

Probe finds Tk 28.6cr irregularities in RCCI

ANWAR ALI, RAJSHAHI

A probe detected financial irregularities worth Tk 28.60 crore including Tk 18.04 lakh dodged in taxes by Rajshahi Chamber of Commerce and Industries (RCCI) from March 2003 to January 2011.

It also found several administrative irregularities like illegally enrolling new general members just before the four RCCI executive committee elections held during the period.

The probe was carried out by a five-member body, formed by RCCI Administrator Ziaul Haque Tuku, approved by the commerce ministry on July 5 this year and led by former additional deputy commissioner of Pabna KNAM Nazrul Haque.

The other members are Transparency International Bangladesh Rajshahi unit convener Prof Chowdhury Sarwat Jahan, Commercial Audit Directorate Audit and Accounts Officer Abdul Majid, Rajshahi Development Authority Administrative Officer Khurshid Alam and the local Rajshahi daily Sonar Desh Executive Editor Hasan Millat.

The Daily Star got a copy of the 48-page probe report, prepared on September 10, which held RCCI Accountant M Shakhawat Hossain responsible for most of the irregularities and termed him "unfit and unskilled".

FINANCIAL IRREGULARITIES

The RCCI executive body, as per its rules, can spend not more than Tk 300 per day. But during the period investigated into, it spent a minimum of Tk 319 and a maximum of Tk 2.25 crore per day, amounting to Tk 26,96,81,041.

Moreover, the government rule making it mandatory for the person making those expenditures to sign the cashbook was never followed, said the report.

The executive body dodged Tk 15,34,292 in VAT and taxes which it should have cut off from the bills of a

construction firm.

Similarly, taxes worth Tk 1,32,170 was dodged while purchasing furniture, electronics, hardware goods and printing works, Tk 87,833 while paying off eight contractors and suppliers and Tk 50,297 while paying off legal advisors.

Advertisements worth Tk 32,835 as per the newspaper rate was billed Tk 1,60,111, causing RCCI a loss of Tk 1,27,276.

There was no tender for an expenditure of Tk 56,35,388 in the construction of RCCI Bhaban while purchase of machineries worth Tk 31,40,518 flouted government rules and was beyond the expenditure limit, said the report.

RCCI incurred a loss of Tk 12,94,212

The probe report suggests punitive action against the accused and steps to stop the irregularities and realise the money lost

by not realising 10 percent liquidity damage from the contractor for delaying RCCI Bhaban's construction.

In contrary, Tk 4,41,084 was deducted from the same contractor's bill for faulty construction though he, as per government rules, should have been compelled to correct the faults.

Though keeping storage records is mandatory, there was none in the purchase of Tk 18,15,041 worth furniture, Tk 16,36,522 worth construction materials and Tk 1,64,429 worth stationery goods.

Another Tk 1,48,154 spent on entertaining guests was unlawful and Tk 65,000 in advance payments to four parties were never adjusted in the audit reports.

The executive committee overpaid

its illegally appointed employees Tk 38,833 and provided its auditors an extra Tk 15,500 as travel allowance. The probe also found expenditures in filing unnecessary cases and writ petitions without recommendations of legal experts.

"UNHEALTHY COMPETITION"
Just a few days before the executive committee's election in 2003, 1,243 people were given membership, bringing general members to a total of 1,526. Of them, only 310 renewed their membership in 2005.

Similarly, 4,771 new members were enrolled before the 2009 election. But only 286 from the new total of 5,091 members renewed their membership the next term.

Mentionable, the membership process requires approval from the RCCI Board Meeting and verification by the executive committee. But these two regulations were flouted, said the report, adding that the number of businessmen eligible for RCCI membership is around 300.

At least eight people gained membership either using nonexistent trade groups or having no membership of any trade groups at all. Although there is no "house committee" in the RCCI constitution, the executive committee formed this body right before the elections to keep its influence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The report suggested punitive action against the accused and steps to stop the irregularities and realise the money lost.

RCCI Administrator Ziaul Haque Tuku said they would publish the report formally within a short time. The report was given to General Prosecutor Rabiul Haque Kakor for his opinion on identifying the accused.

"Separate bodies are needed to further investigate and identify the others responsible," he said, adding that the commerce ministry already reviewed the report and directed RCCI to take necessary action.



A lack of beds forces patients to defy the cold and set up bedding on the corridors of Dhaka Medical College Hospital. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Abducted boy rescued, 3 arrested

BSS, Tangail

Police rescued an abducted minor boy and arrested three youths in this connection from Delduar upazila on Thursday night.

The arrestees are Atiq, son of Sohrab Ali, Mizan, son of Matiar Rahman, and Sijan, son of Bachhed.

Two-year-old Shahed, son of Jamir Miah of the upazila's Dubail village, went missing on Wednesday, said police.

Next day, his uncle Rafiqul Islam filed a case with Delduar Police Station claiming that Atiq abducted Shahed and demanded Tk 3 lakh ransom from Shahed's mother.

Atiq worked as a labourer for three years at the house of Jamir Miah, who works in Dubai.

A police team led by Sub-Inspector Rafiqul Islam arrested the three abductors from Falda area around 10:30pm on Thursday, said Officer-In-Charge Abu Bakar Siddique of Delduar Police Station.

Based on their confessional statement, police rescued Shahed from a house in Falda village.

Outlaw man arrested in Meherpur

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Kushtia

Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) on Thursday night arrested an activist of Purbo Banglar Communist Party (Janajuddha) red handed when he came to realise extortion money from a brick kiln owner at Chhatian village in Gangi upazila in Meherpur.

The arrestee was identified as Jahangir Alam alias Liton, 34, of the same area.

Rab recovered a shutter gun and five bullets from his possession.

Gangni police said Liton is accused in two bomb blast and two extortion cases.

English language fair creates enthusiasm

OUR CORRESPONDENT, BARISAL

The English language fair being jointly organised by The Daily Star and Robi across the country was held at Bakerganj JSU High School in Bakerganj upazila of Barisal yesterday.

Over 25 students and teachers of the school were present at the fair which aims at spreading English language learning skills among secondary school level students.

Screening of a movie and different competitions, including spot quiz, vocabulary test,

one-word question, extempore speech, role playing and picture description for students were held at the daylong fair with much enthusiasm.

The students entertained the audience by reciting poems, telling jokes and singing songs. Later, prizes were awarded to the event winners and an English Language Club was formed.

The school's assistant teachers, Roostom Ali Mridha and Redwan Hossain, and Adcom representatives Imran Hossain and Rashid Rahaman were present.

UCC থেকে গ-ইউনিটে

কাজী গোলাম রাব্বানী মাওলা
পিতা: এডভোকেট কাজী গোলাম মাওলা
মাতা: এডভোকেট কাজী রাইছা মাওলা
মোট স্কোর: ১৭৭.৯২
লিখিত পরীকার প্রাপ্ত নম্বর: ৯৭.৯২
English=27.36 Advanced English=20.88
Accounting=26.40 Principles of Business=23.28
ও সেলে, এ সেলে, এডভোকেট ইকরানামাল কুল
আইই উসে হুজু ওলো

কোথায় কোডিং করব
১২২ Model Test ও টেলিফোন
১১.৯২০ কলকাতা কলকাতা কলকাতা
মেধাস্থান - ১ম

রাশিক আমিন নাশীরা খালিদ আব্দুল্লাহ আল-নোবিন
৪ গুলে ৪ গুলে মালিক হুজু ঢাকা সিটি কলেজ ঢাকা সিটি কলেজ

৬ষ্ঠ ৯ম ১০ম ১২ ১৩

মাহফুজুর রহমান কৌশিক মন্ডল রাহাত খানের কলী জা নেদার জলী বান্দী ফয়সাল আহমেদ
ঢাকা সিটি কলেজ কলকাতা ডিগ্রি কলেজ রাউলট উল্ল দলে কলেজ সুইডা সরকারি কলেজ ঢাকা সিটি কলেজ

১৭ ১৯ ২০

কনক মন্ডল ইয়াসিন মোস্তা আহাদুজ্জামান
ঢাকা সিটি কলেজ ২৯ গুল মন্ডল মিলি হুজু রাউলট উল্ল দলে কলকাতা

UCC থেকে

১ম ৬ষ্ঠ ৫ম ৪ম

তাৎক্ষণিক উপস্থিত ১ম মেধাস্থানসহ কয়েকজনকে
ফুলেল গুডেছা দিচ্ছেন UCC গ্রুপের পরিচালকবৃন্দ।

গ-ইউনিটে চাক্ষুশাণ্ডদের সুবর্ণনার তারিখ পরে জানানো হবে।
খ-ইউনিটে চাক্ষুশাণ্ডদের সংবর্ধনা ৪ জানুয়ারি সুবহার অনুষ্ঠিত হবে।

Reception to martyrs' wives today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two pro-liberation youth bodies, Amra Muktiyoddhar Santan and Projonmo '71, will give a joint reception to 22 wives of the martyred freedom fighters today marking the 40 years of liberation.

The programme will be held at Public Library Seminar Hall in the city at 11:00am.

The prime minister's Health and Family Planning Adviser Prof Dr Syed Modasser Ali will address the reception as the chief guest.

The 22 wives are Hena Kadir (posthumous), Nurjahan Shiraji, Shamoli Nasrin Chowdhury, Rowshan Aziz, Jesmin Alam, Salma Haque, Anwara Begum, Abeda Khatun, Asia Khatun, Nilufar Khanam, Meshrunnahar, Jebunnessa Begum, Anwara Begum, Rashida Begum, Amena Begum, Alea Begum, Shaheda Akhtar, Manwara Khatun, Aleya Begum, Ayesha Khatun, Rahima Khatun and Nurjahan Begum.

DHAKA TODAY

Seminar
The Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies will organise a seminar. Venue: Bids conference room, E-17, Agargaon, Time: 10:30am.

Memorial meeting
Coalition of Local NGOs, Bangladesh will hold a memorial meeting. Venue: Jatiya Press Club, Time: 11:00am.

Discussion
Bangladesh Institute of Law and International Affairs will hold a discussion. Venue: Cirdap auditorium, Time: 10:00am.

Reception
Rajshahi Zila Samity will hold a reception. Venue: Biam Foundation, New Eskaton, Time: 2:30pm.

Rally
Bangladesh Paribesh Andolon will hold a rally. Venue: Before Jatiya Press Club, Time: 10:30am.

Discussion
Bangladesh Sammilito Peshajibi Parishad will hold a discussion. Venue: Jatiya Press Club, Time: 2:00pm.

Seminar
Bangladesh Institute of Planners will hold a seminar. Venue: Bip auditorium, 13/A, Bir Uttam C R Dutta Road, Time: 11:00am.

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