



Strange expenditure

Foreign office spends home's Tk 3,786cr earned from passport, visa fees

PARTHA PRATIM BHATTACHARJEE

The foreign ministry owes the home ministry Tk 3,786 crore which Bangladesh embassies and missions collected in passport and visa processing fees. The dues have accumulated over 16 years, and now the home ministry has asked the finance ministry to make the foreign ministry pay up.

Moreover, the home ministry learnt that some embassies were renewing machine readable passports (MRP) by hand, charging citizens \$200, violating the passport issuance policy that says MRPs could only be reissued, not renewed.

The home ministry has no clue as to where the money received from MRP "renewal" went.

It has recently sent a "working paper" to the finance secretary for holding a meeting

with the foreign ministry to settle the issues.

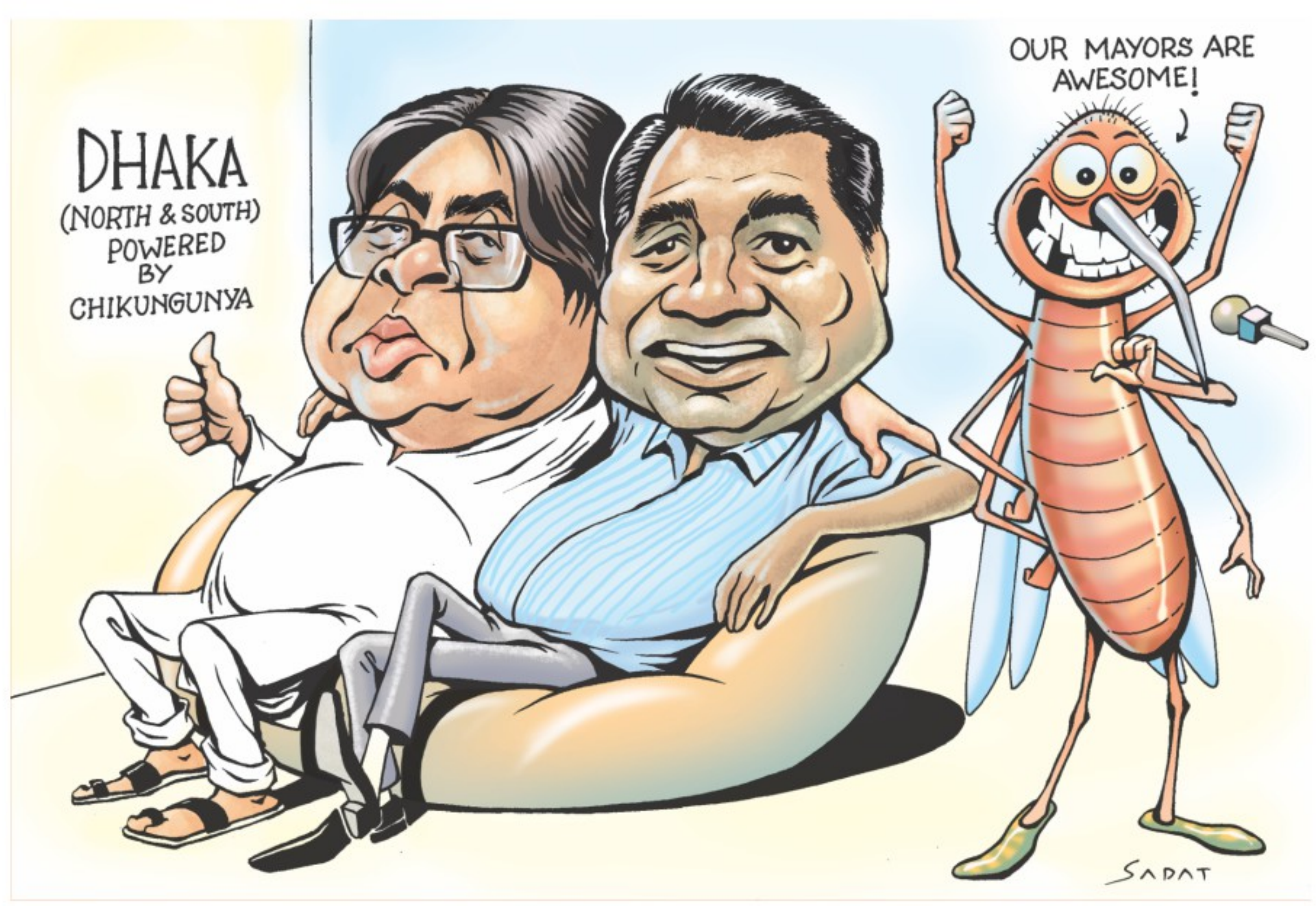
The Daily Star has obtained a copy of the "working paper".

According to the document, the foreign ministry owed home ministry over Tk 1,586 crore for hand-written passports delivered between 2000 and 2016. During this period, Bangladesh embassies and missions distributed over 30 lakh hand-written passports.

The home ministry was supposed to get about Tk 2,052 crore the foreign ministry collected for Machine Readable Passports (MRP) between 2010 and 2016. During this period, Bangladeshi missions abroad delivered nearly 30 lakh MRPs.

It was also to get the Tk 148 crore the foreign ministry received in Machine Readable Visa (MRV) fees between 2012 and 2016, the working paper claimed.

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AEDES ALARM Govt goes for 'symbolic' awareness campaign

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of a chikungunya outbreak, the health and family welfare ministry in association with the two Dhaka city corporations organised an awareness campaign on the viral disease yesterday.

During the five-hour campaign from 9:00am, several hundred students and teachers from dental, medical colleges and health technology institutes raised awareness on the cause and prevention of chikungunya among people in 92 wards

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Struck by twin tragedy

HASAN JAHD TUSHER and MINHAJ UDDIN, from Rangamati

In a matter of 10 days, Bikram Chakma, 47, has lost two homes and all of his belongings.

After his ancestral home, where he lived with his father, was gutted in an arson attack by Bangalee settlers earlier this month, he took refuge in a

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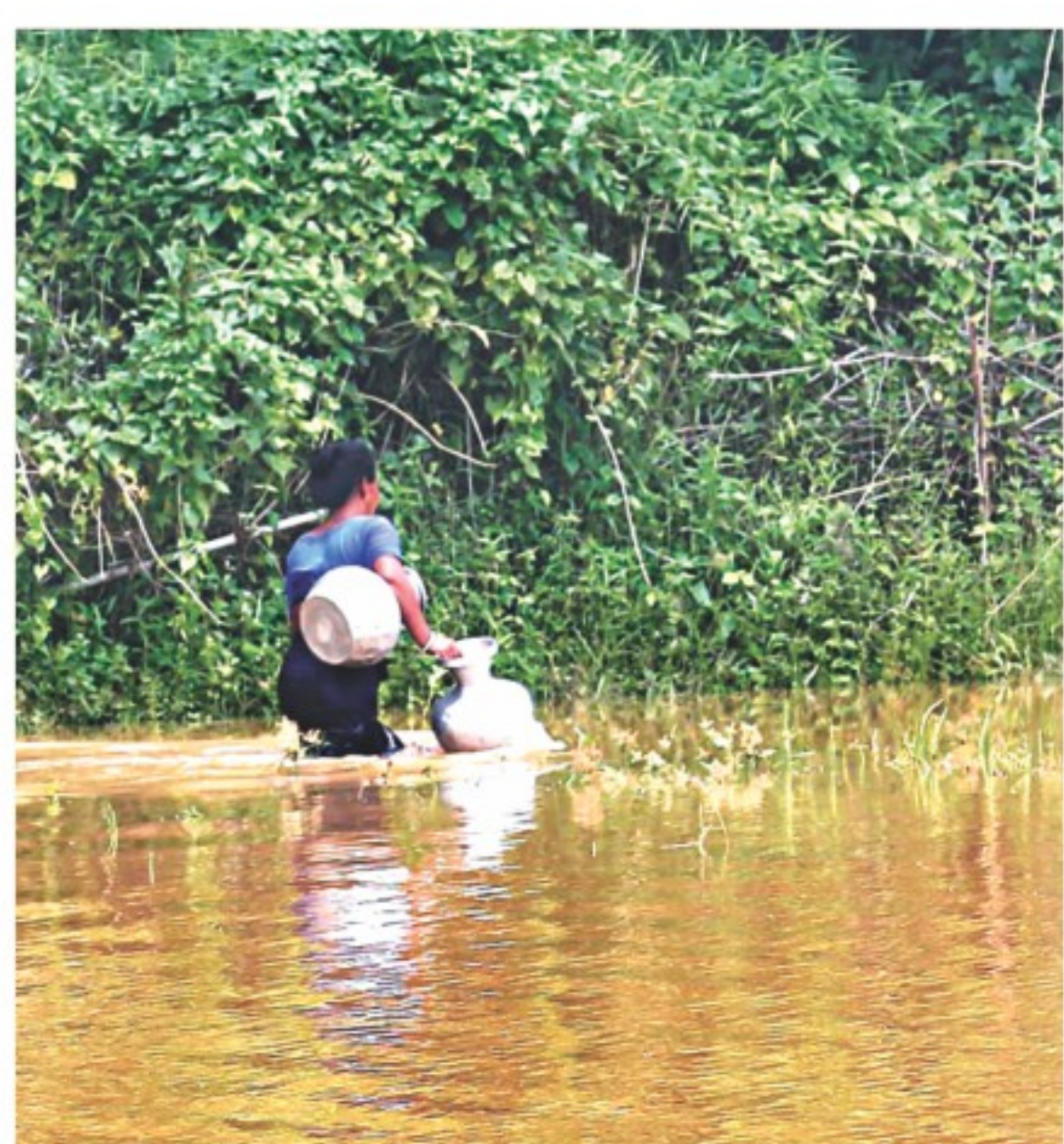


PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

In almost waist-deep water, a woman travels to a remote place to fetch drinking water in Rangamati yesterday as most tube wells there were submerged.

Supplies, prices not normal yet

Essentials get costlier in Rangamati as road transport still not smooth

HASAN JAHD TUSHER, MINHAJ UDDIN and ANVIL CHAKMA, from Rangamati

Four days after deadly landslides hit Rangamati killing at least 114 people, the supply of essentials, including food, was yet to become normal yesterday.

Most of the daily essentials were still selling at higher prices despite market monitoring by the district administration. However, the prices were lower than they were in previous three days.

These correspondents yesterday visited all three kitchen markets in the town -- Banarupa, Debasishnagar and New Market -- where potatoes were selling at around Tk 40 a kg. The price, which was earlier Tk 20-25, rose to Tk 70 on Friday and Thursday.

Similarly, green chillies were selling at Tk 160 a kg, which

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Indo-Pak final after 10 years



AGENCIES, London

India are favourites to retain the Champions Trophy on Sunday but they would probably have preferred to face different opponents than arch-rivals Pakistan in what is sure to be a highly-charged final.

The neighbouring countries have moved on from years of political conflicts but emotions will run high as millions of supporters

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NEWS ANALYSIS

'Best' bank put in a sticky stew

INAM AHMED and SHAKHAWAT LITON

By all indicators it was deemed to be the best performing bank in Bangladesh, posting a profit of Tk 2,300 crore last year, leaving any other private bank far behind.

However, that could not rid the bank of its ill repute—that it was a de facto bank of Jamaat-e-Islami, the Islamist bank. Its top man was Abu Naser Md Abdus Zaher, Jamaat's key man who fled the country when the war crimes trial got momentum, and its main funder was war criminal Mir Qasem Ali, who had to walk the gallows for his crimes in 1971.

There were allegations raised in the US Senate that an Islamic terrorist, Abdur Rahman, had an account with the bank, a claim that the bank later refuted.

Its political façade notwithstanding, the bank worked as a good financial intermediary.

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