

Fake ‘secretary’ embezzles millions

DB arrests man who misrepresented himself as additional secy to fraud people

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

He used to pose as an additional secretary of an important ministry, rode a luxurious car with the ministry’s sticker and frequented the secretariat with fake ID to lobby for works in government projects, bank loans and jobs.

According to law enforcers’ claims, having two offices at the capital’s Gulshan and Karwan Bazar, the fraudulent activities of Abdul Kader, a tenth-grade dropout, have been ongoing for 14 years, until he was arrested by the detective branch (DB) of police on Thursday.

At a press briefing at Dhaka Metropolitan Police’s Media Centre yesterday, DB chief AKM Hafeez Akhter said, “Kader used to say that he has a consortium and business relations with 33 secretaries and top officials.”

He also introduced himself as a legal adviser of business magnate Moosa Bin Shamsheer and former Jubo League leader GK Shamim. He has fooled many established people, he said.

He added that Kader has embezzled crores of taka through getting large bank loans and works in government projects under the false identity.

Gulshan DB police, in collaboration

with an intelligence agency, carried out a drive and arrested four people, including Kader, from Karwan Bazar, Mirpur and Gulshan areas, according to DB sources.

The other arrestees are Kader’s wife Sharmin Chowdhury and his office staffers Shahidul Alam and Anisur Rahman.

A foreign pistol and different types of genuine and fake documents were seized from Kader’s office.

DB said Kader carried out fraudulent activities using names of different companies like Dhaka Trade Corporation, Jamider Trading, Sameen Enterprise, Chowdhury Group, Human Improvement Foundation, Satota Properties, Dana Logistics and Dana Motors.

He started doing all this sometime between 2004 and 2006 through the government project “Ekti Bari, Ekti Khamar”. During this period, his organisation Human Improvement Foundation embezzled crores of taka from general people.

“Kader used to tell sub-contractors that he had received works for different government projects and showed fake documents to convince them. He would then sell fake work orders to the contractors. Besides, he also took money for job recruitment,” said the DB official.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

Friends, comrades and well-wishers in Bangladesh observed a minute of silence and bid an emotional farewell to South Asian feminist activist Kamla Bhasin, who passed away on September 25, through music, poetry and dance at Rabindra Sarobar in Dhaka yesterday. They shared their memories of love, laughter and activism with Kamla, who worked alongside and inspired multiple generations of feminists in the country.

Inset, Khushi Kabir and Fawzia Khondker, two of her close friends, and core committee members of Sangat Bangladesh -- which organised the event -- pay their homage.

PABNA MENTAL HOSPITAL

Resources fall short for rehabilitation

Authorities trying to expand occupational therapy, which only 25-30 patients can currently avail

AHMED HUMAYUN KABIR TOPLU, Pabna

Russel Hossain has been afflicted with mental health issues for a long time. The Dhulauri village native -- under Chatmohar upazila -- was admitted to Pabna Mental Hospital several times, to be released upon temporary recovery and admitted back again.

He is currently staying at the occupational therapy centre of the hospital. His days pass by playing cricket, table tennis, and weaving clothes.

“Nobody in my family supports me. Society has made me into an outcast,” Russell told this correspondent recently. “But here, I get to work as a handicraft artist, and there are opportunities to make some money too.”

Alok Kumar Das, who is in charge of the occupational therapy centre, said, “After recovering through medical and psychiatric treatment, the patients are brought here for occupational therapy, to help with their rehabilitation.”

“We train them on handicraft, tailoring and other vocations, so that they can earn a living once they return home. A few of them are also given computer training,” he added.

But due to a lack of resources, the hospital cannot afford to provide these essential facilities to all its patients.

Of the total admitted to the 500-bed health facility, only some 25 to 30 patients get the opportunity to access the facilities of the occupational therapy centre. “We are unable to accommodate more patients in the cane work and weaving centre, due to shortage of space and human resources,” Alok confessed.

RESOURCE ISSUES

Occupational therapy centre lacks space to accommodate patients

18 out of 31 posts for physicians vacant

445 staffers working, but there are 643 designated posts

Playground, park barely usable for lack of maintenance

It’s a must to remove social stigma surrounding mental health. If a patient gets support from the family and society after returning home, they tend to recover faster.

DR MASUD RANA SARKAR
RESIDENTIAL PSYCHIATRIST AT PABNA
MENTAL HOSPITAL

“But we understand how important this could be for some of the patients.”

Talking to this correspondent, hospital director Abul Bashar Md Asaduzzaman said, “Out of 31 allotted posts for doctors, 18 remain vacant, meaning we’re operating our 500-bed hospital with only 13 physicians. Besides, there are a lot of outdoor patients, who rely on these few doctors too.”

Beyond just doctors, the hospital is not well-staffed in general. Out of its 643 posts, 198 are vacant, the official informed.

However, he claimed that they’re

trying their best to overcome the crises.

“We have a plan to expand the computer training centre and introduce more facilities so that we can train more patients and prepare them for the world outside,” said Dr Bashar.

Amidst all this, a total of 4.35 lakh patients have taken treatment from the outdoor department in the last 10 years.

A total of 16,171 patients were admitted to the oldest specialised mental health hospital in the country during this time, although this includes many cases of re-admission, hospital sources said.

Besides rehabilitation training, patients are also supposed to get the opportunity to play indoor and outdoor games and spend time at the hospital’s park. But due to lack of maintenance, the playground and park are barely usable.

“I used to feel better when we could come out to play,” said Md Salahuddin, a patient at the facility. “Even though the playground is not in any condition to play anymore, we still come here to spend time together. That’s how much we like the place.”

Asked, occupational therapy centre in-charge Alok said, “Maintenance workers often clean the ground, but it’s done in such long intervals that it soon becomes unusable again.”

Besides medical treatment, patients need psychiatric treatment and social support as well, according to Dr Masud Rana Sarkar, residential psychiatrist of the Pabna mental hospital.

“Engaging in multiple activities can help patients with their recovery,” Dr Masud said.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 6



Through the hospital’s occupational therapy centre, selected patients get to learn handicraft, tailoring and other vocations. But the centre, playground and park need to be expanded and maintained, so all patients can take part in recreational activities.

PHOTO: STAR

SC to get new judges soon

Says law minister over reduction of case backlog

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government is planning to appoint some new judges to the Appellate and High Court Divisions of the Supreme Court soon in order to reduce the backlogs of pending cases.

“Some new judges will be appointed to the High Court Division and few judges from the High Court Division will be elevated to the Appellate Division soon for increasing the rate of case disposal,” Law Minister Anisul Huq told The Daily Star on Friday.

“I have said earlier that appointment of judges is a continuous process. When the posts of judges fall vacant, new judges are appointed,” he said.

The law minister said he will not disclose at this moment when and how many judges will be appointed to the Appellate and High Court Divisions which are now experiencing around five lakh pending cases.

According to sources at the SC, discussions are going on in the policy making authorities for appointing 12 judges to the HC



	DIVISIONS	JUDGES	PENDING CASES
Appellate	5	15,225	
High Court	91	4,52,963	

SOURCE: **LAW LAB, AS OF DEC 31, 2020**

Division.

Of the 12, four may be picked from the SC bar association, four from the lower courts and another four from the attorney general’s office.

Besides, three judges from the HC division may be promoted to the Appellate Division. The numbers may be increased at the final stage.

The crisis of judges increased the case backlogs at the courts of the country in the last few years and the pandemic restrictions have turned the situation graver, causing immense sufferings to the justice seekers.

There are five judges including the chief justice in the Appellate Division (AD) and 91 in the HC division now.

The chief justice will retire on December 31 this year.

But the number of cases

pending with the AD is 15,225 while it was 4,52,963 with the HC till December 31 last year, according to a study report of Law Lab, a law-chamber that conducts research on legal and constitutional issues.

The president gave the last appointment on September 2, 2020 when two HC judges -- Justice Tariq ul Hakim and Justice Obaidul Hassan -- were promoted to the Appellate Division.

However, Justice Tariq retired 12 days after his promotion.

In 1974, the AD had five judges and the number of the HC judges was 12. The pending cases in the AD and HC at that time were 4,094 and 28,186 respectively.

On July 9, 2009, the then president raised the number of judges at the Appellate Division from seven to 11 prior to disposing of some important cases.

Larger platform for movement in offing

Says Khandaker Mosharraf

UNB, Dhaka

BNP senior leader Khandaker Mosharraf yesterday hinted that their party has been trying to float a larger platform of opposition parties to wage a strong movement for ousting the current government.

“We’ll create a greater united platform on one-point demand to restore democracy by ousting the current government through a strong movement,” he said.

Speaking at a discussion, the BNP leader said their one-point demand is the restoration of democracy and people’s voting rights and the release of Khaleda Zia.

“Our only goal is to protect the rights and interests of the people of this country.”

Jatiya Party (Kazi Zafar), one of the components of the BNP-led 20-party alliance, arranged the programme at Jatiya Press Club in memory of its late joint secretary general Mohsin Sarker.



SEE PAGE 4 COL 3

BNP joining UP polls in guise

Says Quader

BSS, Dhaka

Awami League General Secretary Obaidul Quader yesterday said BNP is taking part in the union parishad (UP) elections using the identity of independent candidates.

“If you [BNP] have the courage, take part in the polls with your party symbol,” he said while speaking at a regular press briefing at his official residence in the capital.

Quader, also the road transport and bridges minister, said people are happy with the development and achievements of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina’s government and that is why they won’t respond to BNP’s call for movement.

BNP’s daydreaming of waging movement on a single-point demand for neutral polls-time government will also turn into a nightmare very soon, he said.

Pointing to BNP, he said there is no scope to go beyond the constitution for the next general elections.



SEE PAGE 4 COL 2

DENGUE UPDATE



Death toll 73

4 died in Oct so far

23 in Sept, 34 in Aug, 12 in July

224 more hospitalised yesterday

Total infected 19,918

SOURCE: DGHS

DU ‘Cha’ unit admission test held

DU CORRESPONDENT

Admission test of Dhaka University’s “Cha” unit under the Fine Arts Faculty for the 2020-21 academic session was held yesterday morning in eight divisional cities across the country.

The test began at 11am and continued for half an hour.

Around 15,496 admission seekers took the exam while as many as 115 candidates are fighting for a single seat. There are 135 seats under the unit.

The venues outside Dhaka were Chittagong University, Rajshahi University, Khulna University, Bangladesh Agricultural University in Mymensingh, Shahjalal University of Science and Technology in Sylhet, Barisal University, and Begum Rokeya University in Rangpur.

The exam for “Ga” unit will be held on

ADMISSION FOR 2020-21

15,496 vied for 135 “Cha” unit seats

“Ga” unit exam on Oct 22

“Gha” unit exam on Oct 23

October 22, while the “Gha” unit test is slated to be held on October 23.

From first October, DU began its admission tests. A total of 3,24,340 students have applied for the test against the total 7,148 seats under five units.

For the first time in its 100-year history, Dhaka University decided to hold its admission test across all eight divisions, including the capital. DU authorities said it was done to reduce the stress and cost of travelling for examinees, as well as to minimise health safety concerns of the pandemic.

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