



GDP growth tops 6% in third quarter

B1



Gautam Gambhir named India head coach

P11



How has Awami League fared in first six months?

P8



India races to build power plants in Arunachal Pradesh

P6

PSC QUESTION PAPERS

At least 30 leaks in 12 years

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

A syndicate involving officials and employees of the Public Service Commission has leaked at least 30 question papers for government recruitment tests, including those for the Bangladesh Civil Service exams, over the last 12 years.

Investigators, however, believe the syndicate has been active for about two decades.

This is according to CID officials and a first information report filed with the Paltan Police Station regarding the question leaks.

So far, 17 people, including six officials of the PSC, have been arrested. The arrestees include former PSC driver Syed Abed Ali, who lost his job in 2014 for involvement in leaking question papers.

Not having a job at the PSC did not deter Abed. He remained a key member of the syndicate and even got his son involved in the racket.

The CID filed the case on Monday night, accusing 31 named and 50 to 60 unidentified people. At least 14 named accused are on the run, read the FIR.

Investigators have found that at least two deputy directors -- Jahangir Alam and Abu Zafar -- and Assistant Director SM Alamgir Kabir and former assistant director Nikhil Chandra Roy, were involved. Jahangir, Zafar, and Alamgir have been arrested while Nikhil is now on the run.

These officials used to leak question papers and hand those over to Abed through PSC dispatch rider Khalilur Rahman and office assistant Sajedul Islam.

These former and incumbent PSC officials and employees have been found to have become very wealthy.

Even though some of them were fourth-class employees, they own expensive cars, multiple flats, and commercial spaces in posh areas of the capital.

Over the last three months, there were

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The Patrakhata Feichka Government Primary School in Putimari char area of Kurigram's Chilmari upazila has been submerged for the past one week. With the Brahmaputra still flowing above the danger level, at least 80 homesteads, along with croplands, remain flooded in this area. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: S DILIP ROY

Driving to a fortune!

PSC chauffeur has wealth worth over Tk 50cr: CID

STAR REPORT

Syed Abed Ali, a former driver for a Public Service Commission chairman, owns assets worth over Tk 50 crore, the CID found in its primary investigation.

The assets include a six-storey building in Mirpur's Paikpara, three flats in West Shewrapara, a Toyota Harrier SUV and a Toyota Premio, along with cash in bank accounts, an investigator told The Daily Star yesterday.

The Criminal Investigation Department has already seized the vehicles.

Abed was arrested on Monday in a case filed for leaking the questions of 30 public service recruitment exams, including the BCS, over the last 12 years.

His name came to the fore

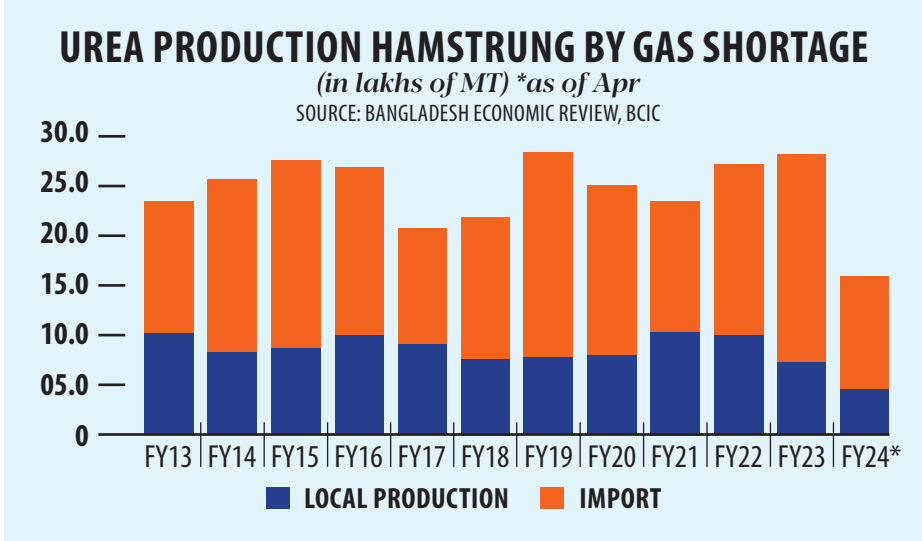
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Syed Abed Ali

Urea output plummets on feeble gas supply

Imports meeting fertiliser needs ahead of aman season



ASIFUR RAHMAN and SAJJAD HOSSAIN

Bangladesh is mostly relying on imports for urea as gas shortage has brought local fertiliser production to a near halt, in a development that will cost the country dearly in terms of foreign currency reserves and food inflation.

The country's six urea factories need 329 million cubic feet of gas a day

(mmcf), according to Petrobangla. Since February, Petrobangla has been providing only 107 mmcf to the fertiliser sector. Subsequently, four of the six factories have halted production.

Only Ghorashal Polash Fertiliser (GPFPLC) and Karnaphuli Fertiliser (Kalco) are getting their required gas and are in operation. Of the two, the government

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HASINA, XI TALKS Economy, trade to be in focus

PORIMOL PALMA

Beijing will push for initiatives with strategic interests in Bangladesh and the Bay of Bengal, while Dhaka will focus on trade and economy as Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina meets Chinese President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Qiang today.

The joint statement that will come out following the meetings at the Great Hall of the People will lay the vision for the future relationship, which is now a "strategic partnership of cooperation".

Foreign policy analysts view the three-day visit to Beijing, which comes 16 days after the state visit to New Delhi, as a balancing act by Hasina, who hopes to be in the good books of the two competing regional powers as they jostle for influence in South Asia as well as in the Bay of Bengal region.

"Balancing [relations with] the two Asian competitors is very crucial

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Chinese firms to invest in textile, fintech and EVs

Hasina urges Chinese companies to expand investments in Bangladesh

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Bangladeshi and Chinese companies yesterday signed 18 memorandums of understanding relating to investments in different sectors of Bangladesh.

Chinese companies have showed interest in investing in Bangladesh's textile, electric vehicle, solar power, fintech, and technology sectors, according to a statement from Bangladesh Securities and Exchange Commission.

Under an MoU worth \$50 million, Bangladeshi mobile financial service company Nagad will forge a partnership with Huawei Technologies to build a digital financial platform.

A \$20 million investment deal was signed for the "Bangladesh Capital Market Digital Transformation Project" between Dex Bangladesh Tech Ltd and Huawei Technologies.

Desbbondu Group of Bangladesh signed an MoU worth \$400 million with Chemtex and China Chemical CNCC to establish a

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Court orders confiscation of Tk 11.34cr assets of Ctg cop, wife

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A Chattogram court has ordered the confiscation of movable and immovable properties worth Tk 11.34 crore of Kamrul Hasan, additional deputy commissioner of Chattogram Metropolitan Police, and his wife Saima Begum over corruption charges.

Chattogram Metropolitan Sessions Judge Begum Zebunnesa passed the order on Monday after the Anti-Corruption Commission sought the court's order to confiscate the couple's properties and freeze their bank accounts.

The court asked the commission to take measures to appoint an administrator to look after the properties, Kazi Sanowar Ahmed Lavlu, a public prosecutor of the ACC, told The Daily Star yesterday.

The ACC, during an investigation, found that the couple owned land in the port city's North Halishahar, West Nasirabad, Khulshi, Chandgaon, and Dhaka's Savar.

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Buet students demonstrate in front of the main entrance to the university in the capital yesterday demanding scrapping of the quota system in government jobs. Students of most of the public universities across the country have also been boycotting classes and exams since Saturday to press home their demand.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

QUOTA REFORM DEMO Protesters set to resume blockade today

SC to hear petition against HC verdict restoring quota in govt jobs

STAR REPORT

After a one-day break in their blockade programme, students demonstrating against the quota system in government jobs have announced a nationwide blockade for today.

"As part of the programme, all highways and railways across the country will be blocked," Nahid Islam, a Dhaka University student and an organiser of the movement, told a press conference in front of the DU central library yesterday.

The daylong movement will begin at 10:00am and continue until dusk, during which students will enforce blockades at key intersections in the capital and highways adjacent to colleges and universities across the country, the organisers said.

However, many will be looking at the Supreme Court's Appellate Division today as it is scheduled to hear a petition against the High Court ruling that reinstated a 30 percent quota for the children of freedom fighters in the 9th through 13th grades of government jobs.

Regarding the hearing, Nahid said, "Since this case has reached the court, legal procedures will be followed. We have complete faith in the justice system."

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