

CAP 10 OF THE STEEL INDUSTRY

BSRM WINS THE BEST BRAND AWARD FOR THE 10TH TIME IN A ROW

COUNTRY'S NO. 1 STEEL EXPORT

BSRM
building a safer nation

ROOPPUR NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Proud Construction Partner

SHAH CEMENT

ACC files 13 cases against PK Halder

Probe finds he and 28 others embezzled Tk 523cr of FAS Finance

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has filed 13 cases against 29 people, including fugitive PK Halder, for embezzling about Tk 523 crore of FAS Finance and Investment.



Meanwhile, a Dhaka court approved a three-day remand prayer for former managing director of FAS Finance Russell Shahriar in connection with the 13 cases filed.

Gulshan Anwar Prodhan, the commission's deputy director and investigation officer of the cases, arrested Russell from Mohammadpur in the capital on Tuesday afternoon.

The commission has been investigating the misappropriation of about Tk 1,300 crore from FAS

The ACC has been investigating the misappropriation of about Tk 1,300 crore from FAS Finance and so far found evidence of embezzlement of Tk 523 crore.

Finance and so far found evidence of embezzlement of Tk 523 crore.

"The money was embezzled in the form of loans," said ACC sources.

The loans were given to 13 organisations -- A&B Trading (Tk 44 crore), Nature Enterprize (Tk 45 crore), Nutrical (Tk 30 crore), SA Enterprize (Tk 42 crore), Sukhadha (Tk 40 crore), MTB Marine (Tk 40 crore), HAL International (Tk 45 crore), Sandeep Corporation (Tk 40 crore), Diya Shipping (Tk 44 crore), Moon Enterprize (Tk 35 crore), Borno (Tk 38 crore), RB (Tk 40 crore) and Marine Trust (Tk 40 crore).

The cases were filed against owners and directors of these organisations, as well as officials of FAS Finance and Investment.

The Daily Star obtained a copy of the FIR of a case filed against 13 people for the misappropriation of Tk 44 crore from FAS.

Russell Shahriar, PK Halder, A&B proprietor Shuvra Rani Ghosh, FAS Finance Chairman Siddiqui Rahman, Vice-Chairman Jahangir Alam, directors MA Hafiz, Abul Shahjahan, Dr Uddab Mallik, Arun Kumar Kundu, Anjan Kumar Roy, Mostain Billah, Uzzal Kumar Nandi and Satya Gopal Poddar are accused in the case.

According to the case statement, Shuvra applied for a Tk 44 crore loan to increase the capital of her firm on March 1, 2015.

The IO also found that A&B is a fictitious firm and Shuvra misappropriated the money without even investing it in business.

Without scrutiny, the then managing director and CEO of FAS Finance and Investment Russel approved the application and forwarded it for final approval at the 165th board meeting of the non-banking finance institution.

On March 4, the loan was approved. Of the money, about Tk 32.36 crore was transferred to Reliance Finance, of which Prashanta Kumar (PK) Halder was managing director, and the rest to different accounts of different private banks of A&B trading.

Initially, A&B took the loan against a 5-katha land in Uttara Sector-13 in the capital. Later, it applied for the renewal of the loan and proposed another 157 decimal as collateral.

The ACC found that PK Halder was the owner of the 157 decimal land and he proposed it as the collateral on behalf of A&B Trading.



A worker risking his life while working on a multistorey under-construction building in the capital's Jigatola area. The authorities concerned remain oblivious to the dire consequences of the lack of safety measures. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

DDT stored for 37yrs finally being cleared

Substance weighs 500 tonnes; removal cost Tk 70.1cr

MOHAMMAD SUMAN, Ctg

An expert team yesterday started the process of shipping 500 tonnes of Dichloro-Diphenyl-Trichloroethane, a banned toxic pesticide, to France for destruction.

The pesticide had been stored at the Chattogram Government Medical Subdepot warehouse for 37 years.

The DDT, a persistent organic pollutant, which is extremely harmful to the environment and human health, was imported from Pakistan in 1985 for Tk 3.59 crore to control malaria in the country.

When a lab report said the pesticide was substandard, the Bangladesh government asked the Pakistani supplier -- Exchange International Limited -- to take back the pesticide, but it did not happen, according to the commerce ministry documents.

The issue was moved before a Pakistan court but nothing fruitful happened, say the documents. Bangladesh banned the use of DDT in 1989.

Food and Agriculture Organisation coordinate the disposal activity which needs around Tk 70.09 crore.

Global Environment Facility is bearing the cost. While visiting the subdepot in Agrabad yesterday, a 15-member team of Polyeco SA, a Greek company assigned to destroy the pesticide, was seen assessing the condition of the powder.

They said it would need four to five weeks to complete packing of the pesticide.

It will be destroyed at a plant in France following the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants. Bangladesh has been a signatory to the Stockholm Convention on removal of POPs since 2001, sources said.

Farid Ahmed, national project director of Pesticide Risk Reduction in Bangladesh, told The Daily Star, "Exposure to DDT can cause serious health problems, including certain cancers, birth defects, dysfunctional immune and reproductive systems and greater susceptibility to disease."

"The ship will use ports of 12 countries before reaching France from Chattogram port and approvals from the countries are mandatory for carrying the harmful material. Approvals from Morocco and Malaysia have not been received yet."

"We are trying through the foreign affairs

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1



LANGUAGE MOVEMENT IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Sainik's role

MOHAMMAD ABDUL GAFUR

In 1952, I was the editor of Sainik. I used to live at 19, Azimpur with Mr [Principal Abul] Kashem. I was present at the meeting of the All-party State Language Action Committee in Nawabpur [February 20, 1952]. The meeting decided not to violate section 144.

But in the face of students' demands it was concluded that violation of section 144 would depend on the role of students in the students' meeting at Amtala next day. If the decision of the working council is not accepted there, the council will be abolished naturally.

I was probably in Sainik's office at the time of the shooting. We published a special issue commemorating the language martyrs. Thousands of copies of the issue were sold in Dhaka within a very short time.

Around 3:00am, [February 23] police surrounded our magazine office. We were aware of such a move. Mr Kashem's wife, without opening the door, kept the police distracted by arguing with them about their activities and gave us enough time to escape safely.

We rushed through the graveyard and forest of Sheikh Saheb Bazar and tried to take shelter in some houses. But no one opened the door out of fear. As a result, Mr Kashem and I spent the night

SEE PAGE 4 COL 3



An artisan applying starch on threads to weave cloth in Rohitpur Ramer Kanda village of Keraniganj yesterday. Earlier, the village would be home to around 200-300 weavers. Now, he is the only one that remains to keep the handicraft alive there.

PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN

College girl 'abducted for 4 days, gang-raped'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A teenager was abducted, held hostage for four days and gang-raped by two youths in the capital's Lalbagh, police said.

The 15-year-old college student was admitted to Dhaka Medical College Hospital yesterday. She was stated to be in critical condition, said Inspector Bacchu Miah, in-charge of the police outpost at Dhaka Medical College Hospital.

She told police that locals Shuvo and Alamin ambushed her in Lalbagh on Saturday morning when she was on her way to a private teacher. She lost consciousness after they

SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

COVID INOCULATION No more first dose after Feb 26 DGHS says no docs needed for jabs until then

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Citizens eligible to receive Covid-19 vaccines would be able to get their first jabs without any registration or documents in any centre across the country from now on.

The health officials came up with the announcement a day after Prof Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam, director general of the health directorate, on Tuesday announced that the yearlong first dose vaccination campaign will be ended through a special campaign on February 26.

"We have already directed all permanent vaccination centres to administer the first dose to everyone who will come without a birth registration certificate or national identity card," Dr Shamsul Haque, member secretary of the National Covid-19 Vaccine Management Taskforce at the DGHS, said in an online briefing yesterday.

SEE PAGE 4 COL 1