

Valuables worth Tk 7 lakh looted from Tangail

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Tangail

A daring robbery was committed at Nagarpur upazila of the district on Wednesday night.

The robbers looted valuables worth about Tk 7 lakh including cash, gold ornaments and mobile sets from the house of one Haji Kasim Uddin at Shaliara village.

Police said a gang of 15 to 20 armed robbers entered the house introducing themselves as police personnel in the early hours.

They made the family members hostage at gunpoint and looted Tk 1,50,000 in cash, 30 tolas of gold ornaments and four mobile telephonesets.

A case was filed with Nagarpur Police Station in this regard.



Prof Sanjida Khatun speaks at a discussion at Bangla Academy in the city yesterday marking the 146th birth anniversary of poet Rabindranath Tagore. Prof Zillur Rahman Siddiqui, *extreme right*, is also seen.

201 pro-BNP RU teachers demand foolproof security for Khaleda Zia

RU CORRESPONDENT

A group of 201 pro-BNP teachers of Rajshahi University (RU) yesterday in a joint statement urged the caretaker government to ensure foolproof security of BNP Chairperson and immediate past prime minister Khaleda Zia.

The teachers also expressed their solidarity with the ongoing anti-corruption drives and hoped the drive will be conducted neutrally.

The signatories to the statement include former vice chancellor of Khulna University Prof Dr Abdul Kader Bhuiyan, former vice chancellor of Islamic University Prof Rafiqul Islam, Prof Abdul Hamid, Prof Abdul Hai Talukder, Prof Amjad Hossain, Prof Nazrul Islam, Prof Shamsul Alam Sarker, Prof CM Mustafa, Dr Hasnat Ali and Atiqul Islam.

Govt once again goes

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proximity to the Hawa Bhaban.

On April 21, the caretaker government's cabinet cancelled two-year old tenders for nine small Independent Power Projects (IPPs) totaling 190 megawatt capacity and asked the authorities to float tenders afresh, completing the process within next three months. Energy Adviser Tapan Chowdhury said that these tenders have been cancelled as there had been questions about transparency in the tendering process.

The Power Cell issued April 25 letters to 33 pre-qualified companies in three groups. The first group of 12 bidders was pre-qualified for 10 megawatt small power plant, the second group of 10 bidders for 20 MW units and the third group for 30 MW units. The third group includes Square Power Company, a venture of the Square Group.

In the letter, the Power Cell said that Request for Proposal (RFP) document would be made available to the bidders to purchase at a cost of Tk 1 lakh. The deadline for submission of the proposal is set on June 4 and a pre-bid meeting will be held on May 17.

This prompted some bidders to contact the Power Cell and say that they had previously purchased the RFP document and they do not want to buy it anew.

On Tuesday, the Power Cell sent yet another letter informing the bidders that they can submit proposals for more than one site and maximum for three sites. It added, the government has decided that the bidders who were qualified for 30 MW plants can also bid for 20 MW and 10 MW plants, and the bidders who were qualified for 20 MW plants can also bid for 10 MW plants.

"Why would the third group (30 MW) be allowed to bid for all categories of small power projects and the first group be restricted to only 10 MW? This pre-qualification was done more than a year ago. By now the financial capabilities of many of the bidders have changed. If a fresh pre-qualification is done, I am sure some companies will disqualify and some can qualify for higher capacity power projects," said one of the bidders.

Another bidder pointed out that a gap of three months is good enough time that calls for fresh pre-qualification of the bidders through an open process. "Pre-qualification process can be complete within 29 days, depending on the commitment of the Power Cell and the tender can be completed within another two months," he said.

Sources also warn the present way of handling would again lead to yet another controversy.

"We don't understand why can't the government go fairly with any single tender. A few days back it just scrapped the tender process of the Siraganj bid and it also scrapped nine small power contracts in its final stage. Since transparency is important, then this scheme should follow complete transparency," said an official.