

Probe body for action against KCC officials

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

A three-member probe committee has asked the authorities to take punitive action against four officials of Khulna City Corporation (KCC) for committing corruption in realising holding taxes.

The accused officials are former revenue officer Kazi Zahidul Hasan, Chief Tax Collector Sheikh Hafizur Rahman, Superintendent of Tax Assessing Section Sheikh Shafiqul Islam and Assistant Super of the same section Sheikh Harun-ur-Rashid.

KCC Mayor (acting) Moniruzzaman Moni formed the probe committee on December 24 last year following allegations of corruption in realising holding taxes from residential hotels, clinics, cinema halls, business firms and multi-storied buildings.

Headed by Ward Commissioner Shafiqul Alam Moni as convener, two other members of the probe committee are Revenue Officer SKM Tasduzzaman and Ward Commissioner Ajmol Ahmed Tapan.

The committee submitted its report to the mayor on Wednesday evening.

Convener of the probe committee said the officials helped evade holding taxes worth Tk 7.0 crores in exchange of bribes received from owners of multi-storied buildings and proprietors of clinics, residential hotels, cinema halls, business firms and private coaching centres.

IBRAHIM KAMAL MURDER

Two to die, two others get life

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced two people to death and two others to life in jail for killing Ibrahim Kamal, a senior assistant secretary to the planning commission, in November 2004.

The convicts with death are Mohammad Shahidul and Abdur Rashid 'Guddu' while Mohammad Jasim and Mohammad Shahid were given life in jail.

Judge Mohammad Nurul Huda of the Speedy Trial Tribunal-3 handed down the sentence in presence of three convicts at a packed courtroom.

Of the convicts, Shahid was tried in absentia and his punishment will be effective from the day of his arrest or surrender, the court said.

According to the prosecution, a gang of unknown miscreants stabbed Kamal to death while he was walking through Iskaton Garden Road at about 3:15am on November 22, 2004.

Following the incident, a mur-

der case was filed with Ramna Police Station against unknown people the same day.

Police later arrested four people of which Shahidul and Rashid gave confessional statements to a magistrate saying that they had killed the victim for mugging.

Special Public Prosecutor Sahidul Islam Sardar appeared for the state while Advocate Delwar Hossain defended the accused.

Lift emergency RMG workers urge govt

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

National Garments Workers Federation (NGWF) at a press conference in the city yesterday urged the government to withdraw or relax the emergency rules to allow trade union activities in order to protect the ready-made garments (RMG) sector for national interest.

NGWF General Secretary Amirul Haque Amin said withdrawal or relaxation of the emergency will help RMG workers to secure their basic rights, improve their relations with owners, increase production, resolve their problems legally and also to ensure transparency and accountability.

NGWF leaders said the government allowed indoor politics from May 12, but any consideration regarding trade union activities is yet to be noticed.

"As we believe the right of trade union is one of the basic rights of the workers, it is illogical to restrict trade union activities for long," they added.

RMG workers are the regular victims of various types of deprivations at their workplaces and they have to continue work considering all these problems. The deprivations include long work hours, no day-off in a week, delay and irregular payment of wages and inhuman behaviour of garments managers.

NGWF members said these deprivations create discontent and unrest among the workers. Active trade unions can solve the problems.

Withdrawal or relaxation of emergency is not essential only for 25 lakh workers and their families, it is also imperative for the nation because 76 per cent of the country's total export-oriented income is earned from this sector, they added.

They said fresh election and changing leadership in trade union are not possible due to emergency rule.

NGWF President Shahida Sarkar, Vice President Faruk Khan and Joint Secretary Nahar also spoke.

Smuggled timber seized, four arrested

CU CORRESPONDENT

Members of Bangladesh Coast Guard seized smuggled timbers worth around Tk 40 lakh and arrested four timber traders from Bepari Para area at Satkania upazila yesterday morning.

Sources said a squad of the coast guard during a 13-hour raid on Wednesday seized 2000 cubic feet smuggled teak, gamar and garjan timbers from Bepari Para adjacent to Keranirhat in the upazila.

They also arrested four traders identified as Mohammad Jahangir Alam, 40, Mohammad Abu Taher, 35, Kamal Uddin, 38, and Abu Taleb, 36, from the area in this connection.

Police and forest officials assisted the coast guard during the drive.

The seized timbers were handed over to Chittagong (South) Forest Department, sources added.



Former ambassador Mohammad Zamir addresses a roundtable at Cirdap Auditorium in the city yesterday. On his left are Sheikh Shahidul Islam, ASM Shahjahan, M Hafizuddin Khan, Prof Muzaffer Ahmad and Syed Abul Maksud. (Story on Page 16)

Call to bring about structural changes to curb corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The ongoing anti-corruption drive could not achieve anything significant so far, speakers at a seminar said yesterday.

No anti-corruption drive can be successful without the rule of law, they said and called for bringing about structural changes to stamp out corruption.

Bangladesh Policy Forum organised the seminar titled 'Anti-corruption drive: achievement and non-achievement' at the Jatiya Press Club in the city, with columnist Farhad Mazhar as the keynote speaker.

Farhad Mazhar said it is a false notion that the political unrest has led to 1/11. Rather, it was a part of 'international scheme', he added.

"It's a part of international scheme and we just got into the

trap. To expand the global capitalism, the political sovereignty of third world countries is being dismantled," he said.

Speaking as the chief guest, former adviser to a caretaker government Maj Gen (retd) Moinul Hossain Chowdhury said nothing has been done so far to curb intellectual corruption, which is a key problem in the country.

"Some progress has been made so far, but corruption cannot be eliminated unless structural changes are made," he observed.

Former education secretary Shahidul Alam said petty corruption still exists in the country, although the rate of big corruption has decreased.

Presiding over the seminar, Policy Forum Chairman and former energy adviser Mahmudur Rahman said the major mistake of the gov-

ernment is that it has forgotten, either intentionally or unconsciously, to stick to its fundamental characteristics.

Mahmudur Rahman Manna, organising secretary of the Awami League, Maj Gen (retd) Fazlur Rahman, former director general of Bangladesh Rifles (BDR), and Azizur Rahman Khan, member secretary of the forum, also spoke.

CPB RALLY BLAST CASE Huji leader Sumon sent to jail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court sent detained Harkatul Jihad (Huji) leader Arif Hasan Sumon to jail yesterday as he denied his involvement in the bomb attack on a CPB rally on July 20, 2001.

The Criminal Investigation Department (CID) produced him in the court of Metropolitan Magistrate Waliul Islam at the end of his five-day remand.

CID sources said Sumon had confessed to his involvement during the interrogation in the remand. But in the court, he denied his involvement in the attack.

Earlier, Sumon gave a confessional statement before a court admitting his involvement in the bomb attack at Ramna Batamul during the celebration of Pahela Baishakh on April 14 in 2001.

Dhaka offers medical help for quake-hit China

UNB, Dhaka

Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury yesterday telephoned the Chinese Ambassador to Bangladesh Zheng Qingdian and offered the services of an army medical team in the aftermath of the earthquake in China.

The Chinese envoy thanked the foreign adviser for the offer and said he would revert to the Bangladesh authorities on the matter, said a press release.

Work hard to address social problems DUVU urges students

DU CORRESPONDENT

Vice Chancellor (VC) of Dhaka University (DU) Prof SMA Faiz yesterday called on the students to work hard to address the social problems and play a vital role in the society, says a press release.

He said this while addressing the freshers' reception programme of Anthropology Department at Teacher-Student Centre auditorium as the chief guest.

Terming DU students as 'junior scholars' and the teachers as 'senior scholars', he said they have to work together to address such issues.

Speaking on the history of DU, Prof Faiz said the university was modelled after the Oxford University. When DU began its journey, the number of students was only 877, but now it is above 33000.

However, an acute seat crisis is prevailing in the university, he said, adding that it will be solved very soon.

Saudi co keen to recruit 5000 Bangladeshi workers

UNB, Dhaka

Alwa Kamel, President of Dallah Group, one of the largest manpower recruiting companies of Saudi Arabia, said his company is keen to recruit some 5000 workers for their projects in Medinah and Makkah.

He said this to media after holding talks with Foreign Adviser Iftekhar Ahmed Chowdhury at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs yesterday.

Over 15,000 Bangladeshis already work with the Dallah Group and all of them are happy and content, he said.

The foreign adviser, who is also in charge of the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, hoped for continued recruitment of Bangladeshis into the Saudi market.

RU JCD workers forced to make apologies for beating Shibir leader

RU CORRESPONDENT

Under the pressure from Islami Chhatra Shibir leaders, several leaders and activists of Jatiyatabadi Chhatra Dal (JCD) made apologies to them yesterday for beating a Shibir leader on the Rajshahi University (RU) campus.

The JCD activists led by Arafat Rahman Ashik and Mukut beat up Shibir cadre Zakaria Alam alias Sumon, a 2nd year student of Islamic history, on Monday as he misbehaved with a JCD activist.

Following the incident, several hundred cadres of Shibir and outsiders staged showdowns on the campus in the last two days and hunted for the JCD activists.

On Wednesday, Shibir activists also met Proctor Enamul Haque and threatened that they would 'taken action' against the JCD activists if they are not 'punished' within 24 hours, sources said.

Finally, the RU authorities brought the two sides to a meeting at the proctor's office to reach a mutually agreed settlement. At the meeting, the Shibir leaders forced the JCD activists to make apologies while hundreds of Shibir members and outsiders gathered outside the office.

The JCD leaders and activists -- Ashik, Mukut, Hira, Shamim, Selim and Zahurul -- also signed a written undertaking that 'they will not attack any Shibir leaders and activists in future on the campus', the sources said.

RU Proctor Enamul Haque, Student Adviser Faridul Islam Pintu, Assistant Proctor Dr Aslira Khatun, Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Mother Police Station Rafiqul Islam, and pro-Jamaat teachers were present at the meeting.

Shishu Park timing for Monday

The Shaheed Zia Shishu Park at Shahbagh in the city will remain open for all from 3:00pm to 8:00pm on May 19 due to Buddha Purnima, says a press release of the Dhaka City Corporation.

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We wish to express our sincerest gratitude to all the friends, family and well wishers who had brought comfort to our beloved father during his final days and also joined us in prayers for his departed soul.

We would also like to thank all those who brought solace to us in our time of grief.

Aleya, Babul, Kamrul, Bully

Meghna-Gomati Bridge repair work begins

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Repair work for Meghna-Gomati Bridge on Dhaka-Chittagong highway began yesterday, said a press release of the communication ministry.

The repair work will continue up to June 24.

To facilitate the repair work, one-way movement of heavy vehicles on half portion of the bridge will be allowed only and the rest half part will remain closed.

Besides, vehicular movement on the bridge will remain suspended for 12 hours on one day a week.

Youth found slaughtered in city house

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A young man was found slaughtered at his house at Shyamoli in the city early yesterday.

The victim was identified as Riaz Ahmed Chowdhury alias Suman, 27.

The family members said Riaz's mother entered her son's room at about 6:00am as the door was open, but she found the body lying in a pool of blood in the bed.

Riaz went out of the house at around 10:00pm on Wednesday night, they said but could not say when he returned.

"He used to take cannabis, phensydid and heroin," the victim's cousin Bahar told reporters.

The police sent the body to Dhaka Medical College morgue for autopsy. The killers first put sticky tape on his mouth so that he cannot scream, the police said.

The killers also stabbed him in the abdomen and cut the tendons of a hand and a leg, they added.

Officer-in-Charge (OC) of Mohammadpur police station Shibly Noman told reporters that Riaz associated with bad companions and used to return home at dead of night along with his friends.



Members of Supreme Court Bar Association yesterday observe a two-hour work abstention at the Appellate Division, protesting some recent judgments of the apex court. (Story on Page 1)

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