



IMPORT OF BTI DNCC sues 3 top Marshal officials for fraudulence

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Dhaka North City Corporation yesterday sued four people, including three top officials of Marshal Agrovet Chemical Industries Ltd, on charge of forgery in importing BTI pesticide.

They are Marshal Agrovet Chairman Mohammad Ali, Managing Director Md Alauddin, Executive Director Nasir Uddin Ahmed, and one Li Qiyang.

Rahat Al Foysal, assistant officer of DNCC's store and purchase department, filed the case with Gulshan Police Station, Sub-inspector Mamun Mia, also the duty officer of the police station, told The Daily Star.

According to DNCC officials, the case was lodged as the supplier did not import Bacillus Thuringiensis Israelensis (BTI), a pesticide used for destroying the larvae of Aedes mosquitoes, as per the purchase contract.

Earlier, DNCC blacklisted Marshal Agrovet and cancelled its purchase order with the company for importing BTI

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A portion of Bandarban's Lama Road has collapsed as heavy rains and severe floods caused extensive damages to the main roads and internal roads connecting various upazilas to the district headquarters. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: MONG SING HAI MARMA

It's a crime not to speak out Says HC bench on ill- gotten wealth

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

During a hearing concerning Mohammed Saiful Alam, owner of S Alam Group, a High Court bench yesterday observed that it is a crime not to speak up after seeing everything.

The bench of Justice Md Nazrul Islam Talukder and Justice Khizir Hayat Liza said, "How much money does a person need to survive? How many buildings are required?"

The remarks came during a hearing on a petition lawyer Syed Sayedul Haque Suman submitted to become a party to a suo motu rule passed by the HC on August 6.

On August 4, The Daily Star published an investigative report stating that S Alam has built a business empire in Singapore worth about \$1 billion, although there is no record of him taking any permission from Bangladesh Bank to invest or transfer any funds abroad.

The HC's August 6 rule asked the authorities concerned to probe the allegations against S Alam.

The rule was issued after lawyer Suman brought The Daily Star report to the HC's notice, and moved a prayer for a

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FARIDPUR-BARISHAL HIGHWAY EXPANSION Land acquisition cost likely to skyrocket

TUJIN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

The Roads and Highways Department in October 2018 took up a project to acquire land and move utility lines for turning the Faridpur-Barishal-Patuakhali-Kuakata highway into a dual carriageway, but hardly any progress has been made in five years.

The Tk 1,867.85 crore project to acquire 302.70 acres and move roadside utility lines was supposed to be completed by June 2020. But as of March this year, only 7.54 percent progress has been made. It missed its last deadline in June.

Citing "ground reality", the RHD is now seeking to bump up the project cost by a staggering 223 percent, Tk 6,050.53 crore, and wants time until June 2025 to finish the project, which the Planning Commission has questioned.

This delay might affect turning the 232km highway into a four-lane highway with service lanes.

The Asian Development Bank plans to finance this expansion and it is in its loan pipeline.

The project authority, however, said they have to acquire 558 acres more "due to ground reality" and this is the primary reason for the cost escalation.

This delay might affect turning the 232km highway into a four-lane highway with service lanes.

They also claimed that they have completed almost half the work, not the 7.54 percent mentioned in the documents. They also said that this delay would not affect the highway expansion work.

Faridpur-Patuakhali highway facing growing traffic following the opening of the Padma Bridge last year. Even the Bhanga-Barishal portion saw congestion during the last Eid rush. Delay in starting the expansion work may cause road users to suffer, people who use the road frequently said.

COST ESCALATIONS, DELAY
Most of the recent RHD projects suffered delays largely due to slow land acquisition and relocation of

utility lines. This has prompted the RHD to take up a separate project only for land acquisition and relocating utility lines ahead of the main project in the hope that the road expansion work could start as soon as it is approved.

The Planning Commission raised questions after the RHD sought more money and time. It asked why 184 percent more land is needed to be acquired and why the cost of the acquisition went up by 310 percent when the length of

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ILLEGAL WEALTH Shahed jailed for three years

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday sentenced Mohammad Shahed Karim, chairman of Regent Group, to three years imprisonment in a case filed for acquiring illegal wealth worth Tk 1.69 crore.

Judge Prodig Kumar Roy of Dhaka Special Judge's Court 7 handed down the sentence in presence of Shahed at the courtroom.

The judge directed the authorities concerned to confiscate Tk 1.69 crore, earned illegally, in favour of the state.

Earlier, the prosecution and defence had completed their arguments and the court recorded statements of 12 prosecution witnesses, including the complainant in the case.

On March 1, 2021, Anti-Corruption Commission Deputy Director Farid Ahmed Patwary filed the case against Shahed with its Dhaka Integrated Office-1 for his alleged involvement in acquiring illegal wealth.

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HABIGANJ CLASH Police sue 1,500 BNP activists

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moubibazar

Two cases were filed against some 1,500 BNP leaders and activists yesterday in connection with a clash between them and police during their road march in Habiganj on Saturday.

Khurshed Alam, sub-inspector of Habiganj Police Station, filed a case against 90 named and 500-600 unnamed BNP members under the Explosives Act.

SI Wahed Gazi, of the same station, filed the other case against 99 named and 600-700 unnamed opposition activists on charges of attacking law enforcers.

The filing of the cases was confirmed by Badiuzzaman, officer-in-charge (Investigation) of Habiganj police.

GK Gaus, cooperative affairs secretary of BNP's central committee and joint convener of the party's Habiganj unit, was among the accused.

At least 150 people, including 30 policemen, were injured when a clash broke out between cops and BNP members during their road march in the town's Shayestanagar on Saturday.

The march was conducted to demand the release of party chairperson Khaleda Zia for treatment abroad.

Ajay Chandra Dev, officer-in-charge of Habiganj Model Police Station, who suffered an eye injury in the clash, was shifted to Sylhet MAG Osmani Medical College Hospital for better treatment on Sunday, said police.

Meanwhile, GK Gaus claimed that over 300 BNP members were injured, and over 150 of them were shot by police.

He said that since the incident, they have been afraid of being harassed and arrested under false cases.



Sri Lanka returns \$50m of \$200m loan Full principal amount expected by next month

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Sri Lanka has finally started paying back the \$200 million it took from Bangladesh in a currency swap agreement in August 2021, more than a year and a half later than the original agreed date.

On August 17, Sri Lanka sent \$50 million to Bangladesh, which is the first instalment of the payment, according to Md Mezbaul Haque, the central bank's spokesman.

The next instalment is expected in a fortnight, he said, without mentioning the amount that is coming.

"We are hopeful that the entire amount will be cleared by September," Haque agreed.

When the currency swap deal was agreed, Sri Lanka was supposed to repay the amount within three months.

Bangladesh lent the money to Sri Lanka in three instalments in 2021: the first tranche of \$50 million was sent on August 19, the second instalment of \$100 million 11 days later and another \$50 million in September.

So, Sri Lanka was supposed to repay the amount by the end of 2021 with an interest rate of LIBOR + 2 percent.

LIBOR, the acronym for London Interbank Offer Rate, used to be the global reference rate for unsecured short-term borrowing in the interbank

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AL leader murdered at hotel in Cox's Bazar Family suspects political rivalry behind it

STAFF CORRESPONDENT,
Cox's Bazar

Police recovered the body of a local Awami League leader at a hotel in Cox's Bazar town yesterday morning.

Saif Uddin, 42, of Ghonarpara area in the town, was the relief and social welfare secretary of AL's Cox's Bazar municipality unit.

He was a former assistant general secretary of Cox's Bazar district Chhatra League.

The body was found lying in a pool of blood around 8:00am with the hands tied, said Rafiqul Islam, officer-in-charge of Sadar Police Station.

Police are trying to find out who were behind the murder and the motive, the OC added.

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Monsoon is the best time for Asiya Begum to earn some money for her family. Like many other women of Gourighona area of Jashore's Keshabpur upazila, she collects around 8-10kgs of snails from nearby waterbodies every day during this season to sell them at the local markets. As snails have high demand among fish farmers, who use them as feed at their enclosures, the women get to earn around Tk 15 per kg. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN

ANCIENT POMPEII Archaeologists uncover new insight into lives of slaves



CNN ONLINE

Archaeologists have discovered a small bedroom in a Roman villa near Pompeii that was almost certainly used by slaves, throwing light on their lowly status in the ancient world, the culture ministry said on Sunday.

The room was found at the Civita Giuliana villa, some 600 metres (2,000 ft) north of the walls of Pompeii, which was wiped out by a volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius nearly 2,000 years ago.

In a video released by the culture ministry, the Director of Pompeii Archeological Park, Gabriel

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