

Ex-BNP lawmaker Amzad Hossain Sarkar sued

Misappropriation of funds from colleges, development projects in Nilphamari alleged

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nilphamari

A case has been filed with Saidpur police station against former BNP lawmaker from Nilphamari-4 constituency Amzad Hossain Sarkar and five others for alleged misappropriation of Tk 50 crore in the name of development of a number of educational institutions in two upazilas.

Nilphamari-4 constituency comprise Saidpur and part of Kishoreganj upazilas.

Shakhawat Hossain Khokon, a lecturer at Saidpur Degree College, son of liberation war martyr Dr Shamsul Haque, filed the case. The five others accused in the case filed on Thursday are Aminul Haque, editor of local weekly Alapon, primary school teacher Ruhul Kuddus, principal in-charge of Saidpur Degree College Ashraf Haque, its vice-principal and Saidpur Jatiyotabadi Mohila Dal president Nargis Banu and Moslem Uddin Ahmed, a teacher of Saidpur College.

Amjad Hossain and the five other accused persons are on the run now, police said.

The joint forces raided the house



Amjad Hossain Sarkar

of Amjad Hossain Sarkar in last two weeks to arrest him, police said.

In the case, it is alleged that Amzad Hossain Sarkar and his associates misappropriated Tk 50 crore from government's development funds for eight colleges in Saidpur and Kishoreganj upazilas. The former lawmakers' men also realised money from college teachers and employees in recruitment, according to the complaint.

In the case, it was also alleged that

while he was Saidpur Municipal chairman from 1996 to 2003, Amzad Hossain Sarkar, in collaboration with his younger brother Rashidul Haque Sarkar, manipulated tenders involving about 150 crore of Saidpur municipality, Local Government Engineering Department (LGED), Road and Highways and other departments. Rashidul Haque Sarkar is president of Saidpur Jubo Dal, youth front of BNP.

The lawmaker's brother has surrendered to police. The plaintiff also alleged that Amzad Hossain misappropriated about one lakh bricks worth about Tk 3 lakh owned by Saidpur Truck Drivers Union.

Talking to newsmen, Sub Inspector of Saidpur police station Mominul Haque admitted filing of the case and said investigation into the allegations will begin soon.

Saidpur police last month chargesheeted Amzad Hossain Sarkar as number one accused in Kazi Rubel murder case. The murder was committed two days after BNP-led government handed over power to the caretaker government.

BNP leader Kazi Rubel was a nomination aspirant from

Nilphamari-4 constituency in the election for the 9th parliament. Amzad Hossain Sarkar also faced cases for his alleged involvement in four other murders in Saidpur town. The murders took place while he was MP from 2001 to 2006. His name was later dropped from charge sheets of all the cases. The four victims were Ayub of Shahebpura, Mongru of Bansbari, Kalu of Nayabazar and Selim of Kazipara.

Amjad Hossain was president of managing committees of 12 colleges in the constituency. Allegations have it that he dismissed 20 teachers from six of the colleges as they protested the alleged irregularities done by him in the institutions.

While contacted over cell phone on Thursday he told this correspondent that all the allegation against him were false and baseless.

"I never misappropriated a single paisa", he added.

'Sealed' diagnostic labs operating in Khagrachhari

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Two 'illegal' pathological laboratories, sealed by a mobile court on February 27, is operating again in Khagrachhari town.

A mobile court led by First Class Magistrate Ahamed Kabir in a drive on February 27 sealed two diagnostic and pathology centers in the hill town for operating illegally without any licence. Two employees from both the laboratories were also arrested.

During the drive the mobile court also fined three other laboratories for being ill equipped, sources said. Five cases were filed against the five centers.

Two days after the drive, the two sealed diagnostics centers started operation again, sources confirmed.

When contacted owner of one of the two laboratories claimed that the magistrate "unnecessarily raided my business centers".

"I have all legal documents", he claimed.

When contacted, Khagrachhari Civil Surgeon Dr. Abu Taher said he requested the administration to take action as all the five diagnostic centers were operating illegally.

Magistrate Ahamed Kabir, when contacted yesterday, said legal action will be taken against the centers for violating law.

8 hurt in police action as farmers block highway for urea in Gournadi

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

At least eight people were injured in police action to disperse farmers who blocked the Barisal-Dhaka highways near Mahilara bus stand in Gournadi upazila yesterday demanding adequate supply of fertiliser.

The road blockade created long traffic snarl-ups on both sides of the road.

Earlier on the day, farmers brought out processions in Gournadi Bandar and Pinglakati areas in the upazila which ended with out any untoward incident as officials cooled tem down assuring steps to augment supply.

As the farmers blocked the highway, police resorted to baton charge at about 9 in the morning, sources said.

When contacted later, Upazila Nirbahi Officer Rafikul Islam, Gournadi thana Officer-in-Charge Abbas Uddin, and agricultural officer Debanshu Saha admitted the incidents.

The trouble ensued after a dealer failed to give farmers the quantities of fertiliser they demanded.

The sources said several hundred farmers gathered in front of the shop of dealer Delwar Hussein Tapan in the morning.

As the dealer got received only 175 sacks, he gave only 20-25

kilograms of urea per head.

This angered the farmers, who demanded 100-150 kilograms each for their IRRi-Boro fields.

On February 25, farmers staged demonstrations and blocked the highway for an hour at Barthi bus stand for fertiliser.

Agriculture officials said about IRRi-Boro has been cultivated on more than 6,000 hectares of land in the upazila. At least 1,9,52 tonnes of fertiliser is needed for in December-March in in Gournadi upazila.

But only 1,155 tonnes have so far been supplied-- 220 tonnes in December, 465 in January and 450 tonnes in February, the officials said.

MONGLA PORT CHANNEL DREDGING Saifur 'help up' Tk 58 cr approved by ECNEC

Khulna development action committee alleges

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Former finance minister M Saifur Rahman was allegedly reluctant to release Tk 58 crore funds dredging of Mongla port channel allocated by the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) at its last meeting during the tenure of the immediate past BNP-Jamaat government.

He asked the relevant authorities of finance ministry to 'hold up' the allocation until further orders.

This was stated in a press release issued by secretary general of Greater Khulna Development Action Coordination Committee (GKDACC) Shaikh Ashrafuzzaman yesterday.

He urged the caretaker government to release the fund to dredge Mongla port channel.

He further demanded a thorough probe into the matter relating to alleged reluctance of the then

finance minister to release the fund, ignoring a decision of the ECNEC, chaired by former prime minister Khaleda Zia.

The GKDACC leader said Mongla port has a vital role to play for economic development of the country. The performance of Mongla Export Processing Zone (EPZ) also depends on development and modernisation of the Mongla port, which is gradually losing navigability due to deposit of on the Passur river.

The EPZ is now virtually on verge of closure as none wants to invest in industries there due to deplorable condition of Mongla port, the statement said.

The GKDACC leader also accused the former finance minister of depriving people of greater Khulna of their right to get deserving funds for economic development.

BCL ACTIVIST MURDER 21 dropped from charge sheet

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

Twenty-one accused has been dropped from charge sheet in Bangladesh Chatra League (BCL) activist Nuruzzaman murder case in Kuakata.

Sub-Inspector of Kalapara thana, who is also Investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted the charge sheet to a magistrate court yesterday, two months after the murder.

Sixteen accused have been named in the charge sheet while 20 others have been dropped, sources said. People in the Kalapara area two and half months to the Kalapa Magistrate court against 16 out of 37 accused.

Six of the chargesheeted accused are in custody. They are Sanu, Elias, Jamal, Hanif, Jamil and Zafar. The rest are absconding, police said.

Nuruzzaman was beaten to death by some local youths at Kuakata on November 25 last year. His brother Nur Sayeed filed a murder case with Kalapara thana accusing 37 people.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

A child artiste presenting a dance at the National Children Award Competition-2007 in Rajshahi yesterday.

Virus attack damages Tk 1500 shrimps in Satkhira a year

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Satkhira

Shrimps worth over Tk 1500 crore are damaged every year in Satkhira district due to virus attack, which can be checked with little government initiative.

This was stated at a seminar on "Usefulness of information in resisting disaster in shrimp farming" organised by Mass-line Media Center (MMC), a local NGO. It was held at the Officers' Club in the town.

The speakers urged the government to undertake an integrated plan to combat the virus attack and create awareness among shrimp farmers. A mechanism for free flow of information on shrimp farming and introduction of modern technology would greatly help farmers to reduce the virus attack, they said.

Around three lakh people are involved in the sector, which is the biggest export earner after garments, but governments in the past gave little attention for its

development, they said.

Many farmers, particularly smaller ones, have left the profession after consecutive losses, they said.

There are around 6000 shrimp enclosures in the district and virus attack on at least 50 per cent of those may be controlled only by creating awareness among farmers, they said.

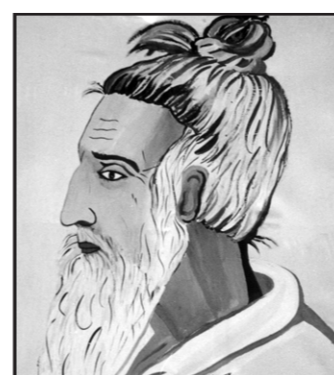
Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC Revenue) was the chief guest at the seminar, chaired by Principal Asit Kumar Majumdar.

Donation for cultural activity

STAR NATIONAL DESK

The Isamoti Samaj Unnyan Uddog, (ISUG), a local socio-cultural organization in Debhata in Satkhira district, donated Tk 46,000 to the Upazila Shilpakala Academy recently to purchase musical instruments and promote cultural activities, said a press release by ISUG here yesterday.

The money was handed over to Debhata Upazila Nirbahi Officer by Biswajit Bhattacharyya, executive director of ISUG.



Lalon festival begins in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A three-day Lalon festival styled Dol Purnima, marking the 115 th birth anniversary of the mystic poet and spiritual personality, began yesterday at his shrine at Cheuria. The shrine is popularly known as Lalon Akhra.

Khulna Divisional Commissioner Kabir Ashraf inaugurated the programme. Kushtia Deputy Commissioner Talukdar Shamsur Rahman is coordinating the programme.

On the occasion, the shrine and surrounding areas have been tastefully decorated. A folk fair and mystic songs are the main attraction to visitors and Laon admirers who came from different districts and from abroad. The programme includes discussion meeting every day.

Every year, the Dole Purnima (full moon) in the Bangla month of Falgun, attracts a large number of Bauls (those who render mystic songs).

Fresh probe into journo Harun murder demanded

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Speakers at a discussion meeting at Khulna Press Club yesterday demanded fresh investigation into the murder of journalist Shaikh Harun-ar-Rashid Khokon to punish the killers who were dropped from the earlier charge sheet.

Shaikh Harun-ar-Rashid Khokon, senior crime reporter of Dainik Purbanchal, was gunned down in the evening of March 2 in 2002 at Mujgunni under Khalishpur thana of Khulna City.

The discussion meeting was organized in observance of his fifth death anniversary. Later a milad mehfil was held there to pray for salvation of departed soul.

The discussion meeting was addressed by, among others, Quazi Amanullah, Wadudur

Rahman Panna, Mohammad Shaheb Ali, Shaikh Abu Hasan, AK Hiru, SM Zahid Hossain, Mamun Reza, Shubir Roy, Mamun Reza and Abdul Malek.

ASP Mawla Bux of CID who investigated the case submitted charge sheet against three extremists Kala Amjad, Shahin and Baby accusing them for the murder.

The case was later transferred to Khulna Speedy Trial Tribunal by order of the monitoring cell of home ministry.

All the three chargesheeted accused case were acquitted as their guilt could not be proved. The verdict was delivered in June last year.

Two of the accused--Kalam Amjad and Baby-- were killed in crossfire in October and November last year at Daulatpur.

8x3

10x3

2x2