

Salman F Rahman

FROM PAGE 1
him to gain strong political hold, by using which he 'plundered' public money through different ventures. For participating in the election that was scheduled for January 22, he managed court stay orders on his loan defaults from the nationalised commercial banks. Sonali, Rupali and Agrani banks.

Salman F Rahman, vice chairman of Beximco Group, who got AL nomination for Dhaka-1 constituency, is still a loan defaulter for big amount of money with National Bank Limited.

He allegedly plundered huge amount of money by giving false information about his father's industry. New Dhaka Industry when the industries were nationalised after the independence of Bangladesh. The money earned in this way helped him establish the business enterprise Beximco.

From then on, he did not have to look back, as he played the role of an opportunist during every government - whether democratic or autocratic. He became owner of a huge amount of money, in both legal and illegal ways, especially during the governments of Ziaur Rahman and HM Ershad.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia's Parliamentary Affairs Adviser Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury is a business partner of Salman Rahman. Their company Beximco has a number of enterprises that borrowed 2,600 crore taka from national and foreign banks and financial institutions. The enterprises are now defaulters of 425 crore taka.

A case was filed against Salman for smuggling Tk 300 crore in 1996, but he thwarted its proceedings using his financial and political influence. All the 13 companies under Beximco Group allegedly

misappropriated hundreds of crore taka from the share markets by giving false information about the companies to the public.

One of his business enterprises also allegedly misappropriated more than Tk 100 crore in printing textbooks during the tenure of last AL government. The enterprise supplied the textbooks five months after the scheduled time.

At that time he also threatened the then Bangladesh Bank governor Lutfur Rahman to make him 'face consequences' if actions were taken against Salman for loan defaults. The then finance minister Shah AMS Kibria took steps for legal actions against Salman's illegal financial activities. The steps against the influential business tycoon, however, could not proceed much.

Salman contested in the 2001 parliament election with AL nomination from Nawabganj in Dhaka. He failed in the election, but not in business. He maintained close links with Hawa Bhaban and continued his 'legal and illegal' business activities.

His appointment as a member of the AL advisory council dissatisfied many 'genuine' AL leaders as well as AL's alliance partners, especially the leftist parties.

Salman Rahman's father Muslim League leader Fazlur Rahman was an education minister during the Pakistani regime and had good links with Jamaat-e-Islami during the 1971 Liberation War.

Sources said Salman F Rahman might have a hand in AL's signing the agreement with Khelafat-e-Majlis that allows the religious leaders to issue fatwa.

The law enforcers recently barred him at Zia International Airport from going abroad.

Jugantor owner's house raided

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) personnel raided the Gulshan residence of Nurul Islam Babul, owner of vernacular daily Jugantor, around 1:30am Saturday.

Although they did not find him in his house, members of Rab-11 recovered a shotgun, a rifle and two pistols from there.

Confirming the arms recovery, Gulshan police told The Daily Star that the firearms are licensed but their validity expired. "Babul did not deposit the firearms despite a government order to do so," said the officer on duty.

Aman

FROM PAGE 1
(ICD), Aman served the immediate past four-party coalition government first as the state minister for health and later in the labour and employment ministry.

Hailing from Keraniganj in Dhaka, Aman was elected in the parliament for three consecutive periods in 1991, 1996 and 2001. He was also made lawmaker in the controversial February 15 elections of 1996. Aman and his cadres beat up a lift operator at the Secretariat Building where he went as the state minister for education in the two-week long BNP government in 1996.

He invested most of his ill-gotten money in different businesses like housing, shopping centre, CNG station and buying lands in his constituency and in Savar, locals said.

But Aman tactfully kept his name away from the documents of most of the businesses, making his long-time friend Mahin Chowdhury their 'owner' under the name of Tanaka Group.

Aman built a commercial building on Gulshan Avenue and a luxurious house in Gulshan residential area in the capital. He has also bought some hundred bigha of land in Savar.

There are allegations that Aman influenced the concerned government authorities to award development works to the local criminal groups and used them to establish a stronghold in the area.

There are at least 57 cases against Aman under the Public Safety Act and he had been on bail in a case for attacking the Keraniganj Police Station.

Ijtema ends

FROM PAGE 1
devotees started pouring in the riverbank amid dense fog in the early morning, turning the venue into a humane.

A pin-drop silence descended there when the Akheri Munajat started. Pilgrims camped on the bank of the Turag and from nearby houses, rooftops and travellers joined the munajat. Devotees who were on the highway also took part in the prayer.

As there was no facility for women devotees there, they joined the munajat from nearby Hariampur and different mills and factories in the area.

President Iajuddin Ahmed and Chief Adviser Fakhruddin Ahmed joined the munajat from a dais in the main pandal.

BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia also joined the munajat from Bata Shoe Factory while Awami League President Sheikh Hasina from Atlas Honda Factory.

Among others present were Jatiya Party President HM Ershad, advisers, former MPs and leaders of different political parties.

Maulana Mohammad Hossain from Bangladesh also delivered sermons after Zohr prayers yesterday. The authorities set up loudspeakers across 10 square km area for the convenience of the devotees in hearing the sermons and the prayers.

Law-enforcers picked up 49 persons for pick pocketing and other crimes from the Ijtema ground yesterday, raising the number of total arrestees to 1,202.

Three devotees died on the Ijtema ground yesterday. Of them, two were identified as Jalaludin, 65, of Narail and Nazimuddin, 55, of Tangail.

Besides, retired DIG of police and freedom fighter Mostafizur Rahman died of cardiac arrest on his way to the Ijtema ground yesterday.

Eighty-seven devotees were admitted to Tongi Hospital with various problems. Besides, 39 others were sent to different hospitals in Dhaka.

Shamsul Huda

FROM PAGE 1
for recasting of the EC to regain people's confidence in the constitutional body and hold a free and fair ninth parliamentary elections after all the controversies created by Justice Aziz and his team.

The previous EC could not conduct the January 22 polls as the president declared a state of emergency on January 11 in the wake of severe political impasse over issues including the EC reconstitution.

Firearms

FROM PAGE 1
bullets was also found at his village home at Ramsa, Kazipur.

People from surrounding villages of Ramsa, Kazipur, Naldanga, Basila, Patul, Khajura and Madhnagar expressed their joy at Dulu's arrest and exchanged sweets.

BNP leader Ruhul Quddus Dulu is known to have patronised vigilante gangs of Jagrata Muslim Janata Bangladesh (JMJB) led by Siddiqul Islam Bangla Bhai in their action against communist outlaws in 2004.

Recommendation

FROM PAGE 16

identifying the existing legal, administrative and institutional inadequacies in rooting out corruption. It was asked to submit recommendations within two weeks.

"We won't ask anyone to quit the commission. We are assigned only to recommend ways to make the ACC effective and precisely that's what we are doing," Matin said, adding that now it is the government's responsibility to take steps accordingly.

Sources said the government might ask the ACC members to stand down once the recommendations are formally submitted to the interim administration chief.

ACC Chairman Justice Sultan Hossain Khan yesterday told The Daily Star that the commission members are ready to resign in case of the government asking them to do so.

Since its inception in November 2004, the ACC has remained non-functional, failing to live up to the popular expectations that it would combat corruption boldly and efficiently.

The committee also recommended re-screening of the staff who had been taken in from the now defunct Bureau of Anti-Corruption (Bac).

Matin, also a former director general of the Bac, said there are too many corrupt officials among the several hundred staffers drawn from the no longer existing anti-graft body.

He argued that those who were earlier screened out would also be re-examined, as there might be honest and competent officials among them.

The Bac with 1,271 officials was dissolved in 2004. Of its staff, the ACC took in 33 first class and 52 second class officers, and 658 class III and IV employees.

The cabinet division approved for them an organogram accommodating 650 staff members.

The committee suggested that the organogram should be altered to increase the manpower of the commission.

Jubilant citizens

FROM PAGE 1

"Exemplary punishments must be meted out to these people irrespective of their political affiliations," said Mohammad Shahjahan, proprietor of a sari shop at Karwan Bazar.

When the poor are struggling to manage a meal a day, corrupt politicians have amassed crores of taka, Shahjahan said. He also demanded immediate arrest of corrupt bureaucrats.

Nazrul Islam, a CNG auto-rickshaw driver of Talola in the capital told The Daily Star that he heard the news of the arrests at noon. "I am very happy with the arrest of Nazmul Huda," he said blasting Huda, and BNP Senior Secretary General Tarique Rahman for having a stranglehold on CNG auto-rickshaw trade, wreaking havoc in the lives of auto-rickshaw drivers.

Supporting yesterday's high profile arrests, Kamaluddin Majumder, an electric appliance trader of Hatirpul area, said all the top political leaders who patronise thuggery and terrorism should be arrested and tried.

He stressed the need for formulating laws so that no body can amass wealth through illegal

It feels that some provisions in the exiting Act should also be changed, noted Abdul Matin.

According to the Act, the ACC needs a set of rules for its functioning. But it has yet to have the rules finalised and approved though over two years have gone since its formation.

Addressing a press briefing after the meeting, Barrister Mainul said a set of draft rules would be finalised within a week.

"Soon, there will be special courts set up throughout the country for quick disposal of graft cases," said the law adviser adding that initially such courts would be set up in the capital.

"The ACC will have its own prosecution unit to move cases in the courts," he added.

At the briefing, the communications adviser observed that the commission must not remain busy dealing with trivial matters. It would rather be geared to "net the big fish".

He said the reconstitution process would follow the resignations of the incumbent ACC members.

Mir Nasir

FROM PAGE 1

He allegedly misappropriated Tk 6 crore in buying two faulty and old F-28 aircraft in 2004 ignoring objections from the technical committee.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines had to pay a large amount of money to repair the faulty planes a few weeks after they were bought, sources said.

Despite Biman employees' demonstration against his corruption, the four-party alliance did not take any action against him.

Sources in the party said Mir Nasir used to address BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia "mother". Perhaps a reason why he was able to evade all those allegations, the sources added.

He was forced to resign in November 2005 following allegations of irregularities in transporting Hajji pilgrims.

means.

Jayed Shahriar, a student of mass communication and journalism in Dhaka University, said,

"However powerful the corruptionists might be, they must be arrested," adding that the arrests must be made irrespective of their political affiliations.

Zakir Hossain, a rickshaw puller of Teigaon area, said mere arrests are not enough, the guilty must be punished.

Anwar Hossain, a businessman of Shahbagh, said the trials must be held quickly so that the arrestees do not get a chance to avoid the hands of justice due to loopholes in the system, adding that the trials should be public so that the corruptionists understand that justice cannot be avoided if they resort to criminal activities.

Mohammad Abdul Majid, an evicted street vendor of Karwan Bazar demanded punishment for politicians who abused power. He said he is not happy with the governments of Awami League, BNP, Jamaat, and Jatiya Party, adding that all these parties resorted to corruption and criminal activities.

Forces search for 41

FROM PAGE 1

Adviser Mainul Hossain told reporters.

"We have no concrete information at this moment about the allegations on which the law enforcers arrested some politicians. Most probably they were arrested for their involvement in corruption... Everything will be clear after two or three days," he said.

Sources in the home ministry said cases will be filed against them. "We are waiting for directives from the higher authorities," a senior official at the home ministry said.

Security forces meanwhile kept hunting for other influential persons for their alleged involvement in corruption and patronisation of criminal activities, including militancy, sources said, adding that a few more corrupt men and godfathers will be caught soon.

Besides the police's list of the corrupt and godfathers, the army has also prepared a list, containing so far names of 300 corrupt politicians, former bureaucrats and businessmen.

Panicked by the ongoing crackdown, some mid-level political leaders yesterday communicated with the media to know if the joint forces will arrest the senior leaders only.

These political leaders have not visited their party offices since the state of emergency was declared suspending political activities.

Munshi

FROM PAGE 16

Munshi's cadres would often attack journalists' meetings and rallies.

He formed a 'mobile force' to assist him at the 2001 parliamentary elections. Later the group used to rape and kill several women, said sources adding at least two women were raped on their wedding nights in 2005.

There were also serious allegations against Munshi of influencing the local administration. He has been on record to have beaten two land ministry officials in front of a large crowd. He was also known for humiliating a number of civil servants publicly.

It was learnt that Munshi had collected resignation letters from all the teachers of private schools and colleges under his upazila to keep them under constant threat of being sacked.

Munshi's brother Atikuzzaman Babu had allegedly formed a 'force' to attack or harass opposition leaders and activists.

Babu was captured by the armed forces during Operation Clean Heart in 2002, but was released the next day.

Worried BNP

FROM PAGE 16

BNP Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan in a statement last night.

All authorities concerned should be cautious so that no one's right to justice is violated, he said.

The statement signed by Mofiqul Hasan Tripti, BNP office secretary, came after a party meeting with BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia in the chair.

Referring to the steps taken against terrorism and corruption by the immediate past BNP-led four-party alliance government, Bhuiyan said people hope that action will be taken on the basis of proper documents and not persuasion of many quarters.

BNP Standing Committee members Khandaker Mosharrif Hossain, Khandaker Mahbub Uddin Ahmed and M Shamsul Islam, Dhaka city Mayor and BNP city unit President Sadeque Hossain Khoka, Justice TH Khan, former education minister Osman Farruk, former foreign ministry adviser Riaz Rahman, BNP Joint Secretary General Nazrul Islam Khan, Adviser to BNP chairperson ZA Khan, former state minister for home Lutfozzaman Babar, and Major (retired) Kamrul Islam Khan also attended the meeting.

Fazlul Haque Amine, chairman of an Islami Oikya Jote faction, a partner of BNP in the four-party alliance, also met Khaleda and discussed the latest political development as well as the recent arrest of political leaders.

Khaleda discussed the arrest with the party leaders and lawyers at her Banani office last night. The meeting also discussed ways for providing legal aid to the detained leaders.

Meanwhile, many BNP leaders went into hiding to avoid the joint forces' crackdown after yesterday's arrest of a number of high profile leaders.

Sources said BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Tarique Rahman and a few of his close aides have not visited Hawa Bhaban in the last few days.

The family members of a few detained leaders, including Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury and Iqbal Hasan Mahmud Tuku, and wife of Aman Ullah Aman met Khaleda yesterday and urged her to provide effective help to know where the detained leaders have been kept.

Sources said the BNP chairperson asked the party leaders to face the situation with courage and keep close contact with the field level leaders. She also advised them to help the families of the arrested leaders.

Civil society

FROM PAGE 16

"Those who possess black money must be brought to justice," said eminent jurist Dr Kamal Hossain in his reaction to the arrest of a dozen former ministers and lawmakers of BNP and Awami League in a crackdown on 'corrupt' politicians early yesterday.

But Kamal observed that any high-profile political leaders should be arrested if there are specific allegations and evidence against them.

Economist Prof Muzaffer Ahmad in his reaction said expected results would not come if the crackdown on political leaders was merely to create a sensation. "This initiative will yield no good if they were arrested without specific allegations," he observed.

Akbar Ali Khan, former adviser to the caretaker government, said: "If they are detained on proper allegations, I will congratulate the caretaker government. But if there is no specific allegation, the government will have to give explanation in this regard."

Prof Muhammad Jafar Iqbal also demanded proper investigation into the corruption charges against the political leaders. "The corrupt politicians should be given exemplary punishment," he said.

Expressing disappointment, Jafar Iqbal said none of the Jamaat leaders were arrested, though there were allegations of corruption against them.

Mosaddek Ali Falu

FROM PAGE 1

the country.
Falu became a lawmaker in 2004 from Dhaka-10 constituency through a by-election that was widely reported to be rigged. He was also former political secretary to the immediate past prime minister Khaleda Zia. He is now the political secretary to Khaleda Zia.

He started amassing his wealth when he was the private secretary to the then prime minister Khaleda Zia in 1991 and remained in that position until 1996. During this period, he bought large tracts of land and built a college in his father's name in Savar.

He was the only BNP man with access to the inside of the then prime minister's office (PMO) during the first BNP term, after Ershad rule, between 1991-96. He made big money that served as his capital for future investments. He invested in factories, farms in Savar and land. He turned his modest home in Shahjahanpur, in Dhaka into a palatial mansion.

During the Awami League rule between 1996 and 2001, he kept close contact with AL high-ups including the then home minister Mohammad Nasim, who was also arrested yesterday.

Until the BNP-led coalition came to power in October 2001, he did not possess a Tax Identification Number (TIN), which effectively meant he did not pay any tax until 2001.

After the BNP-led government came to power, he had a meteoric rise in fortunes within 31 months that saw him amass immeasurable wealth.

The value of his shares in different companies multiplied a hundred fold during this period of two and a half years, between 2004 and the end of 2006. He is one of the owners of two satellite TV channels, ntv and Rtv, as well as the daily Amar Desh. He acquired several plots of land, built palatial homes

and made numerous large-scale investments.

Falu, in a frenzy, turned himself into the biggest media mogul in the country. He gave backdated signatures while ensuring his rights to the private television channel ntv soon after the BNP-led government had assumed power. This was followed by him launching a new Bangla daily, Amar Desh, in 2003.

According to information available from the statements he submitted to the returning officer (RO) on January 9, 2007, Falu's wealth is just over Tk 36 crore since May 24, 2004 when he had contested for Dhaka-10 by-election. This amount is reported to be well below his accumulated wealth, even if the current market value of his properties, assets and share prices are not included.

Five of his associates also confessed to Bangladesh Bank in late 2006 that they took over Tk 31 crore in "benami" loans under fictitious company names, for which Falu along with his brother Hashmat Ali were the guarantors.

Falu, in the 2007 statement, in his liabilities showed a loan of Tk 67,72,890 for the purchase of a car from BFIC (it was not made clear what is BFIC). But he did not show his car in his wealth statement. The only explanation for this could be he used the money for other purposes which is tantamount to criminal offence.

Falu did not show how much tax he pays. In the statement, he did not show any bill for telephones at his residence.

He also did not submit his statement papers for income tax returns to the returning officer despite being the richest among all of BNP candidates running for constituencies under Dhaka district. His statement also shows his properties and land prices well below the market value.

Over 2 lakh sacks

FROM PAGE 16

National Industries Corporation Pvt Ltd, sources said.

The four held by Rab are Jasim Uddin of Ahmed Trading, Tasir Ahmad of commissioned agent Kabir Majhi, MYusuf of Ali Enterprise and Haradhan Saha of Chattagram Paribahan Sangstha.

The essential commodities seized in the 6-hour drive included 58,231 sacks of lentil, 37,838 sacks of sugar, 3,491 of dry chili and 1700 sacks of wheat.

Besides, a huge quantity of other items like peas, poultry feed, washing stone, aluminium sulphate, chalk powder and arrowroot were also seized in the drive.

Among the seized items there were also around 17,040 sacks of date expired sugar of East West Trading, 520 sacks of spoiled dry chili of Neptune Corporation, 13,700 sacks of date expired sodium sulphate of Sajid Corporation, 3,610 sacks of spoiled maize of BK Overseas, 11,600 sacks of date expired RB Soda of Zia & Brothers.

Some 12,830 sacks of sugar imported by PHP Group were seized as those were found mixed up with sacks of date-expired sugar.

Sources said, the seized items were imported and hoarded by some thirty importers including AK Corporation (Abul Khaer), PHP Group, H Brothers, Hasan & Brothers, East West Trading, SK Trading, SL Enterprise and Mou Enterprise.

The warehouses were rented by several commission agents including Kabir Majhi, Ahmed Trading and Ali Enterprise.

Meanwhile, the joint forces seized 2,032 sacks of fertiliser, 1,448 sacks of date expired power milk, 787 sacks of spoiled wheat and 200 sacks of sugar, 40,000 cans of beer, 123 sacks of Indian jute seeds and various types of spoiled basic commodities in the country.

DHAKA
A mobile court led by the magistrate Rokoni-ud-Dowla seized 200 tons of date-expired powder, milk for infants, tomato sauce, Pringles chips and other commodities including 40,000 cans of beer from a warehouse owned by Tanro Ltd at DOHS, Baridhara in the capital, reports our staff correspondent.

The court fined six officials with Tk 3 lakh each or three years imprisonment under BSTI ordinance 24/31-A, DCC ordinance 124 and 150/2/3/61/62 and Pure Food Ordinance 14, 18 and 22.

The officials include owner of Tanro Ltd, Haji M Tajul Islam, chairman Robert Gomes, director Nurul Islam, accounts manager Bashir Ahmed, assistant manager Abdullah-Al-Mamun and coordinator Khaled Hossain.

In another case filed by narcotics department, the court allowed three days' remand for the chairman and director while three others were sent to jail.

RANGPUR
The joint forces unearthed a fake fertiliser and a gul (tobacco powder) factory and seized over 200 bags of fake TSP fertilisers along with raw materials from a warehouse at Burirhat under Gangachara upazila.

In another raid, the forces seized huge tobacco leaves, tobacco dusts, caustic soda, ashes, fake labels of different known tobacco companies and fake guls from a warehouse rented by Selim Mia at Burirhat village under Kotwali thana.

The security forces also seized 48 hoarded fertiliser sacks from a warehouse at Chowdhurirhat Bazar under Gangachara upazila and distributed those for selling among farmers at fair prices under the

supervision of district agriculture officials.

DINAPUR

Our Dinapur correspondent reports, the forces in separate raids detected a fake fertiliser factory and recovered at least 270 sacks of fertiliser including 200 sacks of fake ones from Khanshama and Parbatipur upazila and arrested at least two people in this connection according to police sources.

BOGRA

Bogra Sadar Thana Police seized 123 sacks of Indian jute seeds and arrested three people from Nawdapara area on the outskirts of Bogra town.

The arrested are Abdulla-Al-Rafi, truck driver Abul Kasem and helper Bhola for their alleged involvement of smuggling date expired low-grade seeds.

SYLHET

Rab seized 114 sacks of SSP fertiliser from a store at Pirojpur village under South Surma upazila, our correspondent reports.

BAGERHAT

Joint forces yesterday recovered nine barrels of adulterated coconut oil from a shop at BSIC estate under Sadar thana.

AL, allies

FROM PAGE 16

this to The Daily Star after the joint forces detained top AL and BNP leaders during a night-time drive yesterday.

Meanwhile several grand alliance leaders welcomed the move and viewed it will send a message to the corrupt people, criminals and their godfathers.

Some mid-level AL leaders said they have no objection to the arrests of several AL leaders except president member Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir, who, they believe, is not corrupt.

The grand alliance leaders urged the interim government