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## Suranjit shown the door

Good step, but not enough

**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
Nearly five months into his taking over as railway minister, Suranjit Sengupta resigned yesterday on the prime minister's instructions the night before, following the midnight recovery of Tk 70 lakh from the microbus of his close aide.  
The money had allegedly been collected as bribe from railway job seekers.  
"At the meeting with the prime minister on Sunday night, I told her that I wanted to relieve myself of the charge of the railway ministry, and she happily accepted it," a pale-looking Suranjit told a press briefing at the Rail Bhaban yesterday afternoon.  
He said he had decided to step down taking full responsibility for scandal surrounding the cash haul. "As a minister, I'm responsible for all good and bad things in my ministry."  
Only a couple of days ago, he had said he would not quit. Since the beginning of the cash haul affair



**THE EXIT:** Suranjit leaves the rail minister's office after announcing resignation. PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

**Long sail, steep fall**  
RASHIDUL HASAN  
A 55-year political career of Suranjit Sengupta has fallen flat on its face in the railway-gate scandal that abruptly ended

**React leading citizens; BNP finds entire govt corrupt**  
**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
Eminent personalities and civil society members yesterday welcomed Suranjit Sengupta's decision to step down as railway minister, and said his resignation would help a fair probe into the Tk 70 lakh scandal.  
They also demanded that the people involved in the corruption must be brought to book.  
Meanwhile, the main opposition BNP said Suranjit's resignation has proved that the government is corrupt and it should quit power immediately.  
Mizanur Rahman, chairman of National Human Rights Commission, said, "He [Suranjit] took a bold step no matter whether he resigned spontaneously or on instructions of the prime minister."  
He was speaking at a book launch organised by Ain O

**Who's driver? Where's he?**  
**STAR REPORT**  
The whereabouts of the driver of Suranjit Sengupta's assistant personal secretary remain a mystery since he drove the microbus into the BGB headquarters on April 9 night and blew the whistle about "bribe money" being carted.

## 3-month stay on DCC polls

**HC asks EC to complete voter list update, settle other legal issues**  
**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
The High Court yesterday stayed holding polls to the bifurcated Dhaka city corporations for three months as the procedure required for the elections has not been completed.  
The DCC polls were scheduled for May 24 as announced by the Election Commission on April 9.  
In response to a writ petition, the court ruled that the EC must update the voter lists of the DCC (North and

## Ministers go on positive count

**HASAN JAHID TUSHER**  
Suranjit Sengupta has retained his dignity as well as that of other politicians and the government by stepping down as railway minister, said his former colleagues in the council of ministers yesterday.  
His departure, which follows the recovery of Tk 70 lakh from the vehicle of his close aide, has boosted Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's image, they said.  
The government stance on corruption will now be very clear to the people, they added, expressing sympathy for Suranjit, who served as railway minister for 140 days.  
The ministers said the resignation of this veteran

**None resigned voluntarily**  
**STAR REPORT**  
Since the restoration of democracy in 1991, nine ministers, including Suranjit Sengupta, have so far resigned following scandals of corruption, irregularities and political conflicts.  
During BNP's first

## PADMA BRIDGE PROJECT Cabinet sees debate on financing

**HASAN JAHID TUSHER**  
The cabinet yesterday engaged in a friendly debate on whether the government was heading towards the right direction by signing a memorandum of understanding with Malaysia on Padma bridge funding six days ago.  
Most of the ministers supported the move while Finance Minister AMA Muhith and a few ministers opposed it and spoke in favour of the World Bank

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**ACC to probe Soumen's properties**  
**STAFF CORRESPONDENT**  
The Anti-Corruption Commission decided to investigate properties and income sources of Soumen Sengupta, son of Suranjit Sengupta who resigned yesterday as railway minister following a cash haul involving his APS and two top railway officials.  
A notice will be served on Soumen today, asking him to give details of his properties and income sources, ACC Chairman Ghulam Rahman told The Daily Star. The ACC

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