

SAIDPUR WOMEN'S AFFAIRS DEPTT

Officials gobble up funds for distressed women

EAM ASADUZZAMAN, Nilphamari

Misappropriation of a huge amount of money sanctioned for self-employment of distressed women under the Women Affairs Department in Saidpur upazila has come to light.

The money was stolen by a section of officials by preparing fake papers and putting forged signatures of distressed women. The forgery was revealed when the so-called recipients got letters for repayment of loans which they never took.

The matter is being probed by Abdur Rouf, Assistant Commissioner (Land), sources in the upazila administration said.

The Women Affairs Department in Saidpur got Tk 7.6 lakh in 2004-05 and 2005-06 financial years for distribution among distressed women under a self-employment

programme.

As per official records, the money was disbursed among 89 women in Saidpur municipality and five unions in the upazila for goat and duck rearing, setting up small poultry farms, buying sewing machines and for petty business. The loan money varied from Tk 5,000 to Tk 15,000, shown to have been disbursed in five phases.

During preliminary investigation following complaints by the so-called recipients, it came to light that 70 out of the total 89 women listed as recipients did not get loans. An amount of Tk 6 lakh out of Tk 7.6 lakh was stolen by officials by putting fake signatures of 70 distressed women. But most of the 70 women got letters for repayment of loans which they never received.

Afroza Begum, wife of

Mozaharul Islam of Bangalipur in Saidpur municipality got a notice for repayment of a loan of Tk 13,000.

After getting the notice, she rushed to the upazila woman's affairs office and found her fake signature in the ledger book.

Similar allegations were made by Moyna, Masuda Begum, Jahan, Habsba Begum, Fatema Begum and many others.

Fatema Begum told newsmen that she got a letter to repay Tk 10,000. At the office, she detected her fake signature in the ledger book. She said she never applied for loan.

"Two years back, I applied for training under the self-employment programme of the Women Affairs Department but I did not get the scope", Fatema said. The deprived women then submitted a written complaint to Saidpur Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Nafiul Hasan demanding investigation into the matter.

Chairman of Bangalipur Union Parhisad, Musauddin Pramanik, also filed a complaint to the UNO demanding investigation into the forgery.

He said identification by local Union Parishad chairman or member is needed for a distressed woman to apply for loan under the programme.

"None came to me for identification and my signature for loan. My forged signatures were put in the loan applications", he said.

When contacted, Saidpur upazila Women Affairs Officer Kawsar Parvin said the loans were disbursed during the tenure of her predecessor Nahid Sultana, who is now Women Affairs Officer in Chirir Bandor upazila in Dinajpur district. She admitted that the loan money (Tk 7.6 lakh) was sanctioned for Saidpur upazila.

Contacted over phone, Nahid Sultana admitted that she was working in Saidpur when the loans were disbursed. She claimed that the loans were distributed by Swapna Rani, the then 'daycare officer' in Woman's Affairs Department in Saidpur. She denied her involvement in the alleged misappropriation.

This correspondent also contacted Swapna Rani, now working as Programme Officer of Women Affairs Department in Nilphamari Sadar upazila. But Rani refused to make any comment.

Saidpur UNO Nafiul Hasan said he also got complaints alleging forgery and misappropriation of the loan money.

"Investigation is going on into the matter as per directive of the ministry", he told this correspondent.



PHOTO: STAR
A 312 kg koral fish caught in the sea was brought to Kazir Dewri market in Chittagging yesterday for sale.

Property of 10 Khagrachhari BNP leaders being attached

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Police have started attaching moveable property of 10 BNP leaders loyal to arrested former lawmaker Abdul Wadud Bhuiyan

as they did not appear before court in a case for alleged land grabbing and evicting a family in Khagrachhari.

Attachment of their property, ordered by court, began at about 5 pm Sunday and continued when the report was filed at 5:30 pm yesterday.

Till yesterday, properties of three of the absconding accused were attached. They are district BNP organising secretary Mostafizur Rahman Millat, office secretary Mohammad Nazrul Islam and district Sechchasebak Dal president Mahafuzur Rahman.

The order was given by Cognizance Magistrate Arun Mondol on May 3 as the accused did not appear before the court, police said.

The seven other Other The leaders are district BNP organising secretary Mostafizur Rahman Millat, district Jubo Dal president Abdus Salam, Sechchasebak Dal president Mahafuzur Rahman, social welfare secretary Mohammad Belayet Hossen, office secretary Mohammad Nazrul Islam, Sadar Upazila BNP secretary M N Absar, Sadar upazila BNP organising secretary Tareq Ahamad, Poura Jobo Dal president Mohammad Yunus Mia and secretary Khokon and Ramgarh upazila Jubo Dal president Daudul Islam Bhuiyan.

The case was filed by Naderuzzaman. He alleged that the 10 BNP leaders drove his family from Khagrachhari, grabbed his land and looted furniture from his house.

'Killer' quack remanded

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kishoreganj

Quack Abdus Sadek, arrested on Saturday for killing at least 10 babies during birth in his clinic at Bhairab, was placed on a five-day fresh remand yesterday.

Quack Abdus Sadek ran a so-called clinic named Sadek Medical at Bhairobpur in Bhairab, where there was no trained doctor or nurse.

Meanwhile, one Beauty Akter, wife of Parash Mony of south Bhairobpur village in Bhairab upazila, filed a case with Bhairab police station against Sadek, alleging that her baby was killed during birth at his clinic on October 6 last year.

Sadek was arrested from a hotel in Kishoreganj town by a Rab (Rapid Action Battalion) team led by Capt Mesbahul Alam Selim.

During interrogation by Rab, the quack admitted that he killed over ten babies during birth in last seven years.

Gaibandha BNP president on 10-day remand

Hamidul Huq Chhana faces nine cases

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Gaibandha district BNP president Hamidul Huq Chhana was placed on a 10-day remand yesterday.

He was arrested on April 21 in an extortion case.

Magistrate Kiron Chandra Roy granted the 10-day remand prayed by police for interrogation in a number of cases filed against him for alleged corruption, extortion and other crimes. Police and court sources said Hamidul Huq faces nine cases.

He was arrested in the cases was filed by Jahurul Huq of Gaibandha town in which he alleged that he (Hamidul Huq) realised Tk 1.5 lakh from him on assurance of giving job in Public Works Department. Two others are also accused in the case.

They are Azad Hossain and Sumon Dev, Gaibandha district president of Jatiyata badi Sechchasebok Dal, both absconding, police said.

Complainants in the cases include former president of Gaibandha BNP Shikh Samad Azad, former BNP vice-president Kaziul Islam, former organising secretary Gausul Azam Dollar, former student affairs secretary Morshed Habib Soheli, former president of Gaibandha JCD and Gaibandha town Awami League secretary.

Hamidul Huq Chhana was arrested from Kakrail mosque in Dhaka by a joint team of Ramna police and Gaibandha police.

Extortion case against Ex-MP in Kushtia

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

An extortion case has been filed against former BNP lawmaker from Kushtia-1 Reza Ahmed Bachhu Mollah and 13 other BNP leaders and activist.

Contractor Matiur Rahman Bappi of Daulatpur filed the case on Sunday with a First Class Magistrate court.

The accused also include the former lawmaker's elder brother Samim Reza alias Samim Mollah and Bachhu Mollah's close side Lal Chad, known as chief of Lal Chad Bahini.

First Class Magistrate Jalal Saifur Rahman accepted the case and ordered the Officer-in-Charge of Daulatpur police station to investigate the case.

According to compliant, Bappi

bid for some construction works under Daulatpur upazila engineering department on May 9 last year. Bachhu Mollah asked Bappi to withdraw his bid, saying his men bid for the work.

Bappi declined and he got the works. After some days, Bachhu let loosed musclemen against Bappi, who threatened Bappi of 'dire consequence'.

Bappi went to Bachhu Mollah on June 6 last year to resolve the matter.

Bachhu Molla demanded Tk 10 lakh and asked Bappi to leave the area.

Bappi paid the money and left the area on June 20.

In the complaint, Bappi also stated that he narrated the whole story at a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity (DRU) office and the news was published in different national dailies.

Others accused in the case are Daulatpur upazila BNP vice-president Jamal uddin Dulal, publicity secretary Golam Mustafa, finance secretary Nazrul Islam, Ramzan Ali, Zohurul Islam, Sahidul Islam, Nurul Islam, Fazlu, upazila Jubo Dal president Mahabub Laskar and secretary Abul Kalam Azad.

Tk 3 cr rly land recovered in Akhaura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, B'baria

Joint forces have recovered 53 decimals of land of Bangladesh Railway (BR) worth Tk 3 crore from illegal occupation in Akhaura upazila, railway sources said.

Joint forces recovered the land from unauthorised occupation of Advocate Md Yasin Khan, they said. First class magistrate and railway estate officer Delwar Hossain and Akhaura upazila nirbahi officer (UNO) Md Kamrul Alam jointly led the drive conducted on Saturday.

However, 17 decimals of land are still in his illegal occupation. Court will decide its fate as a case is going on in this regard, railway sources further said. The entire land was in his possession for the last 25 years, they said. Railway Department has claimed that Akhaura railway junction is the real owner of the land.

Earlier, joint forces, in another drive conducted on April 23, asked Advocate Yasin to show valid documents in support of his occupation, but he failed to produce the same.

When contacted with railway estate officer Delwar Hossain, he said Railway Department had acquired the entire land in 1872.

3X2

3X2

3.5X3

4.5X3

2.5X2

4X2

10x4