



In the Bangabandhu Tunnel, 76% of rods were supplied by BSRM



BIMAN RECRUITMENT TEST

Probe finds high officials' link to question leak

ZYMA ISLAM and RASHIDUL HASAN

On 21 October 2022, Biman Bangladesh was to hold a recruitment exam for 10 posts for electricians, mechanics, welders, painters, operators and tailors. Around two hours before the exam, the recruitment process was suspended -- the question paper had been leaked.

Records indicate the leak was not a spur of the moment decision by any lower-level official, but may have been an elaborate plot executed over several months by members of Biman top brass.

A series of seemingly coincidental, dubious transfers and personnel placements took place involving at least three members of the committee responsible for preparing the question papers, to put the right people at the right place at the right time.

One of them is Major Taiz Ibne Anowar, general manager of the ground service equipment department and deputy general manager of the security department. He was a member of the committee formed to prepare the question paper.

Both Taiz and Biman's Managing Director Zahid Hussain rejected they had any link with the leak.

GOES TO THE TOP

Biman motor transport operators Jahangir Alam, Md Masud and Mahbub Ali -- who have since been arrested over the leak -- named Taiz as a culprit in their confessional statements.

Masud, the major's driver, said in his confession that Taiz himself handed him a set of question papers between 3:00pm and 4:00pm on October 20, the day before the recruitment test.

"Two days before the exam, around 5:00pm to 6:00pm on October 19, 2022, the Major's driver Masud called me to tell me that he got the questions from major sir and asked me to take it from him the next day. On October 20, around 12:00pm to 1:00pm, I received a phone call from Masud. Masud asked me to meet him at his house, and I went to his house in Dolipara. He had a printer and he printed two copies of the question paper," said Mahbub Ali, driver of Biman's MD Zahid Hussain, in his confessional statement.

He then took the question paper from Masud, under the condition that he would have to give him Tk 1 lakh in exchange.

"I went to see him that night in front of his house. He told me to go in front of major sir's house. Around midnight, the major came downstairs and engaged in an altercation with his driver, Masud. Major 'sir' saw me and ... Masud introduced me as MD sir's operator," Mahbub added.

"Major sir asked his driver to show him the WhatsApp message with the image of the question paper, and matched it with a hard copy in his bag," he described.

Mahbub gave Masud Tk 20,000, promising the rest later.

Jahangir in his confession said he photocopied a set of the question

BIMAN PROBE REPORT AT A GLANCE

- Probe points finger at Biman GM Taiz
- It didn't investigate or question Biman MD
- Probe body had to report to MD on its investigation
- Taiz had printed copies of question papers for review
- The report was submitted to the civil aviation ministry recently



PHOTO: NAIMUR RAHMAN

An inside view of the two-tube Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Tunnel under the Karnaphuli river in Chattogram, which is expected to be partially opened to traffic by the end of January. Bangladesh Bridge Authority is celebrating the completion of the tunnel's south tube today. The photo was taken yesterday.

Another dream coming true

Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Tunnel under the Karnaphuli set to open partially in January next

MOHAMMAD SUMAN

The construction of the country's first under-river tunnel has reached a major milestone after the completion of a tube, a success Bangladesh Bridge Authority will celebrate today with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina joining the programme virtually.

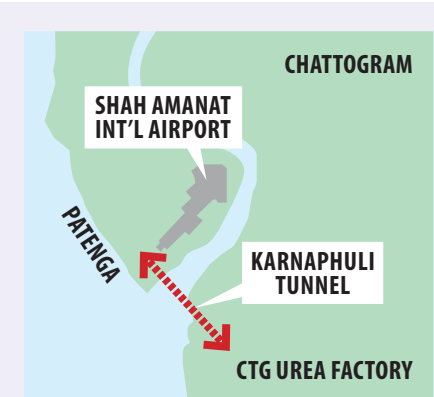
Named after Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the two-tube tunnel under the Karnaphuli river will be partially opened to vehicular movement by January next year after the end of some electrical and mechanical works, officials said.

The overall progress of the country's second dream scheme after the Padma Bridge now stands at 95 percent and it is expected to be fully completed by the end of December 2023.

Visiting the tunnel area yesterday, PM's Principal Secretary Ahmad Kaikaus said, "Tomorrow, we will celebrate the completion of the tunnel's south tube. However, the tunnel will be partially opened to traffic by the end of January 2023."

He added, "The tunnel will reduce the distance between Cox's Bazar and Chattogram by 40km. In addition to radical changes in the communication system, the tunnel will significantly reduce traffic congestion on both sides of the river. It will also create a huge opportunity for increased economic activities on both sides of the river."

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Tunnel length	3.32km
Number of lanes	4
Project cost	Tk 10,374cr
Work progress	95%
To be complete	Dec 2023

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DESERT FEST

Crunch time closing in



KHALID HOSSAIN

Based on the first of three rounds of group-stage games, it is fair to conclude that football fans have been treated to a variety of scrumptious dishes -- a platter that is expected from the Greatest Show on Earth.

41 goals in 16 matches, at an average of around 2.6, it was fitting that the best was saved for the last as Richarlison's postcard-esque strike against Serbia was enough of a glimpse to why Brazil were labelled as the leading candidate to clinch the Hexa.

Casemiro almost pulled off a scorcher from the distance and, had that gone in, it would have been one of the goal-of-the-

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Enner Valencia (C) celebrates with teammates after scoring Ecuador's equaliser against Netherlands during in 1-1 draw at the Khalifa International Stadium in Doha yesterday. Valencia, currently the leading scorer of the World Cup with three goals, was later stretchered off for injury. PHOTO: AFP



Qatar crash out, Iran stay alive

AFP, Doha

Cody Gakpo scored again at the World Cup but the Netherlands missed the chance to secure a place in the last 16 on Friday as they were held to a 1-1 draw by a battling Ecuador, a result which eliminated host nation Qatar.

Gakpo, the gangly PSV Eindhoven forward who has been strongly linked with a move to Manchester United, put the Netherlands in front with a superb strike in the sixth minute at the Khalifa International Stadium.

Yet, with a large and vociferous support behind them, Ecuador fought back with such ferocity that the Dutch were rattled, and they deserved the equaliser when it came through Enner Valencia four minutes after half-time.

It was Ecuador captain Valencia's third goal of the World Cup already after his brace in his country's opening win over Qatar.

And one consequence of this result is that the host nation, already beaten twice, are the first team to be eliminated from their own World Cup.

In contrast three-time beaten finalists the Netherlands are not quite through to the next round, with one point separating them, Ecuador and Senegal, who defeated Qatar 3-1 earlier.

Ecuador and Senegal meet in the last round of Group A matches next Tuesday, while Louis van Gaal's Dutch side meet the hosts knowing a draw will make certain their place in the knockout phase.

Senegal beat Qatar to leave World Cup hosts on brink of early exit

Meanwhile, goals either side of half-time from Boulaye Dia and Famara Diedhiou gave Senegal the lead before Qatar substitute Mohammed Muntari replied in the 78th minute to set up a dramatic finale.

Senegal substitute Bamba Dieng scored six minutes later to put the result beyond doubt and lift the African champions, who opened with a 2-0 loss to the Netherlands, right back into contention in Group A.

Qatar had made a nervy start to the tournament in a 2-0 defeat to Ecuador and they again looked tentative against Senegal.

Qatar spent most of the opening 45 minutes on the back foot but a rare break forward saw Akram Afif

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