

50 political leaders on the run in Patuakhali

District administration sends a list to relevant ministry

OUR CORRESPONDENT,
Patuakhali

At least 50 public representatives and political leaders of different parties, their youth fronts and students wings in Patuakhali are on the run fearing arrest by law enforcers.

The list includes an immediate past lawmaker, some of his party colleagues, some commissioners of Patuakhali pourasabha and chairmen and members of union parishads and local pourasabhas.

Patuakhali district administration has sent a primary list of hiding public representatives to the local government ministry. The list has been sent in response to letters to the Deputy Commissioner's (DC) and to pourasabha and UP offices seeking information on whereabouts of those public representatives.

Talking to this correspondent, the additional deputy commissioner and the additional police superintendent

also confirmed this but declined to say who or how many are there on the list.

A section of political leaders and public representatives became scared after the arrest of Baufal upazila Awami League secretary and Boga UP chairman Motaleb Howlader on Sunday.

However, front ranking leaders like former BNP backed lawmaker Shahidul Alam Talukder and district BNP secretary Snahangsu Sarker Kutti when contacted over cell phones claimed that they were in the capital on personal engagement.

It was gathered that those hiding include BNP leader and Patuakhali pourasabha chairman Mostaq Ahmed; commissioners Milon Mia, Akhtaruzzan Nobel and Mostafizur Rahman Rumi; BNP leader and Kamalpur Union Parishad (UP) chairman Monir Rahman; Galachipa pourasabha commissioner Bashar; Panpatti UP chairman and Awami League leader Jahangir Hossain

Tuku, Kalapara pourasabha commissioners and BNP leaders Hasan Sikder and Jamal Hossain; Chakamoiya UP members Mojibar Fakir, Monirul Islam Talukder and Mamun Sikder; district Krishak Dal president ASM Abdur Rab Howlader and Jubo Dal leader Jibon.

Their houses were raided since promulgation of the state of emergency, sours close to the administration and law enforcing agencies told this correspondent.

There are allegations of toll collection, mugging, tender manipulation and others crimes against them, sources added.

District Jubo Dal president Moshir Rahman, Baufal upazila Jubo Dal secretary Gious Uddin, are in jail after arrest under the Special Powers Act.

At least one poura chairman, seven poura commissioners, eight UP chairmen and nine UP members went into hiding after proclamation of emergency on January 11 this

year. They face allegations of land grabbing, toll collection, irregularities in implementing development projects and sheltering criminals, sources said.

Patuakhali pourasabha chairman Mostaq Ahmed is facing charge of looting more than Tk one crore of development projects three years ago.

Patuakhali district administration has already started investigation into alleged irregularities by pourasabha chairman Mostaq. A one-member probe body headed by Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Md Rabiul Haq begun the probe on Sunday.

Deputy Commissioner AGM Mir Moshirul Alam told this correspondent, "We sent a primary list of public representatives who are hiding. We will also submit a report after probing alleged irregularities by pourasabha chairman".



PHOTO: STAR

Scouts launched a campaign on the Bakkhali river in Cox's Bazar yesterday to create awareness among fishermen not to catch fish fries.

Wadud's bid to hide dazzles of assets

Statement surprises Khagrachhari townspeople

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

The property statement of former Khagrachhari BNP lawmaker, submitted by his wife, surprised many in the town. Amazing details are likely to surprise them more after investigation by the taskforce.

In the statement submitted to Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) on February 24, Wadud Bhuiyan's wife Irin Mahabub Sathi said her husband has moveable and immovable property worth about Tk 5 crore including Tk 2.19 crore with banks.

These included Tk 25 lakh lands in Khagrachhari, Tk 1.75 crore houses in DOHS in the capital and in Khagrachhari town, eight transports worth Tk 90 lakh, furniture worth Tk 58 lakh and Tk 10 lakh in cash. The transports include six buses, two trucks and a car.

But sources in the taskforce now investigating the former lawmaker's



WADUD BHUIYAN

assets said he owns moveable and immovable property worth at least Tk 15 crore.

This was disclosed to this correspondent by a member of the taskforce. He declined to elaborate, saying said they are assessing Wadud's assets and the work is yet to be completed.

The taskforce comprise officials from the ACC, National Board of Revenue (NBR), CHT affairs ministry, home ministry, local administration and joint forces.

Wadud was arrested by joint forces on February 4 from his Kalabagun residence in Khagrachhari town.

District Election (EC) sources said that while submitting nomination paper for election to the 9th parliament, Wadud Bhuiyan showed assets valued at about Tk 1 crore, both moveable and immovable.

Prior to 2001 election, Wadud showed assets worth Tk 20 lakh, the EC sources said.

Wadud Bhuiyan also became chairman of Chittagong Hill Tracts Development Board (CHTDB) in 2001.

Wadud Bhuiyan faces charges of corruption, land grabbing, protect-

ing toll-collectors, party men with criminal records and harassment of opposition political activists during his tenure. Allegations have it that many Jubo Dal and Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal activists, under the lawmaker's protection, realised toll and were involved in manipulation of tenders on development projects in the district and also in other crimes in last five years.

Earlier, leaders of different political parties demanded proper probe into alleged corruption and irregularities done by the former BNP lawmaker.

They include Jana Sanghati Samity leader Suderkor Tripura, Khagrachhari District LDP President Abul Kashem and Awami League president Jatindra Lal Tripura.

BNP leaders held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Joint forces arrested two BNP leaders in Kushtia and Chuadanga Sunday night.

A team of joint forces raided the house of Mirpur upazila BNP president and chairman of Mirpur municipality Saiful Haq Khan alias Faruk Choudhury Sunday evening and arrested him.

Earlier, the joint force arrested Faruk on February 13 on murder charge but got bail from a Kushtia magistrate court on February 21.

In Chuadanga, joint forces arrested Darshana upazila BNP secretary Sawkat Ali from his house on the same night.

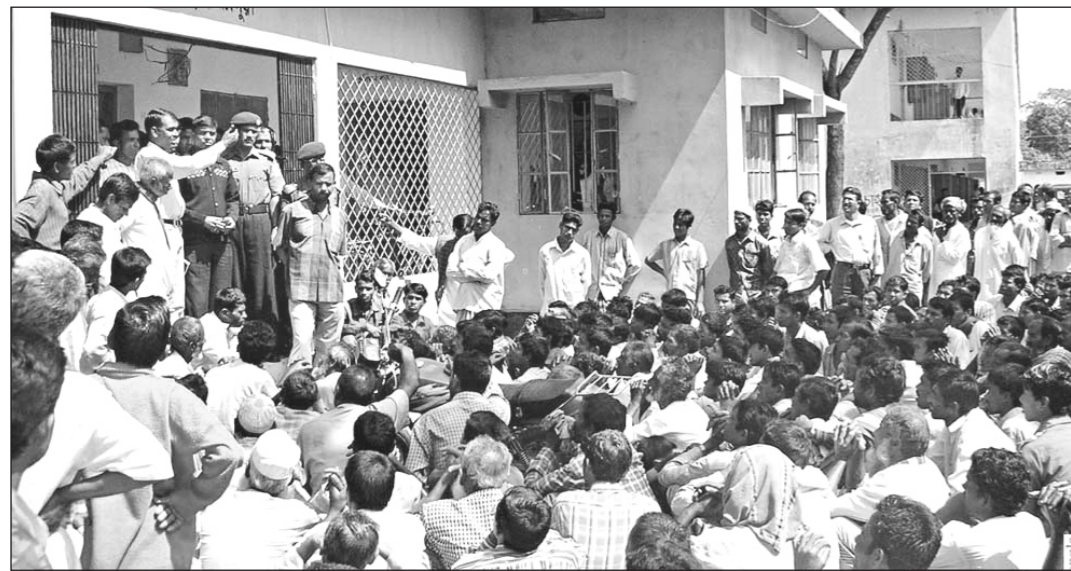


PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Farmers besieged Madarganj Upazila Nirbahi Officer's office in Jamalpur district on Sunday for fertiliser.

10 hurt as farmers scramble for fertiliser in Pabna

STAR NATIONAL DESK

At least 10 people were injured as farmers scrambled for fertiliser in Chatmoher while a truckload of the item was seized in Thakurgaon while it was going to Dinajpur illegally.

Two of the injured farmers—Gaziur Rahman of Handial village and Nabir Hossain of Dhulauri village were admitted to Chatmoher Upazila Health Complex.

In Pabna, at least 200 farmers from different villages in Chatmoher upazila queued in a long line in front of the Chatmoher agriculture office for 'slips' to purchased urea from dealers. The upazila agriculture office introduced issuing 'slip' due to urea crisis, reports a correspondent.

Sources said the scramble broke out when officials started issuing slips to weary farmers who were standing in the queue for several hours. The farmers were waiting since morning.

"We came to the agriculture office yesterday and the day before for fertiliser. Officials just gave us hopes", Mizanur Rahman from Handial village told this correspondent after the incident.

When asked, Chatmoher Agriculture Officer Md Azahar Ali said only 20 tonnes of urea has been sanctioned for Chatmoher for everyday but the demand is at least 30 tonnes a day.

Thakurgaon police yesterday seized 223 sacks of fertiliser in Ranishankoil upazila when a truckload of the item was going to Dinajpur, our Dinajpur correspondent reports.

Police also arrested four people. They are truck driver Sazzad and helper Mozammel and owners of the fertiliser—Khayrul Islam and Abdur Razzak.

Dispatch of fertiliser allotted for one district to another is not allowed. The restriction has been imposed due to urea crisis during the ongoing IRRI-Boro season.

Acting on a tip-off, Ranishankoil police led by SI Raihan seized the truck.

Police claimed that the fertilisers were being taken to Dinajpur for sale in the black market as there is crisis in the district.

A case was filed with Ranishankoil police station, accusing the four persons.

Newsman allegedly threatened by ex-MP's nephew

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

A nephew of former BNP lawmaker Sahidul Islam have threatened the executive editor and reporter of a local daily for publishing news on his alleged misappropriation of government funds and grabbing assets.

Shahidul was MP from Kushtia-2 constituency (Mirpur-Bheramara). Robin Malitha, nephew of Sahidul phoned Executive Editor of Dainik Andoloner Bazar Anisuzzaman and its Mirpur correspondent Dipu Khan Sunday night at about 8.30 pm and threatened them with dire consequences.

Robin warned that his Bahini (gang) will not spare them as they published 'baseless' news against him and his men. Robin, a BNP cadre in Mirpur upazila, also asked Dipu Khan to leave the area immediately if he wants to remain alive.

Dipu immediately informed police and faxed a letter to the home secretary on the same night, seeking protection, sources said.

The Andoloner Bazar published an item on February 25 headlined 'The boss of looting railway assets worth Tk.5 crore Robin and his accomplices are still untouched' The report said Robin and his associates allegedly earned about Tk 5 crore in last five years by misappropriating railway property including slippers and stones. Sources said police on several occasions arrested some associated of Robin and recovered railway slippers from their possession but could not take any action against them. Police said Rodin is on their arrest list.

Body of Rab official buried in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Barisal

The body of Humaun Kabir, one of the two members of Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) killed by assailants at Aminbazar in Savar on Saturday, was buried at his family graveyard at Bokshir Char villages in Chandpasha union under Barisal district last night.

Humayin Kabir was chief petty officer of Bangladesh Navy and deputy assistant director Rab.

A pall of gloom descended in the area after his death news was broadcast by the electronic media on Saturday.

The body was taken to his village home yesterday from Dhaka. His second namaj-e-janaja was held at his village home.

Humayun was the son of late freedom fighter and ex-army man Omar Ali Majhi. His elder brother Ibrahim Majhi is also a freedom fighter, family sources said.

Humaun left his mother Rokeya Begum, 70, wife Nurjahan Begum, son Raisul Kabir Russel, a student of Chittagong University and daughter Sylvia Jahan Urmi, a student of class nine at Chittagong Naval School. Humayun was the second among his four brothers and two sisters.

Humaun alias Tipu was known in the area for his gentle behavior, locals said.

He joined Bangladesh Navy in 1980 after passing HSC examination and was selected as a Rab official for his honesty.

He was supposed to return to Navy next month.

He had the last talks with his mother over mobile phone about her treatment on Thursday, family sources said.