, were also present.

## RMG worker gang-raped in Ashulia

*Two arrested*

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Savar

A garment worker was allegedly gang-raped at Ashulia in Savar, on the outskirts of the capital, on Sunday night.

The 19-year-old victim filed a rape case against three people with Ashulia Police Station yesterday.

Police arrested two of the accused on Monday night.

The arrestees are Arif Hossain, 29, Rana Sarkar, 25. They are residents of Norshighapur area.

According to the case statement, the victim had relationships with her co-worker Shamiul Islam Mridha, 22. Around 8:30pm on Sunday, the girl was returning home from a female friend’s house.

On the way home, Shamiul met and brought her to Arif’s house, saying that he would take her to her house. Later, Arif, Rana, and Shamiul raped her there.

Around 10:30pm, they let her go and threatened her that they would kill her if she disclosed the incident, the statement added.

Fazlul Haque, inspector (intelligence) of Ashulia Police Station, said they detained the two after the victim had notified police of the incident on Monday night.

The girl was sent to the One-Stop Crisis Centre at Dhaka Medical College Hospital for tests, he added.

## JU decides

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decided not to adopt the uniform admission test.

Earlier, Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet) and Chattogram University made similar decisions.

JU Pro-Vice Chancellor (admin) Prof Amir Hussain said, “Jahangirnagar University has its own heritage and uniqueness. The decision of not adopting the uniform admission test was made unanimously as it is “unclear” and “complex”.

“Unclear since we do not have any proper guidelines to conduct the admission test ...,” he added.

On January 23, the UGC, the statutory apex body for higher education, took the decision to hold uniform admission test at a meeting with vice-chancellors of some public universities.

## No trade deal for Trump

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whom he lavished praise during public appearances over the course of his 36-hour visit.

But Trump was frank that Modi puts up a tough trade fight and that their disagreements on tariffs and deficits wouldn’t be resolved in the near-term.

US-Indian trade relations have worsened in recent years as Trump’s “America First” aim of reducing deficits has collided with the “Make in India” mantra of Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Speaking at the end of a short tour that saw him hold hands at the Taj Mahal with First Lady Melania and address a huge rally, Trump said only that they had made “tremendous progress” towards an accord.

“The United States has to be treated fairly and India understands that,” he told a news conference, saying that “if a deal happens with India, it will be towards the end of the year.”

While minor compared to his battle with China, Trump has slapped tariffs on Indian steel and aluminium and suspended duty-free access for certain goods in an effort to cut the \$25 billion US trade deficit with Asia’s third-biggest economy.

Under pressure to deliver ahead of

his November reelection battle, Trump has pressed for greater access to the vast Indian market of 1.3 billion people for US dairy producers and makers of medical goods.

But Modi, battling to fire up a slowing economy hampered by inflation and a widening budget deficit, has responded with higher tariffs on US goods including \$600 million worth of Californian almonds.

Arriving on Monday Trump hailed India and its “tremendously successful” but “very, very tough” Modi at the rally of some 100,000 people inside the world’s largest cricket stadium in Modi’s home state Gujarat.

Yesterday, Trump sat down for one-on-one talks with Modi followed by delegation-level meetings to try and move forward on issues that have divided the two countries, mainly a festering trade dispute.

After those meetings, Trump said his visit had been productive, with the conclusion of deals to buy US helicopters for the Indian military. India will buy 24 SeaHawk helicopters from Lockheed Martin equipped with Hellfire missiles worth \$2.6 billion and plans an order for six Apache copters.

India is modernising its military

to narrow a gap with China and has increasingly turned towards the United States over its traditional supplier, Russia.

But behind the bonhomie they remain far apart on a trade deal between the world’s biggest economy and its second most populous nation, dashing earlier speculation of a possible partial compromise that would have seen India lowering tariffs on Harley-Davidson motorcycles and other items.

“Harley-Davidson has to pay tremendous tariffs when they send motorcycles in here. When India sells motorcycles into the US there is virtually no tariff... That’s unfair,” Trump told a news conference.

“I want reciprocal, it has to be reciprocal,” he said.

The two countries had initially planned to produce a “mini deal,” but that proved elusive.

Instead, both sides are now aiming for a bigger package, including possibly a free trade agreement.

Trump said he also discussed with Modi, whom he called his “dear friend,” the importance of a secure 5G telecoms network in India, ahead of a planned airwaves auction by the country.