

# Sirajganj BNP bigwig sued by party man for 'extortion'

## BNP man sent to jail in Sylhet on extortion charge

### STAR NATIONAL DESK

Sirajganj district BNP vice president has been sued by a party man for allegedly extorting Tk 61 lakh from him.

Another BNP leader was sent to jail in Sylhet yesterday on charge of extortion.

In Sirajganj, a case was filed against advocate Mokaddes Ali for alleged extortion of Tk 61 lakh. Senior vice-president of district BNP and contractor Abdul Mannan submitted the complaint on Tuesday with Sirajganj Sadar police station, reports our correspondent.

Police said they have started investigation into the allegation. They however said Mokaddes is absconding since filing of the case.

In the complaint, Abdul Mannan, owner of Business Consortium Sol, said he purchased on auction a huge quantity of iron and sundries

from Bangladesh Power Development Board office at Sirajganj on May 11, 2004.

He sold the goods to a businessman in Dhaka. BNP vice president Mokaddes Ali along with his cadres intercepted the 12 trucks carrying the goods to Dhaka and demanded Tk 80 lakh as toll.

As he refused, cadres of Mokaddes tortured labourers at the spot and picked up Habibur Rahman Habib, who purchased those, Mannan alleged.

Habib was taken to Malobika Rest House in Sirajganj town where he was confined for three days to realise the demanded toll money. Mannan alleged that Mokaddes' cadres threatened him and Habib with death if the demand is not fulfilled.

At one stage, he paid Tk 60, 80,170 to Mokaddes through Habib, Mannan said in the complaint.

Mannan also named some witnesses to the incident. They are four district BNP leaders--Sazirul Islam Alvi, Harun, Abdus Salam, Mozibor Rahman Lebu--and Habibur Rahman Habib, proprietor of Mss. Dweep Nagor Business Associate, House No. 15, Road No.-1, Nikunjo, Dhaka.

Mannan also mentioned in the complaint that Mokaddes became a multi-millionaire from an ordinary contractor in just five years of BNP rule through corruption, abuse of power and tender manipulation with the blessings of a former state minister and lawmaker from Sirajganj.

Talking to The Daily Star yesterday, Abdul Mannan alleged that Mokaddes' cadres are threatening him with death for filing the complaint.

He demanded a fair investigation into the complaint and arrest of the accused.

When contacted, SI Jahangir, IO of the case, said, "I am hunting for the accused but her is absconding".

Our Staff Correspondent reports from Sylhet

General secretary of Companiganj upazila BNP Hanif Khondaker, arrested on Tuesday on charge of extortion, was sent to jail hajat yesterday.

Police picked him up from near the T & T office Tuesday evening on charge of demanding toll from freedom fighter Nur Hossain of Dhalarpar village.

In a complaint to police Nur alleged that Hnaif attempted to cut the road in front of his village home. As he tried to resist, Hanif assaulted him, demanded Tk 2 lakh toll and threatened him with dire consequences, Nur said in the complaint.

Police produced Hanif before a court yesterday which sent him to jail hajat.



PHOTO: STAR

A mobile court during a drive against food adulteration in Braisal city yesterday detected stale food and rotten eggs at several hotels and fined them.

## Bribery charge against KCC Mayor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

Leaders of KCC Contractors' Welfare Association at a press conference at Khulna Press Club yesterday accused city Mayor Sheikh Tayebur Rahman of taking bribe in giving work orders for implementation of different projects.

President of the association Iskandar Ali also demanded investigation into corruption 'at every tier of KCC administration' by the Anti Corruption Commission (ACC).

"Khulna City Corporation has lost its past image due to unbridled corruption being patronised by the mayor for the last 10 years", Iskander Ali said.

He said the mayor has been abusing power and suspending officials and employees. He withdraws suspension orders in lieu of bribe.

Iskander Ali threatened agitation against the mayor and other corrupt officials of KCC (Khulna City Corporation) if outstanding bills of contractors amounting to Tk five crore are not paid immediately.

He sought intervention by the caretaker government to free Khulna City Corporation from 'a corrupt mayor and officials'.

## Magura police help people seeking legal assistance

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Magura*

Magura Sadar police have taken a praiseworthy initiative to provide assistance to people who seek legal aid against culprits and criminals.

In addition to the existing system of deploying a 'duty officer', they have engaged a 'assisting officer' (AO) at the Sadar police station to help people seeking legal aid.

The AOs are of the rank of Sub-Inspector (SI) or Assistant Sub-Inspector.

This is part of a reform initiative to give more service to people, Magura Police Superintendent Mohammad Muslim said.

The AOs are helping innocent people to save themselves from harassment by touts, criminals and culprits, he said.

The step by the local police administration has already earned people's appreciation.

"I went yesterday to file a general diary (GD) and did it without giving any bribe. It was impossible earlier. The good

behaviour of the AO surprised me", Khabiruddin of Ghoramara village in Magura Sadar upazila told this correspondent.

Retired headmaster Khan Ziaul Huq also termed the initiative a praiseworthy step and expressed his hope that it would fulfill a long cherished desire of people to find police as their friend and get legal help.

To provide people with legal facilities, a 'service delivery office' was opened at Magura Sadar police station on Friday last. Deputy Commissioner Abdul Halim inaugurated the office while Additional Superintendent of Police (ASP) Abdur Razzak, Assistant Superintendent of Police Waheduzzaman, Officer-in-Charge of Sadar police station Mosharrof Hossain, newsmen and local elite attended the function.

Similar facilities will be opened in all police stations in the district in phases, the SP told the function.

The crime scenario will also improve, he said.

## Municipal commissioner, fake DGFI man held

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Khagrachhari*

Joint forces yesterday arrested 4 persons including a municipality commissioner and a fake DGFI member for their alleged involvement in crimes from Matiranga and Manikchhari upazila in Khagrachhari.

Sources said, acting on a tiff-off, a army team raided Manikchhari Bazar and arrested a fake DGFI member Mohammad Abdul Baten and his aide Shahanur Alam.

Police sources said, Baten introduced himself as a DGFI member and proposed the upazila land officer to cancel an order regarding a plot of land allotted to upazila health office. Being confused land officer informed it to the army.

In another drive joint forces arrested yesterday Matiranga municipality commissioner Abdul Malek and municipality BNP president Joynal Abedin for their alleged involvement in crimes.

Arrested persons were sent to jail under Emergency Power Act.

## 3 bombs recovered at RUET, Faridpur

### STAR NATIONAL DESK

A powerful bomb was recovered from in front of the main gate of Rajshahi University of Engineering and Technology (RUET) Tuesday night, reports our RU correspondent.

Campus sources said, the bomb wrapped in red tape and plastic paper, were found on the ground of the university Central Shaheed Selim Hall of REUT.

In Faridpur, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered two bombs and a pipe gun from Goalchamat area of Faridpur town Tuesday night.

Acting on a tip-off, Rab members raided the houses of alleged terrorist Belayet Hossen at about 1-10 am and recovered the bombs and the illegal gun. Those were handed over to Kotwali police.

Belaet is on the run to evade arrest, police said.

Motier thana bomb expert SI Alamgir said it was a locally made powerful bomb.

Earlier, police recovered a powerful bomb and a rifle from Islami Chhatra Shibir dominated Shaheed Selim Hall of REUT.

In Faridpur, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) recovered two bombs and a pipe gun from Goalchamat area of Faridpur town Tuesday night.

Acting on a tip-off, Rab members raided the houses of alleged terrorist Belayet Hossen at about 1-10 am and recovered the bombs and the illegal gun. Those were handed over to Kotwali police. Belaet is on the run to evade arrest, police said.

## Fertiliser dealers at unions soon

Agriculture Adviser tells farmers in Mymensingh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Mymensingh*

Agriculture Adviser Chowdhury Sajjadul Karim yesterday said fertiliser dealers would be appointed at union level to ensure its proper distribution.

He was addressing a farmers' gathering at Char Puliamari Primary School ground in Mymensingh Sadar upazila Tuesday evening.

Channel i, an electronic media, organized the gathering titled "Budgeted for Agriculture and Budgeted for Farmers".

Shaikh Siraj, Director (News) of Channel i was the moderator of the function which started at 6 pm and

continued till about 9 pm.

Farmers in their hundreds including a good number of women, fertiliser dealers, fish farmers and hatchery owners from different villages in the district attended the unique programme and spoke freely about their problems. High officials of the district administration and agriculture and fishery departments attended the meeting.

The farmers said fertiliser crisis during peak season and high price of diesel is their main problems and urged the advisor to look into those.

The agriculture adviser heard farmers' problems patiently and answered them.

## Allocate more funds for Satkhira in budget

Roundtable told

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Satkhira*

Speakers at a discussion in the town yesterday urged the government to sanction more projects and allocate funds in the next national budget for development of 'neglected' Satkhira.

They criticised successive governments for not allocating required funds in national budgets for development of Satkhira, which is earning huge amounts of foreign currency by exporting shrimps.

The pre-budget discussion held at Satkhira Officers Ctoday was organised by Satkhira chapter of the Campaign for Good Governance, an NGO.

Former state minister Dr. Aftaabuzzaman was the chief guest at the function.

Academics, business leaders, lawyers, teachers, journalists, NGO representatives and local government leaders attended the function.

Dr. Aftaabuzzaman said the country earns over Tk 3000 crore in foreign currency every year by exporting shrimps and frozen foods, of which 60 to 70 per cent are produced in Satkhira district.

Other speakers demanded adequate budgetary allocations for expansion of power supply, development of solar energy, supply of safe drinking water, re-excavation of silted rivers like Kapotakhho, Betna, and Marichap, setting up an agriculture college and development of Bhomra land port.

## Jubo Dal leader held in Jhenidha

A CORRESPONDENT, *Jhenidha*

Joint forces arrested former Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal leader and current district Jubo Dal leader Monwar Hossain, 30, on Tuesday night from Adarsha para in Jhenidha.

Police said he was accused in a arms and explosives case. Besides he is a listed criminal.

He was handed over to sadar thana police on Wednesday morning.

10X4

10X3