

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, Habshi 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) Naifil Hasan demanding investigation into the matter.

Chairman of Bangalipur Union Parishad, Musaiddin 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 women 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 Sultan, who is now Women Affairs Officer in Chirir Bandor upazila in Dinejpur district. She admitted that the loan money (Tk 7.6 lakh) was sanctioned for Saidpur upazila.

Contacted over phone, Nahid Sultan 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 Naifil 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.

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 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 Jatiyatabadi 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 Sohel, 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 activists.

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 Bachhu.

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

According to complainant, Bappi

6 Hijbut Tawhid activists held in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

Barisal Metropolitan Police yesterday arrested six alleged members of Islamist militant group Hijbut Tawhid including four women and recovered some leaflets and books.

They are A B M Moinuddin Ahmed, four sisters Hena Naznin, Nasima Akter, Reina Begum, Niru Begum and Hena's husband Nur Hossain.

Police sources said Moinuddin is a former district Amir of the militant outfit.

They were being interrogated when the report was filed yesterday evening.

Tk 3 cr rly land recovered in Akhaura

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Bardia*

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.

Bappi

declined

and he got the

works.

After some days, Bachhu let

loosed

muslemen

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 Jamaluddin Dural, publicity secretary Golam Mustafa, finance secretary Nazrul Islam, Ramzan Ali, Zohurul Islam, Sahidul Islam, Nurul Islam, Fazlu, upazila Juba Dal president Mahabub Laskar and secretary Abul Kalam Azad.

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

10x4



A 312 kg koral fish caught in the sea was brought to Kazir Dewri market in Chittagong 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 Sechchasebok 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 Juba Dal president Abdus Salam, Sechchasebok Dal president Mahafuzur Rahman, social welfare secretary Mohammad Belayet Hossen, office secretary Mohammad Nazrul Islam, Sadar Upazila BNP secretary M N Ahsan, Sadar upazila BNP organising secretary Tareq Ahamad, Poura Juba Dal president Mohammad Yunus Mia and secretary Khokon and Ramgarh upazila Juba 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 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.