

## MORE Tk 24 LAKH POSTAL SCAM DETECTED AT NILPHAMARI

# Banks ignore govt order to disclose accounts of accused

**EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari**

Defalcation of more Tk 23.76 lakh from depositors' accounts in Nilphamari Head Post Office has been detected by the second probe body which began work last week.

With this, the defalcation of funds from savings accounts and savings certificates at the post office now stands at over Tk four crores 32 lakh.

The second probe body, headed by Reazul Islam, Deputy Post Master General (DPMG) of Dinajpur Postal Region and also acting DPMG of Rangpur Region, was formed at the directive of the Post Master General (PMG), Northern Region (Rajshahi Division).

The first five-member probe body formed at the directive of Post and Telecommunication Ministry detected defalcation of Tk four 4 crore eight lakh From April 4 to May 19. It was headed by Additional Director General of Post Offices Mobasserur Rahman.

Reazul Islam told this correspondent on Thursday that any fresh case will not be filed after detection of more funds. Supplements will be added to the cases filed earlier, he added.

Assistant Post Master Mir Nural Islam Munna, Ledger Operator, Ahmedul Islam Raju and Postal Operators Taslim Uddin and Liaqat Ali were charged in the cases filed earlier in connection with defalcation of over Tk four crore eight lakh.

Munna, Raju and Liaqat are in

custody and Taslim Uddin is absconding.

Accused Mir Nural Islam Munna and Ahmedul Islam Raju in their confessional statements made before a First Class Magistrate court under Section 164 earlier said that two former DPMGs of Rangpur Postal Region-- Susanta Kumar Mondal and Mahmubabr Rahman -- were involved in the scam. The two are under suspension now.

Meanwhile commercial banks here did not respond to an order by the postal authorities in Dhaka to give statements of accounts of the accused persons and to stop payments from those.

Only Pupal Bank replied to the postal authorities' letter, saying it would neither provide any information on its clients' account nor stop payments from those without court order.

Other banks did not respond to the order made during probe by the first body, sources said.

On May 2, postal authorities suspended payment against three savings certificates worth Tk 1.5 lac owned by accused Nural Islam Munna's eldest daughter. The savings certificates were kept as mortgage with Uttara Bank against a loan of Tk two lakh taken by an influential opposition leader on 18 December 2000.

It is assumed by different quarters that the accused persons might have huge amounts of money deposited in local banks in fictitious names.

Meanwhile, a lawyers source of the accused informed this correspondent that accused are preparing to get bail in the high court as their bail prayer was rejected a number of times in the local magistrate court.

Syedpur police sources told this correspondent that they raided the house of Taslim Uddin recently at Syedpur town but could not arrest him as he showed a bail order from High Court.

But copies of the bail order are yet to reach the court concerned and the Head Post Office, sources there said.

When contacted by this correspondent, some lawyers in the town said the other accused are preparing to move High Court for bail as their bail prayers were rejected a number of times by the local Magistrate Court.

A member of the probe body said that some others accused of postal scam in some other head post offices under Rangpur Postal Region got bail from the High Court. They include one in Kurugram, two in Lalmonirhat and all the accused at Gaibandha Head Post Office.

A senior lawyer of Nilphamari bar told that the first case was filed under Section 409 and 34 and the second case under Section 409 and 467, which are bailable.

## ATTACK BY COMMISSIONERS' MEN

### Poura staff snap water supply in Patuakhali

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali**

Patuakhali Pourasabha employees stopped water supply in the municipal area for several hours on Thursday following attack on some staff by men of two ward commissioners. They also put off street lights.

About 20 to 25 attackers led by poura commissioners Mostafizur Rahman Rumi and Akhtaruzzaman Nobel tried to ransack the municipality chairman's office room. Being resisted by poura secretary Nurul Islam and others, they assaulted the engineer, accountant and president and secretary of Poura Karmachari Union, according to staff, police and local people.

Following the attack, 14 staff members including the poura secretary submitted a complaint to their chairman at about 2 pm, but he refused to take action against them.

Being disgusted, the agitated staff members have cut off the power and water supply lines.

Poura chairman Mostaq Ahmed also remained stranded in his office room for several hours due to presence of about 50 ruling partymen at the municipality gate till writing of this report at 6 pm on Thursday.

Meanwhile, the municipality chairman has sent a prayer to the prime minister (PM) by fax seeking safety and security from attackers belonging to ruling party. Poura karmachari union president Nazrul Islam also filed a case with the Sadar Police Station.

After the incident, a large number of policemen have been deployed at the pourashaba office.

However, denying their involvement in the incident, poura commissioners Rumi and Nobel complained to newsmen against their poura chairman saying they cannot work in the office because of non-cooperation of the chairman. 'So, people from wards 3 and 4 rushed to the pourasabha to lodge their protest,' they told newsmen.



One of the many stacks of illegally extracted timber in Rangamati town, awaiting transportation.

PHOTO: STAR

## Illegal timber legalised

### Transportation from CHT begins

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangamati**

After eight months' suspension, timber traders yesterday started commercial transportation of timbers from the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) following an order from high-ups that legalised the huge stocks of timbers felled illegally earlier.

On the first day yesterday, some 100 trucks loaded with about 350 CFT timber each left Rangamati for Dhaka and other destinations in the country. Huge timbers were also transported in waterways.

Commercial transportation of timber from Rangamati to other areas was suspended for eight months in the wake of allegations of

massive plunder of trees from reserve forests over the years. A probe committee formed by the MoEF, during investigation, had found that most of the timbers piled up by traders were extracted illegally.

The committee members during their visit to Rangamati in March this year had also seized a huge quantity of such illegal logs in the town.

But ignoring the probe committee's report, the authorities at a meeting on May 24 allowed all stacked logs, including the seized ones, for transportation under COR (Compound Offence Report).

The move came following 'strong lobbying' allegedly by an influential BNP lawmaker from Chittagong

after repeated appeal to him by CHT timber traders, sources said.

They said at least five lakh cubic feet of timbers worth about Tk 50 crore, stacked earlier, will now be transported from Rangamati alone.

The sources said most of the timbers were illegally felled from reserve forests under cover of 'Jote Permit', issued jointly by the Department of Forest and the District Administration against timbers planted on private lands in response of application by landowners.

The probe committee had also found that forest employees issued false Jote Permits and transit passes (TPs) issued against were reused.

## DISPUTE OVER VOTER LIST, AREA

### HC stays Sunderganj poura polls

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha**

All kinds of election-related activities have been suspended in Sunderganj Pourasava till June 11, according to a stay order issued by the High Court (HC) on May 29.

The pourasava election was scheduled to be held on June 21.

The order was issued following a writ petition filed by Dahaband Union Parisad (UP) chairman Abdul Majid Mondal who complained a dispute over fixing of pourasava area and final voter list.

Forty-three candidates filed nomination for chairmanship, 43 others filed nomination to vie the posts of nine ward commissioners and 14 candidates filed nomination for contesting in three women reserve seats.

On receipt of the HC order, returning officer (RO) and upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) Ahsan Habib suspended pourasava polls.

Meanwhile, local people met on the Sonali Bank premises on Thursday demanding holding of pourasava election immediately.

Earlier, the polls schedule was declared for the first time since establishment of the pourasava in 2003.

## BOMB ATTACK ON CHUADANGA BNP LEADER

### Party men involved, victim claims

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia**

Mir Mohiuddin, vice-president of Chuadanga BNP and chairman of Alamdanga municipality, who narrowly escaped a bomb attack on Tuesday, alleged that some of his party men including the brother of a local lawmaker were involved in the incident.

A half-day hartal was enforced in Chuadanga by BNP and its front organisations protesting the bomb attack.

Injured Mohiuddin told journalists at Kushtia General Hospital on Thursday that Ohidul Islam Biswas, was the mastermind.

"Ohidul wants to kill me as I am popular," Mohiuddin said.

Ohidul knows he will not be

acceptable to people if I contest the next parliamentary election.

"This man (Ohidul) threatened me and tried twice earlier to kill me but failed", Mohiuddin said.

Mohiuddin rejected the claims made by a 'new' underground party that it was behind the bomb attack.

"There is no underground party in the name of communist war", he said.

Mohiuddin filed a case with Alamdanga police station accusing Ohidul, JCD leader Hasibul, Rony, Sentu and two others.

Mohiuddin said he informed party high-ups about the matter and sought security.

Besides Mohiuddin, his brother Ismail Uddin and journalist Atiur Rhaman Mukul were injured in the

attack.

Police on Wednesday arrested Hasibul and freed Alamdanga poura BNP president Hamidul Azam and Abul Kasem, held soon after the incident.

Additional Deputy Inspector General of Police (Khulna range) visited the spot on Thursday and directed police to arrest the criminals anyhow.

According to party source, there is a serious conflict in Chuadanga BNP. The party is now divided into three groups, one led by Ohidul Islam, one by Krishak Dal leader Samsuzzaman Dudu and the other by Mir Mohiuddin.

## Video on 'staged' minority torture: 8 sued in Barisal

**BSS, Barisal**

Police filed a non-FIR prosecution case with the District Magistrate Court here yesterday against eight persons for making a video on 'staged torture' of some minority people.

Kotwali thana Sub-inspector Mamun filed the case against Sanjoy Ghose, Khokon Ghose, Ashok Ghose, Sajib Banik, Dilip Chatterjee alias Bhola, Niranjan, Palash and Mithun under Section 121 (Ka), 123 (KA) and 124 (Ka) on orders from the Home Ministry.

When contacted, Barisal Police Superintendeent Mainur Rahman Chowdhury told BSS that legal action and procedure are being started against the persons involved in the "criminal activities" done with a motive to tarnish the image of the country abroad.

Sanjoy Ghose, along with some other persons including one Mizanur Rahman had 'staged' a torture on some minority people at Raypura village in Chandpura union in the Sadar upazila on April 22.

Some local people saw the fake torture and informed police, but they did not take any action. Later, CID of police, DSB and police administration inquired into the matter and a report was sent to the Home Ministry.

Court sources said Deputy Commissioner Khandoker Fazley Wahed will now give the responsibility to a First Class Magistrate to investigate the matter to find out details of the foul play then a regular case will be started with the court.

Police have arrested Sanjoy Ghose and Mizanur Rahman.

The incident drew criticism from different quarters including minority communities.

The Bangladesh Hindu Buddha Christian Oikko Parisahd condemned the foul play and called upon the authorities to punish the culprits.

## Five bombs recovered in Kushtia

**OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia**

Kushtia police recovered five powerful bombs and 20 bullets from Piyarpur in the Sadar upazila on Thursday.

Labourers found the bombs and ammunition while digging a canal and informed police.

Police said they suspect that criminals had kept the bombs hidden under soil for use in criminal activities.

## Heat wave: 11 die in Tangail, Gaibandha

### STAR NATIONAL DESK

Eleven persons died due to heat wave in Tangail and Gaibandha districts within a week.

A Tangail correspondent reports: About eight persons died and more than 100 others fell sick due to severe heat wave in the district in a week.

The victims are: Harun-or-Rashid, 52, of Berabuchna village under Tangail municipality area, Abdu Sobhan, 60, of Gunogram village under Ghatail upazila, Hafez Mohammad Ziarat Ali, 24, and Chandu Miah, 70, of Quitchtara village under Delduar upazila, Montaj Ali Master, 70 of Shabhulla village, Zamila Begum, 65, of Adabari Gramnahali village, Miah Chand Fakir, 55, of Tarawapur village and Yunus Ali, 60, of Bashtoil village under Mirzapur upazila.

The mercury rose to 39:66 degree celsius yesterday and may touch 40 degree celsius by the weekend if there is no rain, according to weather office here.

The hot weather has paralysed life in the district. A few shops were found open in the town. The farmers could not go to work at field and children failed to go to school. Frequent loadshedding has added to people's sufferings.

Our Gaibandha Correspondent reports: Three persons died and 17 others fell sick due to severe heat wave in the district in three days.

The victims are Mofizul, 78, Khaibar, 60, and Abdul Gafur, 87, in Gaibandha Sadar upazila.

The victims are mainly day labourers and rickshawpullers.