

IRREGULARITIES IN BSMMU
Bid to suppress probe committee report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Vice-Chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) Prof Mohammad Tahir at an emergency syndicate meeting yesterday formed a new committee to probe the irregularities in recruitment and procurement, instead of placing the report of a probe committee formed earlier in this regard.

The first committee formed on May 6 at the instruction of the chief adviser to probe the last nine years' corruption in the university submitted the report to the VC on Saturday.

Senior teachers of the BSMMU said the VC formed the new committee in a bid to suppress the report as it found the involvement of the VC, who was the Pro-VC during the BNP-led alliance

government, and some other high-ups of the administration in the corruption.

One of the syndicate members raised objection to the discussion on the probe report at the syndicate meeting as the VC did not place it, meeting sources said. Rather, he formed a five-member committee headed by Shahjahan Biswas, director general of the Directorate General of Health Services.

When contacted, the VC said he formed the new committee as per the recommendations of the first probe committee.

"Deputy Controller of Examinations Iftekhar Alam will be the member secretary of the new committee and BSMMU Treasurer Mobin Khan, Principal of Dhaka Medical College MA Faiz and Prof

Sajal Banerjee of the department of Cardiology of BSMMU will be the members. A procurement expert from the health ministry will also be inducted into the committee," he said.

He also said that the report of the first committee would be given to the new one and justice will be served finally.

A member of the first probe committee said this syndicate has no right to take any decision on the probe report as a number of syndicate members are no longer members.

"As the first probe committee was formed at the direction of the higher authorities, we urge them to take necessary steps regarding the probe report in accordance with the law," he said, preferring anonymity.

12 customs officials transferred

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Twelve customs officials have been transferred and appointed in a major reshuffle.

A letter relating to transfer and appointment order issued by the tax administration reached the Chittagong Customs House through fax yesterday afternoon.

Md Farid uddin, commissioner of both export and import customs of Chittagong, has been made director general of the Department of Customs, Duty and VAT Inspection.

Commissioner Lutfur Rahman of VAT Appeal Commissionerate, Chittagong was appointed commissioner of Chittagong Customs (import) while Commissioner Margub Ahmed of Sylhet Customs House as commissioner of Chittagong Customs (export).

Additional Commissioner Saiful Islam of Chittagong Customs (export) was transferred to the National Board of Revenue as its first secretary.

Mashuk Al Hossain, joint commissioner-1 of Chittagong Customs (import), was promoted to the post of additional commissioner at Chittagong Customs (export).

Matiur Rahman, joint commissioner- 2 of Chittagong Customs (import) was transferred to the VAT commissionerate in Rajshahi.

Jessore Customs Joint Commissioner Belal Hossain and

WATER PILFERAGE

Commercial firms, individuals fined


OUR CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

A mobile court in a drive in the port city yesterday fined different commercial firms and individuals Tk 6.93 lakh at Agrabad for pilfering Wasa water.

Sources said the court in a drive found that an owner of an apartment in Hazipara area has been selling 500 litres of Wasa water per day to a nearby hotel for the last one year.

It also fined a commercial building -Atlas Bhaban at Agrabad for setting up deep tube well without required license and evading taxes of over Tk 5.25 lakh.

The court also found illegal deep tube wells pilfering Wasa water at Navana Workshop at Access Road and unearthed another incident of water pilferage by selling underground water to 12 slum houses through setting up an illegal pump.



WEATHER TODAY

Rain likely

UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty or squally wind is likely at a few places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Sylhet, Chittagong, Barisal and Khulna divisions in the next 12 hours until 6:00pm today.

Moderately heavy rainfalls are also likely at places, Met Office said in a forecast. It said that day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country.

Highest temperature 34.5 degree Celsius was recorded yesterday at Jessore and lowest 24.2 degree Celsius at Dhaka and Tangail.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:41pm today and rises at 5:28am tomorrow.

Highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

City/Town	Temperature	Humidity in incelsius	percentage		
		Max	Min	Morning	Evening
Dhaka	31.7	24.2	93	76	
Chittagong	32.6	26.2	75	80	
Rajshahi	31.7	24.8	86	80	
Khulna	33.7	27.2	78	83	
Barisal	32.8	26.8	77	80	
Sylhet	28.7	24.5	98	86	
Cox's Bazar	32.0	24.7	74	83	

Theft case against Huda adjourned

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday adjourned the proceedings of a theft case against detained former communications minister barrister Nazmul Huda and two others, as the jail authorities could not produce him before the court.

Meanwhile, proceedings of a graft case against detained former deputy minister for land Ruhul Kuddus Talukder Dulu and his wife were adjourned yesterday.

First Class Magistrate Delwara Begum fixed the date of next hearing of the theft case against Huda on August 9 and directed the jail authorities to produce him before the court on the scheduled date.

Police Inspector Syed Nazrul Islam, the investigation officer (IO) of the case, submitted charge sheet against Huda and two others to a first class magistrate's court in Dhaka on May 17 showing 17 people as prosecution witnesses.

Mohammad Salahuddin of Nurpur in Dohar upazila filed the case on March 6 of this year. The plaintiff alleged that following Nazmul Huda's instructions the two other accused beat him up severely and took away Tk 17, 700 from his possession on October 28, 2006.

DULU CASE

Metropolitan Sessions Judge (in charge) AKM Enamul Haq fixed August 7 for hearing of the graft case against former deputy minister for land Dulu and his wife Sabina Yasmin.

The court directed Rajshahi Central Jail authorities to produce Dulu before the court on the scheduled date while his wife was absent from the court.

ACC Assistant Director Nurjahan Ahmed yesterday submitted the charge sheet against Dulu and his wife Sabina to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) court, showing 65 people as prosecution witnesses.

Earlier, the High Court granted ad interim bail to Dulu's wife Sabina until submission of the police report.

The case was filed against them with Adabar Police Station on April 19 for concealing information about Tk 3, 06,55,246 in their wealth statements.

BM BAKIR CASE

Detained Sonali Bank CBA leader BM Bakir Hossain was shown arrested yesterday in a tax evasion case filed with the Metropolitan Sessions Judge's Court on July 30.

The judge granted the petition submitted by the defence lawyers showing him arrested in the case.

The case was filed against Bakir for evading income tax of Tk 15,06,497 from 2000 to 2007.

The court issued arrest warrant against Bakir after Tasmia Delwara, assistant tax commissioner of the NBR, filed the case.

Appeal for help



Md Omar Faruque, a physically challenged youth, has appealed for financial assistance for his treatment, says a press release.

Nineteen-year-old Faruque, a resident of Choddagram in Comilla, has been suffering from disabilities since his childhood. When he was three months old, he had a fever. His legs started to lose strength and got emaciated.

But his parents are so poor that they could not afford his treatment.

Recently, a specialist doctor examined Faruque. The doctor told him that he might regain strength in his legs through an operation, which involves about Tk 5 lakh.

He now appeals to generous people to extend a helping hand for his treatment so that he could live a meaningful life.

Contributions can be sent to Md Omar Faruque, Savings Account No. 13786, Janata Bank Gunabati Branch, Comilla.

Sayed Hossain Roney
STAFF CORRESPONDENT



Sayed Hossain Roney, 19, who was supposed to sit for the Secondary School Certificate Examination from Bawany

School this year, has been suffering from cancer for four and a half months.

He is now admitted to Labaid Cardiac Hospital in the city and under the treatment of Oncologist Prof Syed Muhammad Akarm.

Roney's father Abdul Hannan, a timekeeper of Latif Bawani Tube Mills in Demra, has already spent Tk 2.50 lakh for the treatment of his son.

He is now unable to bear the expenditure of his treatment.

He has therefore made fervent appeal to well-off section of the society to extend financial assistance to save the life of his son.

Contributions can be sent to Abdul Hannan, Account No 13536 / 65, Sonali Bank, Latif Bawani Branch, Demra, Dhaka.

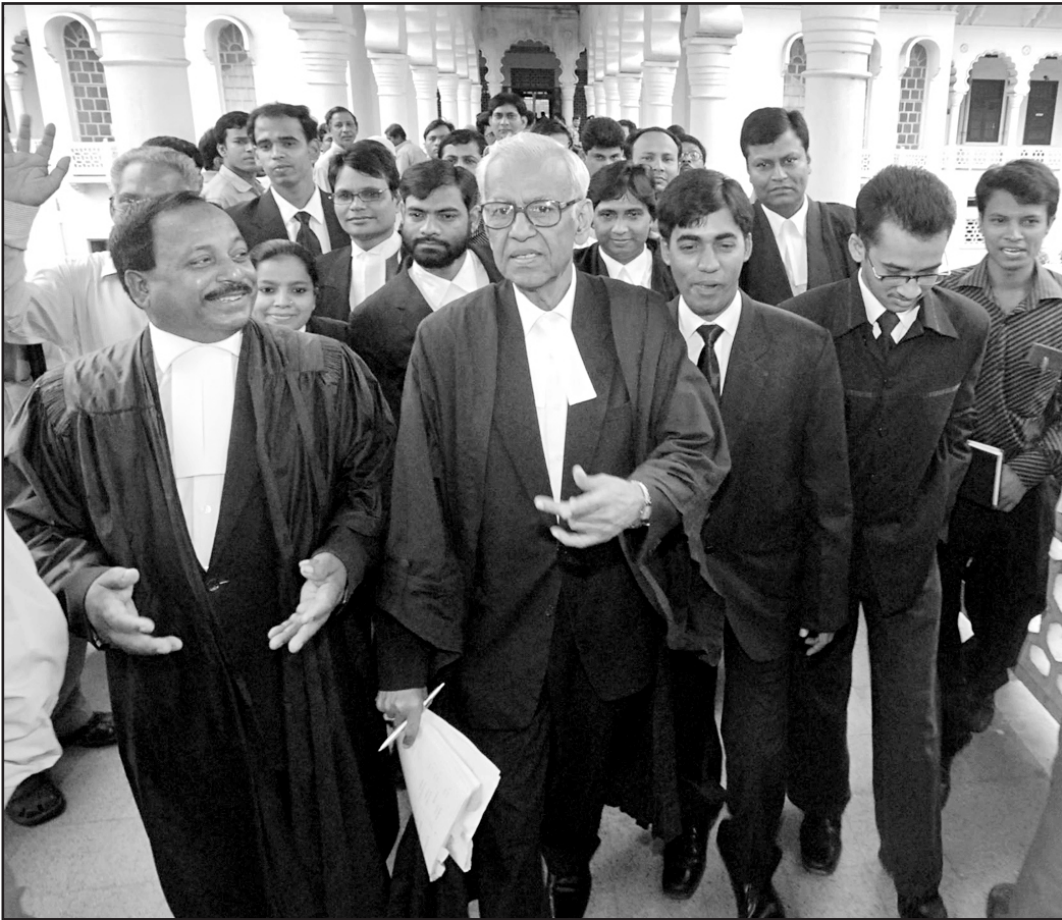


PHOTO: STAR

Lawyers for Awami League President Sheikh Hasina come out of the Supreme Court yesterday after the court stayed the High Court order granting bail to her in an extortion case.

Arsenic-contaminated irrigation water produces toxic crops Study reveals

DU CORRESPONDENT

Crops produced by arsenic-contaminated irrigation water accumulate toxic element, and when these contaminated foods are taken, human body becomes sick, said a study yesterday.

The study titled 'Arsenic poisoning in the food chain and its remedial possibilities' was presented as second dean lecture by Prof S M Imamul Haq of Dhaka University at the Teachers Students Centre auditorium.

The study also showed that rice and other food grains like arum, green papaya, bean, potato, bitter gourd, aubergine and chilli cooked in contaminated water also contain substantial amount of arsenic.

Prof Imamul said around 19 percent of the total population consume excessively arsenic-contaminated rice.

Terming this an urgent matter, the study said only safe water can reduce the risk of arsenic contamination.

He also showed some findings to reduce the contamination.

"It has been observed that mixing surface water with ground water could reduce the arsenic contamination by about 50 percent," said Prof Imamul, adding that organic and inorganic substances including cow dung, poultry feces, litters, sewage and composts could reduce the accumulation of arsenic in soil.

The study also showed two indigenous ferns, pteris vittata and nephrodium molle, could remove arsenic from soil.

Arsenic is a major concern of the world as the ground water in 20 countries is contaminated, and in Bangladesh more than 80 percent ground water is contaminated by arsenic.

The chief guest at the lecture series Prof Nazrul Islam, chairman of the University Grants Commission, said although research is a mandatory part of university education, the teachers at present are not interested in it.

Admitting the fund constraint for research he said the government has allocated Tk 10 crore for research purpose which will help reduce the crisis.

He also noted that the University Grants Commission is going to sign a deal with the World Bank for funding research projects.

"After the signing of the deal with the World Bank, the fund crisis will be solved," the UGC chairman added.

Presided over by DU Vice-chancellor Prof SMA Faiz, the lecture was also attended by Prof Anwar Hossain, dean of Biological Science faculty, and Prof Harun-Or-Rashid, dean of Social Science faculty.

JMB feared to strike again

FROM PAGE 1

Bhai and four other top guns, the law enforcers have rounded up 50 militants including two members of Majlish-e-Shura, the highest decision-making body.

Besides, they have recovered huge arms and explosives including powder gel, locally made iron cases, sodium sulphide, potassium sulphide, potassium carbonate, chloroform, measurement scales, glass jar, funnel, dust mask, hand gloves and Bunsen burners.

"Statements of the arrestees and seizure of explosive materials including TNT (Trinitrotoluene) indicate that those who have managed to be at large are preparing for attacks. And that is why we are taking some pre-emptive measures," said a senior police official.

Police have information that a group of JMB leaders have been relentless in their efforts to regenerate the organisation. Besides trying to regroup those who had dispersed in

the face of massive police dragnet, they are recruiting new members.

For training and other preparations, they have chosen remote char and haor areas across the northern districts.

Sources in the intelligence agencies said that the chars (shoals) dotting Sirajganj, Jamalpur, Sherpur and Pabna districts have long been used as training camps. The militants consider those safe as it takes hours for the law enforcers to reach there and thus allow them time enough to flee.

"Two years back, we had preparations to forestall militant attacks, yet we failed or you could say they had outfoxed us. Besides, we were a bit relaxed in our watch," said a source in the police department.

He said the intelligence officials calculated that attacks might take place between August 13 and 15, but those came on August 17.

An official of the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB) said, "Though the top JMB leaders have been executed and

many are jailed, the ones outside are still a threat to law and order."

Many detained JMB leaders and activists at the grassroots level have disclosed during interrogation that the leaders and suicide squad members of banned outfit had been regrouping.

A suspected military commander, Mostafizur Rahman Shahin, who was arrested on March 20 in Pabna, had claimed that some 5,000 operatives are still active across the country.

Some arrestees in Kishoreganj have come up with similar information during interrogation. They said strategically the haor upazilas like Niklee and Bajitpur are crucial to re-establishing the network in the district that broke down after execution of Abdur Rahman and Bangla Bhai.

The arrestees also described how they had taken up job at different NGOs on orders from the high command as part of a plot to attack those offices in future.

SC stays Hasina's bail order

FROM PAGE 1

Chamber Judge of the Appellate Division of the SC seeking stay on the HC order.

After primary hearing, the Chamber Judge had fixed Wednesday for hearing of the appeal by the full bench of the SC Appellate Division.

After hearing both the sides in the case, the SC had fixed yesterday for delivering its judgement.

In a packed courtroom, the SC yesterday morning delivered its judgement saying, "appeal allowed."

In his instant reaction, Hasina's chief counsel Barrister Rafique ul Huq said, "Absolutely frustrated and disappointed to get such an order."

He told the press, "I would term it a politically motivated judgement had it not come from the highest court."

He went on, " But I don't want to make such comments on the judgement, rather I accept the judgement as it has been delivered by the Supreme Court."

On the stay of the HC order until August 14, Rafique said, "It makes no sense."

He mentioned that August 16 is fixed for hearing on charge farming in the extortion case against Hasina in the trial court. "What is the use of staying the High Court order till August 14? I don't understand this despite my 47 years' experience in legal practice."

Attorney General Fida M Kamal, who was state counsel in this case, told newsmen it is inappropriate that the HC gave interim relief to the petitioner (Hasina) without finalising the explanation of the EPR.

Regarding the SC's directive for disposal of the HC rule as soon as possible, Rafique said they will tell the High Court bench that gave Monday's order that they are ready to complete the hearing before August 14 if the government doesn't delay it by taking time.

Hasina, was granted ad interim bail in response to a writ petition she filed on Sunday challenging legality of the government move to bring the Tk 3 crore extortion case against her under the EPR, and also seeking bail in this case.

The joint forces held the AL chief on July 16 and later that day a magistrate's court sent her to a sub-jail on the Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban complex.

The same day the home ministry gave its approval for taking the case under the EPR, 2007.

Earlier on June 13, Managing Director of Eastcoast Trading Pvt Ltd Azam J Chowdhury, filed a case accusing Hasina and Sheikh Fazul Karim Selim of extorting Tk 2.99 crore from him in connection with a contract for Siddhirganj power plant in Narayanganj.

On July 24, Gulshan police indicted

Hasina together with her sister Sheikh Rehana and cousin Sheikh Selim, the prime accused.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Gulshan Police Station Obaidul Haque submitted the charge sheet under sections 385(extortion)/109 (abetment)/34 (criminal liability) of the penal code.

He did not include in the charge sheet Section 19J (1) of the EPR. But the home ministry on July 16 notified that the emergency rules shall apply to the charges considering "public importance" of the case.

In her writ petition, Hasina alleged that the approval was given without lawful authority and with the ill intention of depriving her of the right to seeking bail.

Barrister Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh, a counsel for Hasina, yesterday said normal proceedings of the case would now continue as the HC's interim order has been stayed till August 14.

Several hundred lawyers were present on the court premises when the SC pronounced its judgement. AL leaders and workers including presidium member Motia Chowdhury, former speaker Advocate Abdul Hamid, former AL lawmaker Rahmat Ali, Advocate Shahara Khatun were also present there.

Many lawyers, journalists and AL men waited in the corridor as the courtroom was crammed.

PALTAN KILLINGS

Court asks IO to submit additional probe report by Sept 10

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday asked the investigation officer (IO) to submit an additional probe report by September 10 against Awami League (AL) President Sheikh Hasina and 45 others in connection with the Paltan killings on October 28 last year.

Metropolitan Magistrate Mir Ali Reza passed the order as the IO could not submit the report on the scheduled date yesterday.

The same court asked the IO on April 22 to probe the matter again and submit an additional report following a petition filed by him (IO).

On April 11, detective branch (DB) of police pressed charges against Hasina, AL General Secretary Abdul Jalil, Workers Party President Rashed Khan Menon, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal (JSD) President Hasanul Haque Inu and 42 others for killing five Jamaat-e-Islami activists and injuring several others.

The IO showed Hasina, former home minister Mohammad Nasim and another AL activist Kiron alias Abdul Malek absconding and prayed for issuance of arrest warrants against them.

Following the charge sheet, the court on April 22 issued arrest warrants against Hasina and two others.

The following day, the same court suspended the arrest warrants against Hasina and ordered further investigation into the matter.

Prior to the takeover of power by the caretaker government on October 28, seven people were killed in a fierce clash between activists of AL-led 14-party coalition and Jamaat-e-Islami in Paltan area. A day later Workers Party and Jamaat filed separate cases in connection with the same incident with Paltan Police Station.

Two more speedboats of Manju seized

UNB, Pirojpur

Two more speedboats owned by former communications minister Anwar Hossain Manju were seized from his village home at Bhitabaria in Bhandaria upazila yesterday.

A team from Bhandaria Police Station seized the two boats from a pond at about 11:00am and put those under care of the policemen.

Sources said the speedboats, used for Manju's election campaign, were seized following a directive by the Anti-Corruption Commission.

Earlier, on Wednesday night, police seized three speedboats of Manju from Pagla ghat in Narayanganj district.

Death anniversary

Today is the 8th death anniversary of Prof Mohammad Faruque, former chairman of Bengali Department of Jahangirnagar University and former head of Bengali Department of Karachi University, says a press release.

On the occasion, Qurankhwani and milad mahfil will be held at mosque. Foods will also be distributed in orphanages and among the destitute.

Relatives, friends, admirers and students have been requested to pray for salvation of his departed soul.

Obituary

Alhaj Abul Hasem Bepari, father of SM Jahangir Hossain, president of Bangladesh Fruits Vegetables and Allied Products Exporters' Association (BFVAPEA), passed away at Lab-Aid Specialized Cardiology Hospital in the city on August 1, says a press release.

On the occasion, a milad mahfil will be held at his residence at Darikandi in Sonargaon tomorrow.

Relatives and admirers are requested to attend the milad.

Chehlum

Chehlum of Dr Mahbubur Rahman, a child specialist, will be held at his 56/1, Siddheshwari, Circular Road residence in the city after Asr prayers today, says a press release.

Dr Mahbub passed away on June 25. He left behind his wife, three daughters, three sons and a host of relatives and admirers to mourn his death.

His friends, relatives and admirers have been requested to attend the chehlum.

SM Najir Hossain



Chehlum of late SM Najir Hossain, former headmaster of Jamirata High School at Shahjadpur in Sirajganj, will be held today, says a press release.

On this occasion, a special doa mahfil will be held at Masjid Taqwa near Banani Nam Village in the city.

His students and admirers have also arranged doa mahfils at various places of the country.