

Wide gap in ex-Jamaat MP's statement and assets

Gazi Nazrul Islam of Satkhira owns over Tk 1cr assets, anti-graft official said

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Former lawmaker from Satkhira-5constituency (Shyamnagar) Gazi Nazrul Islam submitted a 25 lakh taka assets statement to the joint forces during surrender but Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) officials said he owns property worth over Tk one crore.

While surrendering to joint forces in Satkhira on March 9 he also told journalists that he owns property worth Tk 25 lakh.

"We are investigating his assets and alleged corruption", ACC official Abdul Wazed Gazi told this correspondent yesterday. He will be sued if discrepancy is detected in the statement and his assets, the ACC official said.

Gazi Nazrul is on the list of 50 corrupt suspects, released by the ACC in the second phase. He is now in jail.

Gazi Nazrul was elected twice-- in 1991 election as a Jamaat candidate and in 2001 on 4-party alliance ticket. He had lost to AK Fazlul Haque of Awami League in 1996.

Gazi Nazrul Islam started his career as a sports teacher at a Burigoalini High School, a non-government institution.

During the 4-party alliance rule, he was widely accused for corruption, nepotism, misuse of power and destroying communal harmony in his area. Several of his party men were accused of plundering development funds and resources in the Sundarbans under his protection.

"Nazrul is the main man who



Gazi Nazrul Islam

damaged communal harmony in his constituency", Zillur Rahman, a leader of local Ahmadiyya community, told this correspondent.

Gazi Nazrul's cousins Abdul Mannan and Abdul Hannan at Chakbara village in Shyamnagar alleged that after becoming lawmaker again in 2001, he bought 25 bighas of land in Gabura and took a long term lease of over 120 bighas of government khas land in the name of his wife Islam and two sons. He also purchased one acre of land at Shyamnagar in 1991 and built a luxurious house in 2002.

On August 5, 2003, a procession was brought out protesting allocation of shops of Shyamnagar Jame mosque to his sons.

A memorandum was also submitted for the then prime minister against Nazrul's alleged "corruption", seeking her intervention but nothing happened, sources said.

Blaming him for disturbing communal harmony in his constituency,

sources said he and his party men tried to construct a road through the Nakipur crematorium of Hindu community in Shyamnagar.

Several hundred people of the community brought out a procession, held a rally at Shyamnagar and submitted a memorandum to the UNO on August 3, 2003 protesting the move.

At least 25 people were injured when indigenous people were attacked at Baro Kashipur in Shyamnagar on May 23 last year allegedly to grab their lands. The attackers were allegedly led by the then lawmaker's son, sources said.

Protesting the attack, local indigenous people led by Ramkrishna Munda brought out a procession and held a rally at Shyamnagar demanding arrest of the culprits. But no action was taken as the attackers were relatives of a lawmaker, locals alleged.

Gazi Nazrul was also blamed for 'Islamisation' of names of several old institutions, villages and markets in the upazila on the plea that the existing names express Hindu culture.

On March 5, 2002, all the 12 Union Parishad (UP) chairmen submitted a written complaint to Satkhira Deputy Commissioner that the then lawmaker Nazrul was behind building 64 shops on government lands in front of Upazila Parishad and their allotment to his party men.

They also alleged that Tk two to three lakh was taken against each shop but Tk 1,29,000 was deposited to the Zilla Parishad. The rest of the

money was misappropriated by the lawmakers' men, they alleged.

Some of the UP chairmen, talking to this correspondent, said the government allotted about Tk two crore for implementing projects under Test Relief (TR) during 2001-2005. The then lawmaker influenced the local authorities to give all the project works to his party men and a local NGO named Al-Amin Trust, run by Jamaat.

The then government allotted Tk 2.14 crore for food for works programme, Tk 15 crore for road carpeting, Tk 5.5 crore for road reconstruction, Tk 1.28 crore for development of mosques, temples and churches and Tk 5.42 crore for construction of schools, colleges and madrasahs. Jamaat activists got most of the project works, where huge amounts of money were misappropriated, the UP chairmen alleged.

All the 12 UP chairmen boycotted 18 meetings of Upazila Development Co-ordination Committee, protesting distribution of development projects to Jamaat men ignoring public representatives during his tenure, UP chairman Jaglul Haidar told this correspondent.

Since June 2005, the UP chairmen boycotted all programmes convened or attended by Gazi Nazrul.

RU teachers demand Senate, Syndicate polls

RU CORRESPONDENT

Rajshahi University (RU) teachers under the banner of Progressive Teachers' Society (PTS) have urged the vice chancellor (VC) to immediately announce schedule for Deans' Council, Senate and Syndicate elections.

In a statement they said they met the VC, Prof Altaf Hossain at his office yesterday urging him to declare polls schedule of various bodies for smooth functioning of the university. The university activities are being hampered due to absence of elected bodies like Deans' Council, Syndicate and Senate, the statement said.

They alleged that the university authorities suspended promotion of teachers who are supporters or member of PTS.

They said the tenure of deans, senate and syndicate members expired much before but the university authorities are indifferent to declare the election schedule.

They alleged the university authorities are violating the University Act of 1973 which operates the university.

PTS members who met the VC included Prof Entajul Haque, Prof Mijan Uddin, Prof Mahabubur Rahman, Prof Samsuddin Ilias, Prof Chitta Ranjan Misro and Prof Muhammad Nurullah.

On contact, VC Prof Altaf Hossain assured yhis correspondent that he would take an initiative to hold the elections as early as possible.

Babor's ex-APS sued for cheating

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Netrakona*

The assistant private secretary (APS) of former state minister for home Lutuzzaman Babor was sued for cheating a man in name of sending him abroad, police said.

Babor's APS Mirza Haider Ali was sued by Abdur Rahman of village Bamonikona in Sadar upazila on Thursday night. In his complaint, Abdur Rahman said Haider took Tk 1 lakh 50,000 from him two years ago promising to send him to Singapore for job. But he did not send him to Singapore or return the money. Being frustrated, he filed a case with Netrakona Police Station.

On contact, the Investigation Officer (IO) of the case, Sub-Inspector (SI) of Netrakona Police Station Humayun Kabir confirmed the report saying Mirza Haider is now in jail.

An investigation is going on, he added.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Rab and police yesterday seized 2300 kilograms of *jatka* (Hilsha fries) from Port Road area in Barisal city.

Banks kept open to probe Hafiz Ibrahim's assets in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

A task force from Dhaka yesterday started probe into assets and bank accounts of former BNP lawmaker from Bhola-2 constituency Hafiz Ibrahim in Barisal city.

Hafez Ibrahim is brother of Giasuddin Mamun, a close associate of BNP senior joint secretary Tarique Rahman.

Ordered by Bangladesh Bank in Barisal, all banks in the city were kept open yesterday to facilitate officials to prepare statements on Hafiz Ibrahim's accounts but no transaction was made. The banks will also remain open today for the purpose, bank officials said.

Earlier, the task force comprising officials of Anti Corruption Commission (ACC), intelligence department and joint forces, went to Bhola to probe the former lawmaker's assets and allegations of corruption. The team led by an army official came to Barisal from Bhola Thursday afternoon, sources said.

The taskforce probed assets of Hafiz Ibrahim and his family members in Bhola, Daulatkhan and Borhanuddin since last Sunday and seized documents, froze some bank accounts and lodged a money laundering case with Borhanuddin police station.

Arriving in Barisal Thursday afternoon, the task force first cordoned and searched the five-storied house-- Shah Mansion-- built in the name of Hafiz Ibrahim's wife Mafruza Sultana at Banglabazar in the city. The team searched and evaluated the building Thursday evening. Media men were neither allowed there at that time nor they were briefed.

As Hafiz Ibrahim and Mafruza Sultana were directors of Rupali Bank.

The banks regional office was shifted from the city centre to Shah Mansion at a much higher rent, it was alleged.

Sources claimed that the accommodation for the bank at Shah Mansion was rented at Tk 23,000 against Tk 10,000 at the earlier location and a huge amount of money was also given as

advance.

It was learnt that Islami Bank, Barisal branch, sanctioned loans for construction of the building against savings certificates and bonds as security.

Khondokar Anisur Rahman, Assistant General Manager in-charge of Rupali Bank regional office in barisal city, told this correspondent that the task force did not seize any document from them till yesterday evening.

They inquired about irregularities of over payment and sanctioning of Tk 34 core loans recommended by Hafiz Ibrahim and Mafruza Sultana as directors of the bank and collected copies of cases lodged with court and police station in this connection.

Sources said the task force team led by Maj Mamun met with bankers at Barisal Circuit House Thursday night and yesterday morning and sought their cooperation in investigation and their drive against corruption.

At Thursday's meeting, Bangladesh Bank General Manager in Barisal Sudhir Chandra Das verbally ordered all bank officials not to leave station. He asked all branch managers to remain in their offices with computer and data operators on Friday and Saturday to give all information and help the task force.

Pirates abduct 3 fishermen in Sundarbans

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Three fishermen were allegedly abducted by pirates for ransom in Haikhal area in the Sundarbans yesterday morning.

The victims are: Ziaur Rahman, 30, son of Akkaj Ali, Monoranjan Mondal, 31, son of Deben Mondal both of village Kalinchi and Kamrul Islam, 40, son of Belayet Hossain of village Mirgang in Shyamnagar upazila.

The fishermen are held hostages for ransom amounting to Tk 3,00,000 in Arpangashia canal near the Indian border, said a fisherman named Shariful Islam of village Kalinchi who managed to escape.

They set seven days' deadline for payment of ransom, he said. On failure, the fishermen will face the dire consequence, said another fisherman Abdur Rouf who also escaped from the Sundarbans.

The escaped fishermen alleged that the law enforcers did not take any measures to rescue the victims.

They said the fishermen came under attack by pirates while catching fish in the Haikhal canal in the Sundarbans early yesterday and demanded toll from them.

As they failed to pay the toll they abducted the three fishermen and demanded Tk 3,00,000 as ransom for their release.

Fake NGO official held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Tangail*

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested the executive director of a fake NGO from Battala area in the town.

HM Billal Hossain, executive director of DIMA working at Harinathpur Bazar in Hizla upazila, Barisal, was arrested on charge of cheating the clients of the NGO.

Rab ASP Saifuzzaman Faruki said the arrested misappropriated Tk 2 crore of depositors in last five years. Later, the clients filed a case with Hizla Police Station in this regard.

Billal was handed over to Tangail Sadar Police Station.

Shyamasundari canal to get life again

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Rangpur*

At last re-excavation of Shyamasundari canal, the clogged lifeline of Rangpur town, began yesterday through a colourful ceremony.

RDRS, an NGO, along with Rangpur municipality started the work. Rangpur Deputy Commissioner Khandker Atiar Rahman inaugurated programme at Keramotia mosque point. Rangpur municipality chairman Abdur Rouf Manik, RDRS directors Dr Nurul Alam, Imrul Kaes Moniruzzaman, Dr Sayed Shamsuzzaman and Tapan Kormoker were present at the inaugural ceremony.

RDRS will re-excavate 2 km of the canal at a cost of Tk 30 lakh CARE Bangladesh will do the rest of it. Rangpur municipality will provide other necessary support.

The 16 km Shyamasundary canal was the main outlet for drainage in Rangpur town. All drains and small canals are connected with it.

Originating from the upstream of Ghagot river at Rangpur cantonment point, the canal runs through the town and again falls into the river at its downstream.

The then Jaminder Janokibollove dug the canal in 1890 to flush out garbage and keep the townspeople free from diseases and named it after his mother.

But in most areas, lands and

shore areas of the canal have been grabbed by people, clogging the outlet. Moreover, it was not re-excavated since digging.



PHOTO: STAR

Rangpur DC and RDRS officials inaugurating re-excavation of Shyamasundari canal in the town yesterday.

7X3

6X2

13X2