

Hasnat lands in jail

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court in a tax evasion case in which he was earlier sentenced to nine years' imprisonment in absentia.

Judge AK Roy of the Special Court-2 passed the order when Hasnat along with his lawyers appeared before the court around 12:30pm.

Abul Hasnat's lawyers submitted three petitions—one for providing him with proper treatment, one for providing first-class division in jail and the other for sending him to jail.

Moving for the petitions, lawyers told the court that their client had earlier surrendered to the High Court (HC) and sought bail. But the HC asked their client to surrender before the trial court within four weeks.

Special Public Prosecutor Mosharraf Hossain Kajol did not oppose the petitions.

After the hearing, the judge directed the jail authorities to take necessary steps to provide Hasnat, also a former chief whip, with proper treatment and division in jail as per the Jail Code.

Meantime, Abul Hasnat's lawyers submitted another

JMB

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petition for showing him arrested in a graft case filed by Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC).

Sources say that his lawyers want Hasnat to be in jail for the time being so that they can move for his bail in higher courts.

On December 12, 2007, the same court sentenced Hasnat to nine years' imprisonment for dodging Tk 37.47 lakh income tax between 2001-02 and 2006-07.

The court also fined him Tk 40 lakh; in default of which he would have to stay in jail for six more months.

Assistant Tax

Commissioner of National Board of Revenue (NBR) Mohammad Saiful Azam filed the case against him on October 25, 2007 in connection with evading Tk 37.47 lakh income tax.

On March 3 last year, Hasnat was given 13 years' imprisonment in a case filed against him for amassing wealth through illegal means and concealing wealth in the statement submitted to the ACC.

Ctg arms haul

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order yesterday to conduct the test at Chittagong jail on June 24 after hearing a petition CID placed Thursday in this regard.

Investigation officer of the case Muniruzzaman a Chowdhury, a senior ASP of Chittagong zone, placed the petition for the TI parade to verify that former NSI DD Liakat was involved in the offloading of 10 truckloads of firearms and ammunition hauled at Chittagong Urea Fertiliser Company Ltd (CUFL) jetty in the early hours of April 2, 2004.

Investigators are now preparing to conduct the TI parade under the supervision of Metropolitan Magistrate Mohammad Mahbubur Rahman.

Two former police sergeants Alauddin and Helal Uddin, who were credited with the seizure of the consignment, would be present to identify and help pick up ex-NSI DD Liakat from a group of accused in the TI parade.

The CID is almost sure that the ex-NSI DD was involved in the case. The two former police sergeants informed the CID that the person's photo (ex-NSI DD Liakat) they saw in newspapers was the same person who was supervising the offloading of the weapons on CUFL jetty that day claiming to be Abul Hossain.

Detained ex-NSI Director (security) Wing Commander (retd) Sahab Uddin in his judicial confession had also claimed that ex-NSI DD Liakat was involved in the offloading of arms and he was the person who informed him of the seizure over telephone.

Earlier, Liakat in remand under Task force for Interrogation (TFI) cell confessed to his involvement in the offloading of arms and agreed to make a judicial confession, sources said.

He, however, refused to make the statement when he was produced before a magistrate on June 07.

Govt to drop

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not on yesterday's list.

Khaleda and her family members had appealed for withdrawal of 20 cases filed against them during the rule of the last caretaker government.

Asked about withdrawal of cases filed against BNP leaders, he said, "No cases against opposition leaders have been placed before the committee today (yesterday). If any cases recommended by the district committee come to me I will, off course, take a decision on their withdrawal."

If any BNP leader is harassed in cases filed by the ACC it would also be considered, he said.

The government will send its recommendations to the ACC for withdrawal of the "politically motivated" cases as per the commission's own laws.

Replying to a query

Quamrul said the ACC and its former chief Hasan Mashud Chowdhury were used against political leaders.

Coming down heavily on the ACC's activities in between 2007 and 2008 he said the ACC tried to draw a parallel between Hasina and Khaleda by filing false cases against Hasina.

The state minister said steps would be taken in phases against those who conspired to harass political leaders after the 1/11 political changeover.

Cases filed against BNP leaders including its Chairperson Khaleda Zia were

different border routes in Chapainawabganj and Jessor to smuggle in bomb-making materials and small arms from India.

He revealed that active members of Majlis-e-Shura are trying to keep the organisation afloat in Dhaka and other divisional towns. Some of the Shura members are "Bhaigna" Shahid from Gaibandha, Hossain alias Shakil and Mahfuz from Pabna, and Saiful and Abdur Rahim of Chapainawabganj.

Saiful, Abdur Rahim and a few other members are in charge of smuggling in bomb-making materials through different border routes of Chapainawabganj and bringing them to a recently opened office about 12-13 kilometres east of Rajshahisadar.

Another office has been opened in an area between Bogra and Joypurhat districts for the same purpose. Houses of JMB workers have been hired for setting up the two offices. The owners of the houses look after the materials.

The JMB member said recruitment has been stalled since JMB's leadership was recast last November. They are including those related to JMB members through blood or marriage while both old ehsar and gayeri ehsar members are being accepted if they want to be active again, he said.

Shura member Bhaigna Shahid, who can make 12 bombs in an hour using electric circuits, had his bodyguard Russel arrested in Bogra two months ago. Shahid has revived his activities in Bogra.

The JMB is planning attacks in several important districts including Dhaka to embarrass the government, the gayeri ehsar said, adding that recce would be done before implementation of the plan.

Beef up drive

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and dump effluents in the rivers.

The officials also assured the parliamentary body of issuing warning to the industries for not dumping wastes in the rivers, as waste disposal is the major cause of river pollution.

After the meeting Land Minister Rezaul Karim Hira said the government has moved to amend the Vested Property Act to ensure publication of gazette notification of the vested property in next 180 days.

BNP for 'neutral'

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"If the government does not do this, the visit to the dam will be meaningless," he added.

Earlier on June 16, the parliamentary standing committee on water resources ministry formed a nine-member team comprised of lawmakers and experts to visit the Tipaimukh dam area to assess its impact on Bangladesh.

But no BNP lawmaker was incorporated into the committee, as the party does not have any representatives in the parliamentary standing committee on water resources ministry.

The chairman of the parliamentary body, however, later urged the BNP to send a representative's name to include in the delegation.

Zainul hoped the government would consider their proposal to face a national crisis like Tipaimukh issue and urged the government to include those experts in the committee.

Earlier, Liakat in remand under Task force for Interrogation (TFI) cell confessed to his involvement in the offloading of arms and he was the person who informed him of the seizure over telephone.

He, however, refused to make the statement when he was produced before a magistrate on June 07.

BNP lawmakers

Mahbubuddin Khokon, Nazrul Islam Manju and Shahid Uddin Chowdhury Anee, among others, were present at the press briefing.

MPs assured

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The offices for the rest will be allocated gradually as the parliament secretariat is having the offices readied.

On the first day, 60 lawmakers from Awami League (AL), 21 from BNP, 10 from Jatiya Party and one independent legislator received allocation letters and keys to their offices.

Lawmakers will also be provided with offices at upazila level so that they can perform their duties properly, Hamid said.

He said the parliament secretariat would bear expenditure of one staff for each lawmaker and Tk 500 will be allocated each month to maintain the office, he said.

The speaker said lawmakers will get vehicles and which they will be able to own in exchange for a token money after their five-year tenure.

Replying to a query

Quamrul said the ACC and its former chief Hasan Mashud Chowdhury were used against political leaders.

Coming down heavily on the ACC's activities in between 2007 and 2008 he said the ACC tried to draw a parallel between Hasina and Khaleda by filing false cases against Hasina.

The state minister said steps would be taken in phases against those who conspired to harass political leaders after the 1/11 political changeover.

He said they had so far received recommendations for withdrawal of 1,500 cases from the district level committees until yesterday.

Cases filed against BNP leaders including its Chairperson Khaleda Zia were

prosecuted on behalf of the Sector Commanders Forum.

The court completed hearing last month.

ORDERS AND OBSERVATIONS

The High Court bench observed that the Proclamation of Independence published on April 10, 1971, states beyond doubt that Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman made the declaration of independence.

The Proclamation is protected by article 150 of the constitution and thus cannot be changed at will, it added.

The court also declared illegal and unconstitutional the publications of the third volume of the books titled 'Swadhinata Juddho: Dalilpatra' (The Liberation War of Bangladesh: Documents).

It directed the government to confiscate the books painting late president Ziaur Rahman as a declared independence.

Besides, it wants the government to stop sale, distribution and reprint of the books at home and abroad.

The bench said the government might take initiative to bring to trial those involved in attempts to establish an untrue version of the Liberation War.

It observed that the persons responsible have in fact committed an offence against the nation and the constitution.

The committee formed by the BNP-led alliance government to write and print history of the Liberation War had recommended that Ziaur Rahman be declared as the independence proclaimer in place of Bangabandhu, without having any authentic documents at its disposal.

The court, however, said Zia had a valuable contribution to the war, and that he had never claimed in his lifetime to be the proclaimer.

Additional Attorney General M Enayetur Rahim, petitioner's counsel Manzil Mirshid, and Muntasir Mamun, a professor of history at Dhaka University, were present at the court during delivery of the judgment.

They hailed the judgment as an epoch-making event.

Talking to The Daily Star, they hope it would help restore the authenticated narrative of the Liberation War.

HOW THEY DISTORTED HISTORY

Originally, the information ministry compiled and published the documentary evidence of the Liberation War in 15 parts in 1982.

Edited by Hasan Haifur Rahman, those were reprinted in 2003.

The Liberation War affairs ministry, set up during the BNP alliance regime, changed some of the facts in the second edition published in 2004.

It deleted the first document of the third part that contained Declaration of Independence made in the name of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and broadcast from Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra on March 26, 1971.

Instead, it included a document stating that Major Ziaur Rahman first declared independence from Biplobi Betar Kendra (Chittagong) on March 27, wherein he claimed to be the 'provisional president and commander-in-chief of the liberation army'.

The second document of the third part stated that Zia made another declaration on March 28 from Swadhin Bangla Betar Kendra.

The committee will be grateful to you if you kindly attend the meeting and clarify your position," said Bakr quoting the letters.

Talking to reporters

Opposition Chief Whip Zainul Abdin Farroque said the party will give its reaction to the summoning of its leaders before June 27.

B N P l a w m a k e r

Mahbubuddin Khokon said the committee did not follow proper procedures in summoning the former speaker, his deputy and former chief whip Delwar.

He said the committee should have informed the accused about the allegations brought against them before the summoning.

The committee should have first served show cause notices on them seeking their version. If they did not respond, then the committee could have summoned them," he added.

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