

Reappointment Rule nisi on LGRD secy, DWASA chairman

By Staff Correspondent

A High Court (HC) division bench yesterday issued rule nisi on the secretary of the LGRD and chairman of the Dhaka WASA Board asking why the reappointment of Dr Khondkar Azharul Haq as Dhaka WASA managing director would not be declared illegal.

The HC bench comprising Justice Mohammad Fazlul Karim and Justice Mohammad Ali Asgar Khan allowed two weeks for a reply to the rule and asked the authorities concerned to show cause why the government would not be ordered to cancel Dr Azharul Haq's reappointment.

The rule was passed upon a writ petition filed by former chief engineer Abdul Mukit of Dhaka WASA challenging the reappointment.



Death Anniversary of Rear Admiral Mahbub Ali Khan

The 15th death anniversary of Rear Admiral Mahbub Ali Khan, former Chief of Naval Staff and Minister for Communications and Agriculture will be observed today says a press release.

Laying of wreaths at the Banani Graveyard, *Quran khwani*, distribution of sweets in a number of orphanages and special prayer for the peace and salvation of the departed soul at important city mosques after Zohr prayers, have been arranged.

A *milad mahfil* will also be held at 'Mahbub Bhaban' House # 40, Road # 05, Dhanmondi R/A on the occasion after Aris prayers at 5:30 PM.

Bangladesh Navy has also arranged *milad mahfil* at all its bases in Dhaka, Chittagong, Khulna, Kaptai & Mongla to pray for the peace and salvation of the departed soul.

'Surovi' a voluntary organisation founded by Begum Mahbub Ali Khan has also arranged *milad mahfil* in its different branches.

Death anniversary By Staff Correspondent



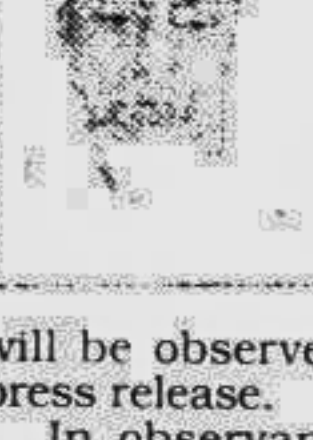
The first death anniversary of Khondker Zahedur Rahman, a former member of the Dhaka University Central Students' Union (DUCSU), will be observed today.

Zahed, son of late Khondker Fazlur Rahman (Mawaddah of Gowa), died of a massive heart attack at the Shuhrawardi Hospital on August 5, 1998.

A *milad mahfil* will be held at his family residence (House-85), Road-12/A (Dhanmondi) after Aris prayers today.

Relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the occasion and pray for the departed soul.

Death anniversary of Mahmudunnabi Chowdhury



The fourth death anniversary of former minister, one of the founders of Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CCIC), Mahmudunnabi Chowdhury will be observed today, says a press release.

In observance of the death anniversary *Quran khwani* offering of *fateha* and feeding the destitute have been arranged. Amir Khusrul Mahmud Chowdhury, MP, is his son.

Obituary

Rawshan Ara Akhtar, wife of renowned social worker Nazrul Islam Chowdhury of Kalabagan, died at BIRDEM Hospital in the city, family sources said. She was 78, reports BSS.

Raushan left behind three sons, three daughters and grandchildren.

Her eldest son Saiful Islam Chowdhury is the Senior Principal Officer of Janata Bank.

The *qulhawani* of Raushan will be held at 54/A Kalabagan First Lane, after Aris prayers on Saturday.

Obituary

Mohammad Iman Ali, Deputy Secretary of Establishment Ministry, died in the city yesterday (Thursday). He was 51, reports UNB.

He was buried at Banani graveyard after *namaz-e-janaza* at the Secretariat, Kakrail and Basabo mosque.

Kailashtila LPG Plant resumes production

From Iqbal Siddiquee

SYLHET, Aug 5: Kailashtila LPG Plant resumed production yesterday after more than one and a half months, an official said.

Following this, the LP Gas Limited, a concern of Bangladesh Petroleum Corporation (BPC), started supplying LPG cylinders to distributors. As many as 2250 cylinders were supplied to the dealers yesterday.

Production in the LPG Plant at Golapganj thana resumed suspended from June 11 due to 'stoppage of NGL (raw material) used for producing LPG' supply from the Kailashtila Gas Field. It also caused suspension of production in the bottling plant nearby, the official said.

Another official, however, said that following detection of some leakage in the MSTE plant (Molecular Sieve Turbo Expander plant), which processes raw gas for separation of dry gas and NGL, the LPG plant had to be closed in the second week of June. 'But, we have already overcome the crisis, spares were brought from UK,' said the official.

The LPG Plant was set up by Rupantarita Prakritik Gas Company Limited, a concern of Petrobangla, in 1997 at a site near Kailashtila Gas Field at a cost of Tk 20 crore. It was commissioned in April last year and production started in May.

The plant has a production capacity of 5,000 tonnes of LPG per year. It can also produce 7600 tonnes of petrol and 8400 tonnes of diesel as by-products per year. For bottling the LPG produced in the plant, another plant — LPG Storage and Bottling plant — was set up by BPC at a cost of Tk 24 crore. It can bottle about 15 tonnes (2000 cylinders) per day.

The Kailashtila LPG plant is the first in the country to liquefy natural gas for bottling. Gas available in the area is unlike that found in Comilla, Chittagong or in the Hill Tracts and is 'suitable for producing LPG because it is rich in propane and butane,' said a Petrobangla official.

LPG is also produced by the Eastern Refinery in Chittagong from by-product of crude oil imported from the Gulf.

CU students announce agitation programme

From CU Correspondent

CHITTAGONG, Aug 5: Anti-Communal Students Forum (ACSF) enforced a day-long siege programme on the Chittagong University (CU) campus today to press home its three-point demand, including resumption of bus service for the students.

ACSF also announced agitation programmes including indefinite strike from August 10 to realise their demands.

In the morning, the activists of ACSF locked the main gate of the university and prevented motor vehicles, from entering the campus.

Classes were not held but offices at the administrative building remained open during the siege programme.

ACSF brought out a procession and held a rally in front of VC's office. At the rally, the forum leaders announced agitation programme. The programme includes boycott of all classes on August 7 and 8, mass rally on August 9 and indefinite strike on the campus from August 10.

Presided over by Shahjahan Chowdhury, president of CU BCL, the rally was addressed by Ahsan Kabir Bengali, president of Chhatra Union, and Nurul-haifa Julhas, president of SCF. Islami Chhatra Shibir (ICSF) also laid a siege to the VC's office on the same demand.

Meeting of Monobikash Edn Centre held

A meeting of the ad-hoc committee of Monobikash Education Centre at Malita under Palash in Narsingdi was held Saturday, says a press release of the centre.

The meeting, presided over by the chairman of the ad-hoc committee Helal Uddin, formed a nine-member permanent committee for the July '99 to June 2000 term. Helal Uddin was elected unopposed the president of the permanent committee.

The other members of the committee are: A Z Saiduzzaman, Abdul Kader, Mustafa Bhuiyan, Abul Kashem Junayed, Saghir Ahmed, Kabir Uddin Bhuiyan, Md Liton and Sultana Yasmin, secretary.

Sikandar Abu Zafar's death anniversary

By Staff Correspondent

The 24th death anniversary of noted poet and the Editor of the Samakal, Sikandar Abu Zafar will be observed today through various programmes.

In observance of the death anniversary, a memorial meeting will be held at Sufia Kamal Memorial Hall at the National Museum at 5 pm.

Renowned poet Abul Hossain will be the chief guest at the function while poet Shamsur Rahman, president of Sikandar Abu Zafar Shawan Uthab Committee will preside.

Stunting shelter

'The government's new tax regime for real estate will reduce access to housing'

By Staff Correspondent

The advance income tax (AIT) imposed on the real estate developers in the last budget will severely affect the entire sector and will stunt its growth depriving prospective buyers of apartments of any good deal.

The warning came at a press conference by real estate developers and members of the Real Estate and Housing Association of Bangladesh (REHAB) held at the Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel yesterday.

The government's decision to impose AIT of Tk 15 per square feet is a deterrence to development of a sector which grew on its own without any incentive from the government,' said Brig (Retd) AHM Abdul Momen, president of REHAB.

Officials of the largest association of the professional real estate developers, REHAB, said the sector, since 1985 has procured construction materials worth over Tk 1,000 crore. Today it directly employs about 12,000 construction workers and pays them wages amounting to about Tk 45 crore annually.

TK 2 crore is paid annually by this sector as professional fees for architectural and engineering consultants, the sector depends on about 5,000 management personnel who are paid approximately Tk 25 crore in annual salaries.

'When it was expected that the sector will get some incentive from the government, it is burdened with additional tax that is payable before the developer makes any income,' said MS Alam, secretary, REHAB.

REHAB's AFM Jahangir said a substantial number of projects which are taken up by the developers are never implemented due to legal and other complications. 'What happens to the person who could not implement his project, let alone make a profit?' asked Jahangir.

They said at the time of taking up a project the developer is already under cash constraint. Practically, there is no financing in the housing sector, as the House Building Finance Corporation, the only government

institution, has been constantly cash-starved and has consequently made negligible contribution to the sector. The developer has to depend on other institutions to procure cash for the project, it is completely unjust to impose an advance income tax which is sure to stunt the growth of the sector.

Smaller apartments for lower income groups will be the worst affected because such projects are huge in nature and the initial investment in AIT would be prohibitive and discouraging.

Hekkar Ahmed Khan said that increasing VAT in the sector from 1.98 per cent to three per cent was unjust. 'VAT is already being collected at 15 per cent at various stages when construction materials are purchased and from the developer for the balance portion.'

Among others who represented REHAB at the conference included, Akhil Akhter Chowdhury, Towfik Seraj and Lt Col (retd) Mahtabuddin Ahmed.

Sohel Chy murder Court to 'admit' charge sheet on Sept 8

By Court Correspondent

A Metropolitan magistrate's court yesterday fixed September 8 to 'admit' the charge sheet in film star Soheli Chowdhury murder case.

However, the Magistrate Shahidul Islam said that he would accept the charge sheet after scrutinising the Case Diary (CD).

The Detective Branch (DB) of Police submitted the chargesheet, accusing nine people including Aziz Mohammed Bhai and Bunty Islam, before the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's Court on August 1.

Soheli Chowdhury was shot dead by a gang of assassins in front of the Club Tramps on December 18 night.

Of the accused, police arrested six. The rest three — Imron, Faruk Abbasi and A R Chowdhury — have been absconding since the incident. Five of the arrested were later released from the jail on bail while Mamun, who was arrested a few days ago, is now detained in the Dhaka Central Jail.

Nasim

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law-enforcing agencies. The home minister said the convicted persons who have surrendered during the drive have already been sent to different central jails. But those who are not involved in any case will be rehabilitated after scrutiny, he added.

UNB adds: The government will start a fresh joint combing operation shortly in the capital to mop up terrorists in the wake of a spurt in crimes.

The home minister told journalists yesterday that the government decision would take effect any moment. The preparation is on and it will start anytime.

He also said the government would introduce a new anti-terrorism act in the next session of Parliament that is almost similar to the special law enacted by the then BNP government to curb terrorism.

The law will have the provision for summary trial of the terrorists to be caught by the law-enforcing agencies,' he said.

However, the government might consider giving certain time to the terrorists to surrender before a crackdown.

Ctg murder

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on the Dhaka-Chittagong highway at Baraoula Bazar early this morning. They also put up barricades on rail tracks at Sitakundu, snapping rail communication between Chittagong and rest of the country, railway sources said.

Mail trains from Dhaka, Sylhet and Chandra remained stranded at places between Feni and Mirsharai stations.

Hundreds of vehicles remained stranded on about 20-km highway from Mirsharai to Fouldharhat till 9 pm, causing sufferings to thousands of passengers.

The railway authorities cancelled schedules for Dhaka-bound 'Subarna', 'Purabi' and 'Karnaphuli' trains and Chandra-bound 'Sagarika'.

The barricades were withdrawn at 9 pm tonight after the administration assured BNP activists that action would be taken against the killers of Shahjahan, police said.

Jail killing

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and transparency for holding the trial' the judge said as eight of the 21 accused who are facing the trial in person appeared in the dock under heavy police escort from the nearby Dhaka Central Jail.

In the pre-dawn action of November 3, 1975, the national leaders — Syed Nazrul Islam, Tajuddin Ahmed, M Mansur Ali and A H M Quamruzzaman — were shot dead inside Dhaka Central Jail.

Sonali defies

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against the borrower, otherwise the bank may not get back its money.

But SB has prepared a reply to BB governor's letter in which it said his 'net worth' turned negative because of imposition of interests on loans and depreciation of project assets.

The SB proposal as the group already has huge defaulted loans with the bank and filing of cases against it now will only increase the amount of classified loans. Under such circumstances, the bank recommended that the borrower be allowed a last chance to reschedule its loans.

However, central bank officials termed this logic ridiculous saying this would further increase the bank's exposure on one single borrower and put the whole amount at risk of being defaulted.

In its last board memo, SB said the borrower had deposited Tk 6 crore at different times, which should be considered as 10 per cent down payment for loan rescheduling.

However, this decision of the bank violates the central bank's 1996 circular, which says loans cannot be rescheduled without making a one-time down payment of 10 per cent.

Fazlur Rahman Group had Tk 128.22 crore outstanding loans with SB till June 30 this year. This includes Tk 69.79 crore defaulted loans.

In its last board decision, SB approved rescheduling of loans of Messers Rahman Spinning Mills, Fazlur Rahman Super Market and Rahman Yarn Twisting.

Save the Buriganga

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Nearby, rows of slums on top of bamboo stilts rise directly from the riverbed. Local people said Haji Selim, the local MP, and his associate Selim Kamal control the slums in the area. 'If you have any query about the slums, contact them,' said an elderly man when this correspondent wanted to know about the owner.

A female member of a family living in the slum said she was renting a room for Tk 200 a month. Dozens of hanging latrines have been built on the pillars for more than 1,000 families living in the slums. Haji Selim, who is also the Commissioner of the area could not be reached for his comment.

In the same area bamboo fencing demarcating ownership are rising above the water. 'When the water level falls in winter, the river banks are up for sale,' said Rokon Mian, who owns a tea stall on the embankment, pointing his finger at a demarcated area near by. 'The MP saheb has put his claim on this plot,' he said.

Towards Sadarghat by boat, both sides between Killarua and Mitford Hospital show signs of indiscriminate encroachment upon the river. The ongoing construction site of the flood protection embankment had to be shifted into the

river as the government failed to evict the settlers.

There is no trace of the once famous promenade of the city — the Buckland Bund — built in 1864 by British Commissioner of Dhaka Buckland, near the Sadarghat launch terminal. A madrasah-orphanage complex, Baitun Nazat, has been built on the river. Extension work on the mosque is underway.

On the southern side of Ahsan Marjil Museum, another mosque is being built with pillars on the river. The imam of the mosque said that the BIWTA has authorised the construction. But the BIWTA in-charge of the Sadarghat terminal, deputy director Saiduzzaman, said the area is within the port limit.

All these mosques and madrasahs are totally illegal and those people never sought any permission from us,' he said.

The onslaught on the river Buriganga continues on the eastern side of the terminal through Shyambazar wholesale vegetable market. To get rid of tonnes of rubbish generated from the huge market the authority has made a large pen inside the river. Local people said if the dumping continues that part of the river would rise above the water level very soon.

acres of land for the 370 allottees as committed by Rajuk. In the process, the BNP government officially de-requisitioned 1,350 acres for the settlers. But even the 82 acres of land could not be recovered from the diheard subsequent buyers and other settlers' despite several attempts.

Early this year, the government sat down to discuss the J-Block situation. Officials said, depending on an 'unrealistic report' on settlement at J-Block, the minister slashed down a further 32 acres from the 82 acres and decided to fight for recovering 50 acres for the allottees. The slashing resulted in reducing the size of the plots from five and ten kathas, each to a uniform size of four kathas.

The report said that the density of settlers on that 32-acre stretch was too heavy to plan any eviction drive. In fact it was a misinformation because that particular stretch had fewer structures than the other places making it easier to clear,' said a Rajuk source.

In addition to the actual allottees, several parties that now claim plots at J-Block include about 150 individuals of the Nayanagar Nurachala Samity, about 100 individuals claiming to be 'original owners' under the umbrella of Rajuk's Bastu-uhita Uchhed Parishad and slum dwellers.

Legal hassle

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Daily Star. That is why the Attorney General has sought time for complying with the SC order.

The Attorney General on Wednesday moved an application before a chamber judge, Justice A M Mahbubur Rahman, seeking extension of 15 days time to comply with the Supreme Court order in this regard. Hearing on the application will be held on Sunday.

A full bench of the Appellate Division of the SC asked the Speaker on July 29 to refer the matter to the EC within seven days from the date of the order. The HC had directed the Speaker to refer the matter to the Election Commission.

However, Attorney General Mahmudul Islam refused to disclose the specific reasons behind his move for extension of time. Talking over telephone, he said, 'The Speaker wants to see the text of the judgement, that's all for the moment.'

Speaker Humayun Rashid Chowdhury was not available for comment.

Meantime, the president has summoned the parliament session on the 29 of this month. An influential source in the government hinted to The Daily Star that the session might witness a 'politically stimulating' debate on the issue.

Shafiullah

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concept of Development Quadrangle (to consist of Nepal, Bhutan and north eastern states of India). Shafiullah said, 'Yes, it would, to some extent, affect our potential market in the north eastern Indian states.'

Replying to another query, the ruling party lawmaker said, 'We may like or dislike, the reality is that we are surrounded by India almost from three sides, while on the other side, we have the Bay of Bengal. So we should not remain isolated from the neighbour.'

But at the same time, we also need opening to Nepal and Bhutan. Since the proposal for transit has come from India, we should consider this moment as the most appropriate time to strike a package deal with our neighbour.'

On the issue of infrastructure necessary, specially for international transshipment of goods, Shafiullah said, 'Presently, we do not have adequate infrastructure. There are bridges hardly capable of taking weights more than three tons while no bridge can carry weights more than seven tons.'

He thinks that international financial assistance would be necessary to build adequate infrastructure for implementing the proposed transshipment. 'But before everything else, we need to study thoroughly the pros and cons of implementing the proposal on a different front's economic, political and defence.'

Military muscle no answer

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cision of purchasing MIG-29s, at the cost Tk some 600 crore, unproductive and immoral, especially when half of the country's population is still living below the subsistence level. They also questioned the decision making process of military purchase, which, according to them, is non-transparent. None of them, however, opposed the idea of maintaining a standing army.

Prof. Ahmed asserted that it was mainly the economic power, not military power, which guarantees national sovereignty these days. He argued that none would perhaps question Japan's ability to defend its independence and sovereignty, although the country is barred to raise a military power beyond a particular limit determined by its constitution made under the supervision of the Americans.

'To strengthen the economy, we have to have developed human resources. So we have to invest in the social sectors on priority basis,' he said.

Prof. Ahmed found it more important to strengthen border guards, instead of building cantonments one after another. He, however, does not see any reason for India to attack Bangladesh.

'Bangladesh should try to be Switzerland of Asia.'

The academic also criticised defence audit. 'The audit is being conducted not by the Auditor General's office. There is a special system for that. This cannot be an ideal practice.'

Earlier, Afsan Chowdhury, a journalist, criticised the conventional definition of national security and sovereignty. 'National security essentially means security of the people. But the government seems to be least bothered about security threats arising out of environ-

mental hazards and so on.'

Referring to the environmentalists' concern that the one-third of the country's land territory might go under water within the first quarter of the next century, Chowdhury said that no government appeared bothered about it. 'How much money the government has spend to protect the territory in question, when it is up to purchase MIGs at the cost of hundreds of crores?'

Chowdhury, presently working on arsenic contamination, also said that regrettably the government spent money for fighter planes, while seeking for foreign aid to fight back arsenic aggression killing thousands of people.

Abrar Chowdhury, a professor of international relations at Dhaka University, refused to go by the conventional definition of national security which is based on fire power.

'India, taken as potential threat for Bangladesh, has the fourth largest army of the world. Bangladesh cannot afford to build up its military strength keeping India in mind,' he said. He asserted that Bangladesh must develop alternative defence strategy 'based on expertise of our war of liberation.' 'People should form the core of our defence strategy.'

Anu Muhammad, a professor of economics at dahangir-nagar University, found it important to consider the defence issue in the perspective of Global Capitalist System.

'The Gulf War came as a blessing for American Economy and we have to realise that. World capitalism cannot sustain itself without war industry,' he said. 'Defence purchase in developing countries like Bangladesh is induced by this global system.'

Demanding transparency in

All the kings' men

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Minister for Water Resources' Abdur Razzak Tk 10, 805.

The former ministers who have not paid their telephone bills till March this year are:

7th Parliament:

Hour Rahman Chowdhury (Nilphamari-3) — Tk 8760, Dr Khondkar Mosharrar Hossain (Comilla-2) — Tk 46,173, K M Obaidur Rahman (Faridpur-2) — Tk 1,59,556, Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yousuf (Faridpur-3) — Tk 8,603, Oli Ahmed (Chittagong-14) — Tk 5,690, Dr Abdul Moyeen Khan (Narsingdi-2) — Tk 24,724, Barister Nazmul Huda (Dhaka-1) — Tk 10,551, Abdul Mannan (Dhaka-2) — Tk 3,226, and Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan (Narsingdi-3) — Tk 2,166.

5th Parliament:

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury (Rangpur-5) — 11.41 lakh, Mir Shawkat Ali (Dhaka-8) — Tk 83 thousand, Akbar Hossain (Comilla-8) — Tk 10 thousand, Kazi Zafar Ahmed (Comilla-12) — Tk 9.13 lakh, Fazlur Rahman Patal (Natore-1) — Tk 13 thousand, Shah Moazzem Hossain (Rangpur-6) — Tk 76 thousand, Brig (ret'd) A M M Hannan Shah (Gazipur-4) — Tk 26 thousand, Syed Abul Hossain (Madaripur-3) — Tk 43, 575, Abdul Matin Chowdhury (Narayanganj-1) — Tk 27,665, Dr Sirajul Haq (Sherpur-3) — Tk 968, Redwan Ahmed (Comilla-6) — Tk 3.81 lakh, Sardar Amjad Hossain (Rajbari-3) — Tk 2.76 lakh and Mohammad Nurul Huda (Chandpur-2) — Tk 9 thousand.

4th Parliament:

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury (Chandpur-4) — 4.76 lakh, Shahjahan Siraj (Tangail-4) — Tk 55,740, A T M Giasuddin (Shariatpur-2) — Tk 4 thousand, Moyennuddin Sarkar (Rangpur-1) — Tk 2.31 lakh and Kamrunnahr Zafar (Chittagong-10) — Tk 1.35 lakh.

3rd Parliament:

Late Abdul Malek Ukil (Noakhali-4) — Tk 88,173, Major (ret'd) Manzur Kader (Pabna-1) — Tk 1,754, A T M Giasuddin (Shariatpur-2) — Tk 2.13 lakh.

Mayennuddin Sarkar (Rangpur-1) — Tk 22 thousand, Kamrunnahr Zafar (Chittagong-10) — Tk 38 thousand and Redwan Ahmed (Comilla-6) — Tk 39 thousand.

2nd Parliament:

Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yousuf (Tel No. 313065) — Tk 1,349, Abdul Matin Chowdhury (Tel No. 404167) — Tk 35,892

and Atauddin Khan (Tel No 313331) — Tk 10,184.

1st Parliament:

Haten Ali Akbar (Tel No. 317369) — 7,180 and Advocate Salauddin Yousuf (Tel-Khulna -280) Tk 2,531.

Others who have outstanding telephone bills and who assumed high offices, include former president Lt General (Ret'd) H M Ershad Tk 1,01,736, Chief Whip Abul Hasanat Abdulah Tk 377,318, Deputy Speaker Abdul Hamid Tk 40, 704, former 'First Lady' Begum Rawshan Ershad Tk 19,674, Prime Minister's parliamentary Affairs Adviser Suranjit Sengupta Tk 83,571 and Workers Party leader Rashid Khan Menon Tk 98,022.

Bangladeshi held with Rs 5.5 lakh at Benapole