

# Hasina formally charged with extortion

Rehana's name included in charge sheet as investigation 'found' her involvement; AL rejects it

COURT CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday pressed charges against detained Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina, her sister Sheikh Rehana and cousin Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim in a Tk 3 crore extortion case.

In the charge sheet submitted to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate's (CMM) Court, Dhaka, Rehana's name was included among the accused as the investigation has found "her involvement with the extortion".

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Gulshan Police Station Obaidul Haque, also investigation officer

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Sheikh Hasina



Sheikh Selim



Sheikh Rehana

Charge false, ill-motivated  
Says Rehana

HASAN JAHD TUSHER

Sheikh Rehana, sister of Sheikh Hasina, yesterday said the charge brought against Sheikh Hasina, Sheikh Selim and herself is 'completely false, fabricated and ill-motivated' and it is aimed at annihilating the surviving family members of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

It is completely a horrendous act by the present government and sign of their sick mentality as they have fixed the hearing of the case on August 15 – the day father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was assassinated along with most of his family members, said Rehana.

Rehana, the youngest daughter of Bangabandhu, urged the people of the country to protest and resist the injustice. "Normally the day [August 15] brings sadness to members of the family. I strongly protest it," she added.

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MEGHNAGHAT-2 POWER PROJECT

# PDB to cancel deal with Obaidul Karim's group

SHARIER KHAN

The bid for Meghnaghat phase two 450 MW power project that was awarded to scamster Obaidul Karim's shell company BON Consortium is finally heading towards cancellation, Power Development Board (PDB) sources said.

"BON has not submitted the performance security deposit of \$10 million by July 15 as asked by the PDB. We had been very flexible with BON, but it is not reciprocating our cooperation," says a PDB high official.

Power ministry sources said BON's main financier Bahrain-based Capital Management House has recently written to the ministry that it would be unable to arrange for the finances or submit the \$10 million deposit before December.

This had prompted the power ministry to ask the PDB last week to follow the due legal course regarding the Meghnaghat-2 power project.

A source said the PDB had sought legal opinion in this regard a week ago. "We are now waiting for the opinion. But we can say that it's heading towards cancellation because BON has defaulted on deadlines and it has failed to respond to the flexibility offered by us," said a PDB official.

Being very accommodative, the caretaker government had offered BON Consortium extension of various deadlines from January when it failed to meet those.

On May 28, the consortium failed to meet its deadline for financial closure for the project and it blamed the country's "political instability".

A day before this, it requested the government to allow it an additional

seven-and-a-half-month time for financial closure--pushing the deadline to December. The BON plea was accompanied by another letter from Capital Management House.

The power ministry agreed to extend the deadline. In early June, the PDB requested the BON Consortium, located at the Orion House in Tejgaon, to submit a performance security deposit of \$10 million immediately and said that the financial closure deadline will be set upon submission of this deposit. The PDB even agreed to amend the contracts to accommodate these exceptions.

Orion Group's Obaidul Karim-- who bagged many large-scale

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No executive power used in Hasina case

Says Mainul

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Law Adviser barrister Mainul Hossain yesterday said the government did not use its executive power to take the extortion case against Awami League Chief Sheikh Hasina under the Emergency Power Rules 2007.

"During the state of emergency, the president enjoys ordinance-promulgation power...the case was taken under the emergency power rule under that power, not using any executive power," the law adviser said while talking to reporters after the advisory council's meeting on law and order at the home ministry.

Mainul observed that the overall law and order situation of the country has been improved excepting a few incidents in the capital.

However, he asked the members of the law enforcement agencies

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Cops live with muck and filth as their mess hall on the ground floor of Jatrabari Police Station in Dhaka is inundated due to downpour for the last few days.

BNP reformists hope for an end to dispute

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Pro-reform BNP leaders have expressed hope that all sorts of misunderstanding between the party chief and them will be over once normal political activities resume.

They also said they now cannot contact party Chairperson Khaleda Zia unlike in the past due to some reasons but they (BNP) are still united.

"All kinds of misunderstanding will disappear once open politics is allowed," Joint Secretary General of the party Ashraf Hossain said yesterday.

Ashraf, a close aide to party Secretary General Abdul Mannan Bhuiyan, was talking to reporters after a meeting with Bhuiyan at his Gulshan residence.

He however did not reply when asked about the reasons for which they now cannot contact the party chief.

According to sources, pro-reform leader ZA Khan's comments on the party chairperson's allegations against them have created mixed reaction among the

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RLY LAND FOR SIGMA'S HR BODY

# Charges pressed against Huda

Remanded again in extortion case

COURT CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday pressed charges against detained former communications minister Nazmul Huda for allocating a piece of railway land illegally to a human rights organisation run by his wife Sigma Huda.

Meanwhile, a Dhaka court placed Huda on a three-day remand in connection with a case filed for extorting Tk 1 crore from an automobile dealership.

ACC Assistant Director Mirza Azizul Islam, IO of the case, yesterday submitted the charge sheet against Huda to the court of Chief Metropolitan Magistrate, Dhaka showing 27 people as prosecution witnesses.

In his charge sheet, the IO said the charges brought against Huda have been proven primarily and he should be put on trial.



Nazmul Huda

On March 21, ACC Deputy Director (DD) Shafiqul Islam lodged the case against Nazmul Huda with Shahbagh Police Station saying that while Huda was at the helm of communications ministry,

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VOTER ROLL WITH PHOTO, NATIONAL ID CARD

# Army collecting voters' data

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladesh Army is collecting area-wise number of voters from the last year's nullified voter list to lay the groundwork for simultaneous

preparation of a voter list with photographs and national identity cards.

On directives from the headquarters, the local army camps

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# Over 1 lakh marooned as floods engulf 10 dists

STAR REPORT

Heavy rain triggered by an active monsoon inundated low lying areas in 10 districts and the situation might get aggravated further submerging more areas as major rivers continued to rise in different parts of the country yesterday.

Reports from the affected districts said torrential rain pounded the country over the past one week, touching off floods that left more than one lakh people marooned.

Besides, standing crops on tens of thousands of hectares of land

were destroyed. Road links and power supply were snapped in the submerged hamlets.

Flood Forecasting and Warning Centre (FFWC) said the flood situation in the country's eastern part worsened while it improved in the north-eastern and south-eastern parts.

The rivers Brahmaputra and Jamuna continued to rise at all points and were likely to cross the danger level at Sirajganj and Aricha by the next 24 hours and 48 hours respectively since last night. Low laying areas in the districts of

Sirajganj, Pabna and Tangail are likely to be inundated by the next 48 to 72 hours since last night.

FFWC's latest report said the Padma also continued to rise at all points and was flowing 10cm above the danger level at Goalundo. The river is likely to rise further and might cross the danger level at Bhagyakul by the next 24 hours since last night.

As a result, more low laying areas in the districts of Manikganj, Munshiganj, Faridpur, Rajbari, Madaripur, Shariatpur and Dohar,

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# Biman mulls hiring large aircraft

RASHIDUL HASAN

Biman Bangladesh Airlines, a public limited company since Monday, is thinking about leasing a number of large aircraft in a bid to bring Biman out of the woods.

The Biman's newly formed board of directors would hold a meeting soon and make decision in this regard, a Biman high official told The Daily Star yesterday.

"We are thinking about leasing

new aircraft," the Biman official said, adding, "We are also thinking about buying aircraft through lease-to-purchase."

Biman will increase frequency of flights on high-yielding routes, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD) of Biman MA Momen told The Daily Star yesterday about Biman's initial plans.

Biman will also take initiatives

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# Tigers' last chance

BISHWAJIT ROY, From Colombo

All-rounder Mahmudullah Riyad will make his international debut when Bangladesh play for pride in the third and final one-day international against formidable Sri Lanka at the R Premadasa Stadium here today.

The demoralised team management drafted the 21-year-old middle-order batsman, who also bowls off-spin, in place of out-of-form Tushar Imran when they made two changes from the last match. Left-handed opener Shahriar Nafees was dropped to make way for veteran Javed Omar.

But for the second occasion, the visitors will miss the services of pace spearhead Mashrafe Bin Mortaza who is yet to recover from his ankle injury.

The match starts at 10:30am Bangladesh Standard Time with Bangladesh Television and TEN Sports beaming live coverage from Sri Lanka's biggest venue.

Sri Lanka have already clinched the series by winning the first two games convincingly but they will definitely go for the kill as they are in sight of another whitewash. Earlier, they won the Test series 3-0.

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