

# First Security Islami Bank's cash shortage leads to scuffle

Dilkusha branch able to give only Tk 5,000 per customer

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**

A scuffle broke out between customers and employees of First Security Islami Bank PLC's (FSIB) Dilkusha branch yesterday centring a cash crisis at the outlet.

The confrontation occurred around 11:00am following a heated exchange between the branch staff and frustrated customers, who were unable to withdraw their desired amount of money.

The situation was brought under control following the intervention of senior bank officials and some customers of the Shariah-based lender. No one was seriously injured, according to witnesses.

Tabassum Hussain Tanuza, a dental surgeon and FSIB customer, alleged that she was physically assaulted by bank staff when she attempted to intervene in a dispute between another customer and the employees.

Tanuza, who holds a salary account with the bank's Banasree sub-branch, said she and several other customers were asked to go to the Dilkusha branch after the Banasree branch was unable to honour their cash withdrawal requests.

"We arrived at the Dilkusha branch at around 10:45am and requested to withdraw amounts we



PHOTO: AM JAHID

required but the staff told us that they could only provide Tk 5,000 per customer. When we questioned them further, the situation escalated," she said.

Tanuza also claimed that some staff members were recording video footage of the incident and when a customer tried to stop them, some employees assaulted her. "I was assaulted while trying to protect the customers," she added.

Branch officials, however, denied the allegations, saying that the altercation escalated while they were trying to calm the situation. According to the staff, the

customers assaulted the employees after being informed about the ongoing liquidity crisis.

Md Tahurul Haque, senior executive vice president and head of the Dilkusha branch, later met with the agitated customers to resolve the issue.

Speaking to this correspondent, Haque said, "Due to the liquidity crisis at the bank, we are currently providing Tk 5,000 to each of the customers, and we are trying to release higher amounts for urgent cases. However, no customer has been turned away without being provided at least some cash."

## NRBs can now get up to Tk 10 lakh in bank loans

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**

Banks have been given the go-ahead to extend loans up to Tk 10 lakh to non-resident Bangladeshis (NRBs) working abroad in case of emergencies.

The Bangladesh Bank issued a circular in this regard yesterday.

The central bank made the decision to support migrant workers who are facing unexpected financial crises and failing to send remittances home.

According to the circular, banks can extend these loans based on bank-customer relationships for bona fide purposes.

It also said banks must extend emergency loans to NRBs who regularly send remittances through formal channels.

The repayment of these loans must be made from the remittances sent by borrowers, ensuring that the loans are closely tied to incoming foreign exchange, according to the circular.

Banks are also required to adhere to all applicable credit norms, prudential regulations, and due diligence procedures when approving such loans, it said.

# Upon pay assurance, workers lift highway blockade after 52 hours

**STAR BUSINESS REPORT**

Workers of Birds Group, a textile maker in Bangladesh, withdrew their blockade at the Baipail intersection of the Nabinagar-Chandra highway in Dhaka's Ashulia yesterday after being assured that all their arrears will soon be paid.

At around 9:30am last Monday, workers of Birds Group blocked the highway to demand the payment of their salaries and ancillary dues for the three months leading up to the company's closure in late August.

Since then, hundreds of vehicles on the route have been stuck in gridlock, causing great suffering among drivers and passengers, according to our Savar correspondent.

The workers finally withdrew the blockade at around 1:00pm yesterday after a joint force comprising army personnel, the police and other law enforcing agencies arrested the company's owner and assured that their arrears will be paid as soon as possible.

But even after ending the blockade, the workers took position in front of the Birds Group factory and informed that they would remain there until all the dues are cleared.

During a visit to the area at around 11:30am yesterday, it was seen that hundreds of cargo trucks were idling along the highway connecting Dhaka with western and north-western districts.

The stranded truck drivers told The Daily Star that they had been stuck in place for the past three days due to the workers' blockade.

They also expressed frustration at the

interim government and lawmen for not addressing the situation.

But later at around noon, a senior army officer held a discussion with the workers.

"He [the army officer] told us that thousands of people are suffering for our blockade. He then asked us to leave the road as they have already arrested the owner and will arrange our payments very soon," a worker said.

Following the hour-long discussion, law enforcers reopened the road despite facing obstruction from some workers.

However, the army officer did not reveal the name of the person they have arrested. Shahinur Kabir, an additional superintendent of Police in the Savar circle, also told The Daily Star that the workers will promptly receive their due payments.

Responding to a question regarding the owner's arrest, he said they have not yet received any information to this end.

In a notice on August 27, the authorities of Birds Group said they have had no work at their factory for some time due to the economic effects of the Russia-Ukraine war and global recession.

Still, the company tried to continue operations despite incurring losses.

However, this proved to be all for naught as all concerns of Birds Group -- RNR Fashions Ltd, Bird's Garments Ltd, Bird's Fedrex Ltd and Bird's A&Z Ltd -- were eventually shuttered on August 28.

After announcing the closure of Birds Group's unit in Baipail, the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) called a meeting with its owners and workers at the Directorate of Inspection of Factories and Institutions.

## Stocks plunge

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Beximco stocks to realise gains of Tk 477 crore.

On September 26, 28 companies were downgraded to "Z" category for violating regulation by not properly paying investors their dividends.

These are prompting the sale of shares on a massive scale, which, in turn, is causing the indexes to fall, said the protesters, who also demanded resignation of the BSEC high-ups.

A number of stock brokerage firms confirmed that those who had usually taken part in stock price manipulations have sold off shares on a massive scale as they fear that they would be caught by the regulator.

At the same time, they are spreading rumours among investors that the market index will soon fall by a massive extent.

Stocks of Islami Bank Bangladesh contributed to yesterday's fall by 19 points alone, according to LankaBangla Securities data.

"Because of the fine on

Beximco Limited imposed by the BSEC, I believe the index has fallen," said Asif Khan, chairman of EDGE AMC.

"In recent years, many gamblers and speculators have been active in the market, and other investors have followed their lead. When these manipulators get fined, it clearly impacts the market, and that's exactly what we're seeing now," he said.

Khan pointed out that there was no straightforward solution.

"We've been saying that the regulator can't control the market completely. Their job is to set rules and punish those who break them," he said.

"We've met with the regulators and urged them to be tough on the wrongdoers. If the index falls as a result, we have to accept it and wait for better times, even if it takes a while," he added.

The overall economic situation needs to improve, said Khan.

The Bangladesh Bank governor recently

mentioned that inflation would eventually decrease. "When inflation goes down, interest rates will also drop, and that should help the market recover," he said.

He emphasised the importance of patience for investors.

"It's not wise to jump in and out of the market quickly. Investors need to understand that market prices will go up and down. They must be prepared to take risks," advised Khan.

In this challenging environment, he remains hopeful that with time, the market would attain stability and grow stronger.

Rajesh Saha, CEO of CAL Securities, voiced his concerns about the current regulations.

"There are too many loopholes in the laws. Unless they're fixed, I don't see the market improving for a long time," he said.

He suggested that the interim government take notes from successful models in other countries for guidance on creating better regulations.

## Dollar holds gains

**REUTERS, London/Sydney**

The dollar held on to its biggest gains in a week on Wednesday after an Iranian missile attack on Israel drove the buying of safe haven assets as investors fretted about the widening of conflict in the Middle East.

It also jumped against the yen as Japanese officials, including new Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba, talked down the chances of another Bank of Japan rate hike.

The euro was little changed against the dollar at \$1.1069, following its largest drop in nearly four months on Tuesday at 0.6 percent. The US dollar index, which tracks the currency against a basket of peers, was also steady at 101.32 after rising 0.5 percent on Tuesday.

Iran said on Wednesday its missile attack on Israel, its biggest military assault on the Jewish state, was over, barring further provocation, while Israel and the United States said they would retaliate against Tehran.

## Inflation

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would reach double digits by the end of the current fiscal year due to supply-side disruptions and higher import amid the sharp depreciation of the local currency taka.

The Manila-based lender's projection for inflation in fiscal year (FY) 2025 increased to 10.1 percent, which is 3.1 percentage points higher than its April estimate. The previous Awami

League government, which was ousted by a mass uprising on August 5, targeted to keep inflation at 6.5 percent this fiscal year after the price pressure hit 9.7 percent in FY24.

On September 30, the International Monetary Fund said that the country's economic activity has slowed markedly while inflation remains at double-digit levels owing to the recent political turbulence and major floods.

## Why most stock market

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"No other stock market in the world was kept shut for such a long time. This was a bad decision from the regulatory end," he said.

After that, floor prices were imposed twice, which proved to be devastating decisions.

"A regulator cannot set share prices. The market faced a huge lack of liquidity in the absence of buyers at set prices," he said.

In 2020, the Khairul-led commission launched floor prices for the first time in the country amidst the pandemic. The two-month suspension of trading activities also hit foreign investors hard, Hasan said.

The Shibli-led commission lifted floor prices but imposed them again in 2022 amidst the Russia-Ukraine war. Floor prices are still in place for six companies, he said.

Regarding the tenure extension of closed-end mutual funds, Hasan said it was one of the major reasons for the havoc in the mutual fund industry.

An investor puts money into a fund with hopes of getting it back with a profit after a stipulated amount of time, but the regulator stopped that, he said.

In 2018, the Khairul-led commission extended the tenures of all closed-end mutual funds by 10 years, hurting investors who had already waited long periods to get their funds back with profit, Hasan said.

"Even a foreign investor, the City of London Investment Management Company, filed a writ petition against the BSEC's decision as such extensions without the approval of unitholders are in violation of the BSEC (Mutual Fund) Rules, 2001," Hasan added.

The Khairul-led commission even allowed asset managers to provide stock dividends or returns on investments in mutual funds, which is uncommon around the world, he said.

Most companies that got approval to go public from the Shibli and Khairul-led commissions were later downgraded due to poor

performance, which raises questions over the initial public offer processes, he said.

Once the BSEC had ordered all asset management companies (AMCs) to keep at least 75 percent of their investments in mutual funds, which was understandably a poor directive, said Shekh Mohammad Rashedul Hasan, managing director and CEO of UCB Asset Management.

"A regulator cannot direct AMCs about where to invest. The AMCs are bound to protect investors' funds. However, the BSEC's directive, when stock prices were already inflated, led to losses, impacting investors," he said.

Now, the regulator must provide assurances that they will not frequently change policies. This will bring back investors' confidence in the mutual funds, he added.

The Daily Star tried to contact Shibli and Khairul for comment yesterday, but they did not receive phone calls.

**Office of the Matlab Municipality**  
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Memo: Mat.Paur.Engr./2024-2025/50 Date: 01/10/2024

**Invitation for Tender (IFT for Works)**  
**e-Tender Notice No. 01/2024-2025**

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for procurement of the following:

SL No.	e-Tender ID No.	Package No.	Package name	Tender method	Last date & time for selling documents	Tender closing date & time
1	1016651	IUGIP/M ATL/UT/02/2023	Construction/Improvement of 8,079m Roads in 8 locations, Protection Work 551m at Matlab Paurashava, Chandpur District.	OTM	30-Oct-2024 up to 16:00	31-Oct-2024 up to 12:30

This is an online tender where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal & no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<http://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information & guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

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## Sky Bees to invest

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in making UAV technology has been substantial despite having limited support for research and development.

Sky Bees has already secured overseas training opportunities for its engineers, enabling them to refine their skills and expertise in drone development, Ahmed added.

Its factory will initially produce high-capacity rotary wing drones for firefighting and vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) drones for cinematography, mapping and surveillance.

They also plan to manufacture 10 additional

models with varying payload capacities and endurance.

These UAVs, designed primarily for civil applications, will be used for a range of tasks, including spraying pesticides, delivery services and disaster relief operations.

The company's proposal to Bepza outlines an ambitious target: the production and export of 7,314 UAVs annually, according to Ahmed.

ASM Anwar Parvez, executive director (public relations) of Bepza, told The Daily Star they are going to sign the deal with Sky Bees to lease land to set up the factory.

## ADP spending hits

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"We know that project costs tend to be inflated. This should be stopped and projects that were previously undertaken should be examined," Khan said.

"The government should also prioritise the implementation of foreign-funded projects amid financing shortages."

Ashikur Rahman, a senior economist at the Policy Research Institute

of Bangladesh, said political uncertainties and instability in July and August and the lukewarm response of the bureaucracy to different policy prescriptions of the interim government had slowed the ADP implementation rate.

"This should, however, improve if political stability and law and order is restored and public bodies become more decisive," he said.

**Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh**  
Local Government Engineering Department  
Office of the Executive Engineer  
District: Rangpur  
[www.lged.gov.bd](http://www.lged.gov.bd)

Memo No. 46.02.8500.000.07.12.24-3062 Date: 01/10/2024

**Invitation for Tender (Works)**  
**e-Tender Notice No. 06/2024-2025**

e-Tender is invited in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) for the procurement of following works, details are given below:

Sl No.	Tender ID No.	Package No.	Description of work	Tender document last selling (date & time)
1	1022429	LGED/GOBM/Rang/24-25/RW-40	Periodic Maintenance of Ranipukur UP office -Lalbagh-Bhendabari Road via Ranipukur GC Road from Ch.00m-9680m Road ID. 18558309 [Mithapukur] [OTM]	27/10/2024 16:00pm
2	1022430	LGED/GOBM/Rang/24-25/RW-45	Periodic Maintenance of Singimari Ghat-Burishat GC via Gangachara GC Road from Ch. 00m-7485m Road ID. 185272009 [Gangachara] [OTM]	
3	1022431	LGED/GOBM/Rang/24-25/RW-49	Rehabilitation (Widening) of Baradargha bazar-Bhendabari UP Office via Bhimsar Road from Ch. 00m-3600m Road ID. 185763006 [Pirganj] [OTM]	
4	1022449	LGED/GOBM/Rang/24-25/CW-01	Rehabilitation of 2 Vent 3.50x 3.50m RCC Box Culvert on Palichara-Madhabpur Road at Ch.1200m Road ID. 185494082 [Rangpur-S] [LTM]	20/10/2024 16:00pm
5	1022450	LGED/GOBM/Rang/24-25/CW-02	Rehabilitation of 2 Vent 3.00x 3.00m RCC Box Culvert on Palichara-Madhabpur Road at Ch.1130m Road ID. 185494082 [Rangpur-S] [LTM]	
6	1022451	LGED/GOBM/Rang/24-25/CW-03	Rehabilitation of 1vent 3.0m x 3.0m RCC Box Culvert on Baidpukur bazar- Ranipukur Road at Ch. 1350m Road ID. 185584007 [Mithapukur] [LTM]	
7	1022452	LGED/GOBM/Rang/24-25/CW-04	Rehabilitation of 1vent 2.0m x 2.0m RCC Box Culvert on Shalmara Bazar To Vagni Bazar Road at Ch.3000m Road ID.185584142 [Mithapukur] [LTM]	
8	1022448	LGED/GOBM/Rang/24-25/RM-On-01	Supply of Materials for On-Pavement Routine Maintenance (MMT) work at LGED Bhaban Campus, District-Rangpur (FY: 2024-25) [LTM]	
9	1022851	GSID-2/RNG./DW-222	Improvement of Gate at Kisanot Menanagar Kendario Graveyard Under Hariarkuti Union, Latitude: 25.4629.13 Longitude: 89.578530] Upazila: Taraganj [LTM]	
10	1022852	GSID-2/RNG./DW-232	Improvement of Bisnopur Suzanagar Horibas Mondir. Under Kursha Union, [Latitude: 25.79551, Longitude: 89.0265], Upazila: Taraganj [LTM]	

This is an online tender, where only e-Tender will be accepted in the National e-GP Portal and no offline/hard copies will be accepted. To submit e-Tender, registration in the National e-GP System Portal (<https://www.eprocure.gov.bd>) is required. The fees for downloading the e-Tender documents from the National e-GP System Portal have to be deposited online through any registered banks branches. Further information and guidelines are available in the National e-GP System Portal and from e-GP help desk ([helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd](mailto:helpdesk@eprocure.gov.bd)).

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GD-604