

ILL-GOTTEN WEALTH

Ex-state minister Aman gets 13yrs, wife 3yrs in jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Special Court dealing with graft cases yesterday sentenced former state minister Amanullah Aman to 10 years' rigorous and three years' simple imprisonment and fined Tk 10 lakh in a corruption case for committing two different offences.

In default, the minister of the immediate past BNP-led alliance government will have to suffer another one year in jail.

Aman's wife Sabera Aman was also sentenced to three years' imprisonment as she was found guilty of abetting her husband in acquiring wealth through dishonest means.

The court also directed the government to confiscate their wealth worth over Tk 9 crore, which is disproportionate to the known



Former BNP state minister Amanullah Aman being taken to jail from a special court in the capital yesterday.

sources of income of the former state minister for labour and employment and his wife.

Special Court-1 Judge Firoz Alam delivered the verdict yesterday afternoon in a packed courtroom set up in the MP Hostel in the national parliament complex.

Prosecution lawyers told The Daily Star that Aman will have to serve in jail for 13 years as the conviction would be implemented consecutively, not concurrently.

A defence lawyer, however, said they are not sure about the nature of implementation of the conviction. "It would be clear after we get the copy of the verdict," said advocate SM Shajahan, one of Aman's counsels.

"I have already received instructions from my client [Aman] to

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EC drafting rules for controversy-free CEC selection

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Election Commission (EC) is drafting the proposed rules of appointment of the chief election commissioner (CEC) and election commissioners to put an end to the practice of appointing persons to the EC as per the government choices.

"The chief election commissioner himself is preparing the proposals that will be sent to the government to make laws. The future appointments will be better if the law can be made, specifying a set of criteria for the appointments," Election Commissioner Sahul Hossain told reporters at his office yesterday.

The law has not been formulated during the 35 years since the constitution was framed in 1972.

On the formation of the EC, the constitution says, "... the appointment of the CEC and other election commissioners (if any) shall, subject to the provisions of any law

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CONFESSION IN COURT

Selim shared extortion money with Hasina

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detained Awami League (AL) leader Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim yesterday confessed to a metropolitan magistrate that he shared with former prime minister and AL chief Sheikh Hasina Tk 2.99 crore he extorted from the managing director of a power company.

Details of his confessional statement given to Metropolitan Magistrate ABM Abdul Fattah in the extortion case could not however be known.

Azam J Chowdhury, managing director of Eastcoast Trading Private Ltd, filed the case against Hasina and her cousin Selim with Gulshan Police Station on June 13 for extorting over Tk 2.99 crore.

Selim was shown arrested in the case on June 14 and placed on a two-day remand on June 18.

On expiry of the remand, Obaidul

Haque, officer-in-charge of Gulshan Police Station and also investigation officer of the case, produced Selim before Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Jalal Ahmed. He assigned Fattah to record Selim's



Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim

confessional statement.

The AL presidium member, arrested on May 29, was brought to the magistrate's chamber at 3:40pm and taken away at 6:00pm after his statement was recorded.

Selim's lawyers however raised questions over this since he was not given three hours to think about confession before his statement was recorded.

His counsel Kamrul Islam submitted a petition to the magistrate saying that his client's confessional statement was not recorded lawfully.

In the FIR, Azam mentioned that Shiekh Hasina's cousin former lawmaker Sheikh Selim had tried to be the local agent of Russian company Techno Prom Export (TPE). On different occasions, Selim tried to influence the TPE chief to agree to this but failed, he added.

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Conviction warrant against AKM Mohiuddin sent to Dhaka jail

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sent a conviction warrant to the Dhaka Central Jail against AKM Mohiuddin Ahmed, a condemned killer of Bangabandhu and most of his family members.

Judge AKM Ishtiaque Hussain of the District and Sessions Judge's Court passed the order following a written petition of Rangabali police in Patuakhali district to show him arrested in the Bangabandhu murder case.

Three other sessions courts had earlier showed Mohiuddin arrested in three cases and sent conviction and custody warrants.

On Wednesday, police submitted petitions for showing Mohiuddin arrested in four cases including the Bangabandhu murder case.

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Amu followers won't hand Hasina their reform plan

In their first 'open' meeting, they decide to place it to working committee

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The pro-reform leaders of Awami League (AL) in their first 'open but informal' meeting yesterday nearly finalised their 25-point intra-party reform proposal and decided to place it to the AL Central Working Committee instead of handing it over to party chief Sheikh Hasina.

Earlier the same group had decided to hand over their reform proposals to Hasina.

"She [Sheikh Hasina] as an individual has come up with her reform proposals. We have also simultaneously come up with our

reform proposals. So we will not hand over our proposals to her, as she has become a party. Our proposals will be placed directly at the party's central working committee," said a leader who attended the meeting.

Yesterday's meeting nominated Abdur Razzak to look after the party's activities across the country. "In absence of Amir Hossain Amu, Abdur Razzak will coordinate leaders and workers of different units across the country," said another leader attending the meeting.

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PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Authority demolishes illegal establishments on the Buriganga banks at Chir Mierbagh of Keraniganj on the outskirts of the capital yesterday.

BNP reformists to make plan public soon

RAKIB HASNET SUMAN

Pro-reform leaders in BNP are determined to make public the much-talked-about reform proposals within a couple of days although party Chairperson Khaleda Zia on Wednesday said she is preparing a proposal which will be finalised through discussion after withdrawal of the ban on indoor politics.

Leaders preparing reform proposals under the direction of party Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan are trying to strengthen themselves while Khaleda loyalists are trying to create opinions in favour of the chairperson.

A group of party leaders are

meanwhile trying to set up a meeting between Khaleda and Mannan Bhuiyan following Khaleda's desire to talk with her secretary general to save the party from a possible split.

BNP Joint Secretary General Ashraf Hossain, a close aide of Bhuiyan, yesterday once again said, "We want reforms and the people will get our reform proposals within one or two days."

He, however, rejected rumours of any conflict between the party chairperson and the pro-reform leaders. Everything will become clear to party leaders and workers when the ban on indoor politics is lifted, he said.

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LACK OF CNG REFUELLING STATIONS

Red tape shoos away prospective investors

MD HASSAN with MAMUN AL MOSTOFA

The prospective entrepreneurs are shying away from investing in the CNG sector due mainly to bureaucratic red tape, although demand for the fuel is increasing fast following skyrocketing prices of petrol and diesel.

Moreover, conversion of vehicles into CNG-run ones is on at fast rate, while the supply of CNG (compressed natural gas) is not increasing as per demand. If the trend continues, the capital may soon suffer serious fuel crisis.

It often takes several years to launch a CNG refuelling station as the government offices concerned miserably lack coordination.

Industry insiders said over 100 applications for setting up CNG stations are kept in the cold storage in different departments because of slow and complex procedures.

To set up a CNG refuelling

station, one has to get approval from at least nine departments and agencies -- Rupantarita Praktitik Gas Company Limited (RPGCL), the Department of Explosives, the police commissioner (traffic), the Deputy Commissioner's (DC) Office, the environment ministry, the Roads & Highways Department, gas company of the respective areas, municipality and the communications ministry.

Regarding the hassles in getting approval from these offices, aggrieved entrepreneurs said a file has to pass through 64 tables in the R&H Department alone. They alleged the officials sometimes delay intentionally with ill motives.

According to the RPGCL, there are 1.9 lakh CNG-run vehicles in the country, most of which are running in the capital. These vehicles put tremendous pressure mostly on the 91 CNG refuelling stations located in and around

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Proceedings of graft case against Huda, Sigma adjourned

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday adjourned the proceedings of the graft case filed against detained former communications minister Nazmul Huda and his wife Sigma Huda until June 25.

Following a time petition by the defence lawyers, Judge Mohammad Azizul Haq of the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's court granted the time petition and transferred the case to the Second Special Judge Court set up at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar MP Hostel.

Besides, the same court sent the graft cases against Swechchasebak League General Secretary Pankaj Kumar Devnath and wife Monica Devnath, T&T CBA leader Firoz Mia and his wife Rowshanara Begum to the special courts.

Nazmul Huda was present in the court during yesterday's proceedings while his wife could not appear due to illness.

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NBR asks banks for account details of 60 individuals, companies

REJAUL KARIM BYRON

The National Board of Revenue (NBR) yesterday asked different commercial banks to submit the transaction reports of 60 individuals and companies, including political leaders, businessmen and their relatives, by June 27.

The Central Intelligence Cell (CIC) of the NBR sent separate letters to the banks seeking account details of former state minister and BNP lawmaker Fazlur Rahman Patal, former Awami League (AL) lawmaker Rafiqul Islam, former Jamaat lawmaker Shahjahan Chowdhury, businessman AK Azad, Shamim Iskander, brother of BNP chairperson Khaleda Zia, among others.

The NBR also asked the banks to stop withdrawal and transfer of money from the accounts of Shahjahan Chowdhury and his wife Johra Begum until further

notice.

The letters directed the banks to provide the account statements of last 6 to 10 years till the last printout of the audit trial.

As per the directives, the banks will have to come up with detailed information about transactions made through personal account, joint account, current account, foreign currency account, savings account, credit account, and credit cards.

Sources said that the revenue board would match the tax returns against the transaction reports to learn the sources of these people's income and check if they have been involved in tax evasion.

The steps came in line with the caretaker government's ongoing anti-graft crackdown.

Those whose accounts details have been sought are Fazlur Rahman Patal, his wife Quamrun

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Shops of food, drugs to remain open after 7pm

Govt clarifies

BSS, Dhaka

All small shops mainly selling rice, pulses, vegetables, meat, fish, milk, bread, pastry, sweets and fruits will remain open after 7:00pm, as the shops have been kept out of the purview of the ongoing programme for rational use of electricity in evening peak hours.

In a clarification yesterday, the government said the shops selling medicines, medical appliances, bandages, funeral materials, cigarettes, ice, newspapers and hotels, restaurants, movie houses and

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