

Party men demand punishment of ex-BNP MP in Magura

Quazi Kamal on the run, faces several complaints lodged with ACC

HOSSAIN SERAJ, *Magura*

Party men now demand punishment of former BNP lawmaker from Magura-2 constituency Quazi Salimul Huq alias Quazi Kamal, accusing him of tarnishing party image by allegedly being involved in corruption, bribery and tender manipulation.

They are now raising voices for action against Kamal after Judge Mohammad Azizul Huq of Metropolitan Sessions Judge's court in Dhaka on September 16 ordered attachment of Salimul's properties for not appearing before the court in a case.

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) filed the case against detained former state minister for communications Salahuddin Ahmed and Quazi Kamal with Shahbag police station in Dhaka on May 29 alleging that they took Tk 1 crore bribe from contractor Mir Zahir Hossain to help him get a business, according to earlier newspaper reports.

Quazi Kamal, convener of Magura district BNP, is on the run since filing of the case. Law enforcers failed to arrest him despite several raids in his residence of Gulshan in Dhaka.

Earlier on September 11, the same court had issued arrest warrant against him following a plea submitted by the investigation officer (IO) in a Tk 1 crore

bribery case.

On September 9, ACC Assistant Director Ashraful Islam, IO of the case, submitted the charge sheet against the two to the Chief Metropolitan Magistrate (CMM) court in Dhaka.

This correspondent talked to several front ranking leaders of BNP and its fronts. Most of them demanded his punishment for his alleged involvement in crimes and



Quazi Salimul Huq

sheltering criminals.

"Kamal formed a syndicate in the name of negotiation committee to manipulate tenders of different government offices and earned money", said former minister and BNP central executive committee member Nitai Roy Chowdhury.

"He should be taught a good lesson as he and his cronies abused power and committed

crimes. Party men will not own the irregularities done by him", Nitai said.

Magura municipal BNP president Faruk Ahmed Babul said, "Legal steps against him was expected as he (Quazi Kamal) abused power by using his links with party's senior joint secretary Tariq Rahman and former state minister for home affairs. But it was delayed for reasons unknown".

A front ranking of Magura sadar BNP seeking anonymity alleged that Quazi Kamal inducted infamous outlaw Ali Ahmed Biswas into the party and made him district BNP secretary. He should have faced action for this and other corruption and irregularities, he said.

BNP should not defend and stand by him as he disorganised and defamed the party, he said.

Quazi Kamal, chairman of Econo Ball Pen Industries, joined BNP in 1994 and became a lawmaker from Magura-2 constituency in the bi-election held following the death of Awami League (AL) lawmaker Asaduzzaman. He lost to AL candidate advocate Biren Sikder in 1996 election but won the seat in 2001.

Being elected, Kamal sidelined honest and dedicated leaders and inducted terrorists in the party, the BNP leaders alleged.

Ali Ahmed Biswas was arrested

by army during 'operation clean heart', an anti-crime drive launched in 2000.

Allegations have it that professional contractors could not buy or drop any schedule as Quazi Kamal's syndicate manipulated tendering process.

The syndicate illegally realised 16 per cent of estimated costs of development works implemented by LGED, PWD and Roads & Highways Department, some aggrieved BNP leaders and contractors alleged while talking to this correspondent.

Six percent of the total realised money was deposited with the account of 'Quazi Salima Huq Trust', a social welfare body named after the mother of Quazi Kamal while the rest 10 percent was deposited with banks in the name of party, they said.

The tender manipulation syndicate styled 'negotiation committee' was formed comprising pro-BNP contractors and district BNP's high ranking leaders, sources in intelligence and Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) informed.

ACC Deputy Director Abdul Gaffar when contacted said, "We received some allegations regarding former lawmaker Quazi Salimul Huq's alleged involvement in tender manipulation and those have been sent to higher authorities for directive".

DEFYING EMERGENCY 9 Jubo League, BCL men chargesheeted in Sylhet

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Sylhet*

The Speedy Trial Magistrate Court in Sylhet yesterday framed charges against nine activists of Awami Juba League and Bangladesh Chhatra league for bringing out a procession in Kanaighat upazila headquarters on July 25 defying emergency.

Magistrate Devjit Sinha framed charges against Helal, Minhaj, Faruque Ahmed, Ataur Rahman, Rahim Uddin, Harun, Iqbal, Sadhan and Zainal.

They took out a procession protesting the arrest of AL chief Sheikh Hasina.

Kanaighat police filed a case against them on the same day. Within hours, police arrested Helal and Minhaj but others went into hiding. Police later submitted charge sheet against the nine.

CASE AGAINST EX-BNP MP SHAFI

7 more PWs examined

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Sylhet*

The Sylhet Sadar Speedy Trial Magistrate Court yesterday examined seven more prosecution witnesses (PWs) in the case against detained former BNP lawmaker Shafi Ahmed Chowdhury for alleged misappropriation of relief goods.

Prosecution witnesses Mokbul Ali, Sohel, Abdul Jabbar, Arkan Ali, Borhan Uddin, Nur Uddin and Boshor Ali were examined in the court of Devjit Sinha. With them, cross-examination of 11 PWs out of 18 was completed.

Complainant of the case Sub Inspector Tarequzzaman and three others were cross-examined on Sunday by lawyers of Shafi Chowdhury.

Former lawmaker Shafi Ahmed is in jail hajat. He appeared before the same court on September 18.

Dakshin Surma police filed a case against Shafi Ahmed Chowdhury and another person after joint forces recovered relief materials including CI sheets, biscuits and others items from his village home on the night of February 17.

The other accused, now in jail, is Selim Ahmed, Shafi's neighbour and an employee of Pubali Bank.



PHOTO: FOCUS BANGLA

Eid shopping is gaining momentum in Bogra town. Most buyers with fixed incomes first visit hawkers' markets.

ALIM JUTE MILLS

Tension mounts as sit-in continues

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, *Khulna*

A tense situation is prevailing in the laid-off Alim Jute Mills following BJMC chairman's comment on allocation of fund for payment of all outstanding dues to workers and purchasing raw material.

BJMC Chairman Ataharul Islam said Sunday evening that lay-off notice would not be withdrawn if finance ministry does not allocate fund for purchasing raw materials and payment of outstanding dues.

He further said that BJMC required Tk 4.5 crore for payment of all outstanding dues of workers and employees.

He said BJMC gave a proposal to the government to privatise Alim Jute Mills (AJM) in view of increasing financial crisis and other liabilities.

The BJMC chairman did not make any comment whether the mill would be finally shut down or not.

Meanwhile, president of AJM workers union Abdus Salam yesterday said sit-in programme by workers would continue to press their demands.

BJMC chairman's latest

observation about payment of outstanding dues has added fuel to the fury of workers. Workers are hungry and they will not bow down to any repressive measure if taken at all by the mill management, the CBA leader said.

Police and Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) were deployed in and around the mill which was laid-off on Saturday.

Meanwhile, 608 retrenched and terminated workers of Pplatinum Jubilee Jute Mills got their all outstanding dues amounting to over Tk 7.63 crore. The payments, made in cheques, ended Sunday night, mill sources said.

On the other hand, payment of dues except provident fund of 1305 retrenched and terminated workers of Crescent Jute mills (CJM) began on Sunday. By Tuesday, Tk 21.22 crore will be paid, said BJMC Project Director Abu Tahar.

Payment of gratuity to workers of closed Peoples Jute Mills will begin on September 30, said its project director.

2 UPDF men

held with arms in Khagrachhari

3 arrested for hill cutting

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Khagrachhari*

Three hill plunderers were arrested here yesterday, police said.

A police team led by magistrate Nazim Uddin, in a raid, conducted at about 11 am at Shalbagun in Sadar upazila arrested 3 hill plunderers for cutting hills.

The arrestees are Abdul Jabbar, son of Asmot Ali, Bacchu Mia, son of Abdul Jabbar and Nurul Amin, son of Abdul Hakim. They were produced before court from where they were sent to jail hajat.

Meanwhile, in another raid, army personnel of Bagaihat zone arrested two activists of the United People's Democratic Front (UPDF) with one LG and five rounds of ammunition at Huglachhara in Dighinala upazila Sunday night.

The arrestees are Injoy Chakma, son of Nil Ranjon Chakma and Sumon Chakma, son of Bodhatang Chakma.

Later, they were handed over to police, sources said.

Indigenous members return to Madhupur Nat'l Park Committee

Officials assure resolution of their problems

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Tangail*

All six indigenous members who had resigned from the Madhupur National Park Committee yesterday withdrew their resignation letters and joined it again.

Their decision followed their meeting with high officials of district and upazila administrations and forest department. The meeting was held at Madhupur Upazila Nirbahi Officer's office yesterday.

Earlier on Thursday, the forest department withdrew the case filed against local indigenous people and their leaders on September 17.

Madhupur Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) Dr MA Parvez Rahim presided over the meeting addressed by Tangail Deputy

Commissioner (DC) Akhter Ali Sarkar, Police Superintendent (SP) Mohammad Abdul Mannan, Divisional Forest Officer (DFO) Abdullah-al-Mamun and Father Subrato Tolento of Jalchhatra Church.

Local indigenous leaders including the six who had resigned earlier from the National Park Committee also addressed the meeting. The six are Ajoy-a-Mre, Ugin Nokrake, Shekhor Mrang, Stiphen Chambu Gang, William Dazel and Pronath Mring.

Indigenous leader and president of Joinshahi Adivashi Unnayan Parishad Ajoy-a-Mre told The Daily Star that they decided to withdraw their resignation letters as DC Akhter Ali Sarkar assured them

to resolve all their land related problems immediately.

The September 17 case against some local indigenous people and their leaders was filed as they allegedly resisted forest department's bid to plant trees on their lands in Beribaid area earlier on the same day.

After the incident, all the six indigenous members of Madhupur National Park Committee resigned on September 19.

Forest and Environment Adviser Dr CS Karim formed the 12-member committee during a visit to Madhupur on March 9 to solve the problems involving the indigenous people. The committee is headed by Madhupur UNO DR MA Parvez Rahim.

Outlaw held in Jhenidah

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Jhenidah*

Members of the Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) yesterday arrested a regional leader of the outlawed Gono Mukti Fauj at Pira Gati village in Shaikupa upazila here, police said.

Acting on a tip-off, a Rab team arrested Shahidul Islam alias Kapal Kata Shahid, son of Adar Ali of Lakhmandia village from Pira Gathi village where he was holding a meeting, Rab sources said.

When contacted, Shaikupa police station officer-in-charge (OC) Beal Uddin said Shahidul was sent to jail hajat. Shahidul is an accused in seven cases including two for murder, he said.

Son gets 17-year RI for killing mother in Barisal

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Barisal*

A court here yesterday sentenced a youth to 17 years rigorous imprisonment (RI) for killing his mother at West Ratanpur village in Mehendiganj upazila, court sources said.

The convict is Abu Taleb Bepari, they said.

First additional district and sessions judge of Barisal Md Siddikul Arefin Chowdhury handed down the verdict in presence of the accused.

The punishment was given under two separate sections of penal code. Under Section 304 of penal code, the convict was sentenced to 10 years RI and fined Tk 3,000, in default, to suffer one month more RI. Under Section 201 of penal code, he was sentenced to 7 years more RI with fine amounting to Tk 1,000, in default, to suffer one month more RI. The court ordered execution of the punishment one after another.

The young convict was not given capital punishment as he confessed to his guilt and expressed his repentance for the 'unintentional' crime done out of 'emotion'.

The prosecution story, in brief, is that Abu Taleb Bepari told his mother Niruja Begum to cook fish at noon on September 16, 2003.

On return from crop filed in the afternoon, Taleb saw that his mother did not cook fish. At once he became angry and engaged in an altercation with his mother. At one stage he hit her mother with a sharp weapon.

As Niruja became senseless, Taleb bundled the body in a sack and threw it to a nearby ditch at about 8 pm.

The next morning Taleb confessed to his crime when his father Abdul Jalil Bepari and neighbours enquired whereabouts of his mother. Later, they recovered the body from the ditch.

Taleb father lodged a murder case against son. Police arrested Taleb on September 18.

On investigation, sub-inspector (SI) Masud Rana chargesheeted Taleb on March 26, 2004 and the court framed charge against him on July 06, 2004.

The court pronounced the verdict after examining 12 witnesses and other evidences of both the sides.

9.5X4

8X3