

## Court orders confiscation of Shakib Al Hasan’s assets

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday ordered the authorities concerned to confiscate properties of cricketer and former Awami League MP Shakib Al Hasan in a cheque dishonour case.

Dhaka’s Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Ziaudur Rahman passed the order following an application submitted by the plaintiff, Atiqur Rahman, bench assistant of the court, told The Daily Star.

In December last year, a summon was issued asking Shakib to appear before the court on January 19 this year, following a case filed by Shahibur Rahman, a relationship officer at IFIC Bank.

On January 19, the court issued an arrest warrant against Shakib after he failed to appear before the court as per its direction.



An excavator, deployed by the Akhaura Upazila Administration and Water Development Board, demolishes an illegal embankment on the Titas river in Bongoj area of Dharkhar union yesterday. The action was taken following a March 23 report by The Daily Star highlighting illegal soil lifting and river grabbing in the region.

PHOTO: MASUK HRIDOY

## Hannan Masud, 4 others hurt as NCP, BNP clash in Hatiya

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Noakhali

A clash broke out between supporters of National Citizen Party and local BNP activists in Noakhali’s Hatiya upazila yesterday, leaving five people, including NCP leader Hannan Masud, injured.

The incident took place at Jahajmara Bazar in the evening, said AKM Azmal Huda, officer-in-charge of Hatiya Police Station.

According to police and locals, Abdul Hannan Masud, joint chief coordinator of the NCP, held several public meetings and gatherings throughout the day in Jahajmara union.

Before iftar, he finished his programmes there with a rally at Jahajmara Bazar.

BNP activists organised a protest rally at the same location, condemning an alleged attack earlier on a Krishak Dal leader.

The BNP supporters reportedly attacked Hannan Masud’s rally, resulting in a scuffle, locals and police said.

Protesting the incident, Masud and his supporters staged a sit-in for two hours on the road, demanding the arrest of the attackers.

At the time, the BNP activists regrouped and

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## Northerners may hit snags on roads

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to open four lanes on the entire corridor with service lanes and bridges.

But, two points remain vulnerable to road congestion: one on the Jamuna Bridge and Gobindaganj in Gaibandha, said the project’s Director Waliur Rahman.

The Jamuna Bridge is a narrow four-lane bridge and if a vehicle breaks down there, it creates huge congestion until the vehicle is salvaged.

Besides, the construction of a flyover is going on at Gobindaganj, which may create congestion, he said.

On the other hand, the construction of the Dhaka-Ashulia Elevated Expressway is now going on and that may create congestion on Abdullahpur-Ashulia-Baipail road.

Besides, the construction of a flyover at Baipail under the project may cause traffic congestion on the Savar-Chandra highway, which often witnesses congestion during the Eid rush.

Because of the construction work of the expressway, most of the vehicles will not use Abdullahpur-Ashulia-Baipail road, Ashok Kumar Pal, Gazipur Metropolitan Police’s additional deputy police commissioner (Traffic), told our Gazipur Correspondent.

They will use the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway to the northern region via Gazipur, which may create a huge pressure on the highway, he said.

“However, we will have 500 more traffic policemen to ensure that there is no traffic jam on the Gazipur territory

on the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway,” he said.

Meanwhile, an official of the Dhaka-Sylhet highway expansion project said that currently they were working on the main road at two points: Hatkhola and Velanagar in Narsingdi.

But, the roads in these areas are four-lane ones, so there is unlikely to be congestion if traffic management can be ensured, he said, wishing not to be named.

Meanwhile, many people left Dhaka by bus yesterday, but their number was not big.

Many of them, including those who collected advance tickets, complained of overcharging.

One such passenger is Abu Talha, a private service holder. When he went to buy a ticket from SI Paribahan to travel to Sirajganj on March 26, he was charged Tk 150 more than the actual fare of Tk 350.

“They did not even mention the fare on the ticket – the bus operator charged Tk 350 on March 21 when I sent my family home.”

When he inquired about the overcharging, the counterman did not provide any explanation.

The number of passengers leaving Dhaka was very thin yesterday, said Mosharrar Hossain, general manager of Hanif Paribahan, adding that he expects the passenger flow to pick up from Thursday.

Suvankar Ghosh, general secretary of the Bangladesh Bus Truck Owners Association, said they expected passenger

pressure on March 25, 27 and 29.

The closure of garment factories on March 29 may cause huge traffic pressure in Savar, Ashulia and Gazipur areas, he said.

The construction of a flyover at the Baipail area may cause traffic congestion on the Savar-Chandra highway, which often witnesses congestion during the Eid rush.

Replying to a question, Suvankar said they had sought security from the police to ensure passenger safety.

They also asked the bus owners to keep the bus doors closed at night to avoid any untoward incidents, he said.

Asked about overcharging by some bus operators, he said they have nothing to do regarding AC buses as there is no fixed fare for such services.

But they will take action against other buses if they receive allegations of overcharging, he said.

Meanwhile, thousands of people started to leave Dhaka by train as the Bangladesh Railway started a special Eid service yesterday.

Most trains left Kamalapur Railway Station on time amid tight security and ticket checking.

As of 1:00pm, 18 intercity trains left the station and two of them were late.

Burimari Express left the station one and a half hours late while Egara Sindhur Express left one hour late, said Station Master Anwar Hossain.

A total of 68 trains, including 43 intercity trains, were supposed to leave Dhaka yesterday.

## The massacre at Ctg cantonment



Col (retd) Oli Ahmad Bir Bikram



Mohammed Kamal Uddin



Dr Mainul Ahasan



COURTESY: COL (RETD) MAHMUD UR RAHMAN CHOWDHURY

**Farewell ceremony of the 4th East Bengal Regiment in Lahore, West Pakistan, June 1970. Lt Col Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury, battalion commanding officer (back right). He was the first martyred Bangalee officer in 1971. Lt Gen Khwaja Wasiuddin, the colonel commandant of the East Bengal Regiment (back middle).**

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“At 7:00pm, all of our soldiers’ rifles were taken away and stored in the armoury,” Subid Ali Bhuiyan, writes in his book.

Maj Mir Shawkat Ali from the 8th East Bengal Regiment was the last person to speak to anyone from the EBRC via telephone around 11:00pm – it was Chief Instructor Lt Col Mujibur Rahman Chowdhury.

Soon after the phone call, Lt Col MR Chowdhury ordered Captain Enamul Haque to break open the armoury and distribute weapons to the Bangalee soldiers. However, before they could do so, the Baloch Regiment soldiers stormed the premises.

Captain Enamul Haque described this moment in his writings on Bangladesher Swadhinota Juddho: Dolil Potro (Volume 9).

“Suddenly, the Bangalee guard commander from that particular quarter came running and informed me that the 20th Baloch soldiers were getting off their vehicles, fully armed...Within moments, they launched an attack on the guards, and gunfire erupted from all directions.”

“At 11:30pm, six truckloads of Baloch soldiers slaughtered the Bangalee troops at the armoury and surrounded the recruit barracks, where most soldiers were asleep and unarmed, leaving them no chance to resist. The Baloch troops ruthlessly gunned down every soldier in their sight,” Maj (retd) Rafiq-ul Islam writes in his book “Lokkho Praner Binimoye”.

Captain Enamul was captured and held in a room filled with wounded soldiers.

“I saw Bangalee soldiers in agony, some crying out for water, others writhing in pain. The Pakistani

soldiers pressed their boots on the throats of the dying to hasten the process,” Enamul describes his experience on Bangladesher Swadhinota Juddho: Dolil Potro (Volume 9).

In the early hours of March 26, the Baloch soldiers fired shells from tanks onto the barracks. The wounded soldiers’ screams filled the cantonment. Many were executed inside the EBRC school, where Pakistani troops opened fire at point-blank range.

Captain Enamul wrote, “At 7:00am on March 26, I saw a truck being filled with the bodies of those who had been mercilessly killed overnight. More than a hundred bodies were taken away in front of my eyes.”

**RESISTANCE THAT NEVER CAME.** Colonel Oli Ahmed, Bir Bikram, who was the quartermaster of the 8th East Bengal Regiment, later revealed that he had tried to contact Lieutenant Colonel MR Chowdhury throughout the night but failed. The next morning, he learned that MR Chowdhury had been murdered.

Asked why the 8th East Bengal Regiment did not intervene, he said, “We had limited arms and ammunition. Many of our soldiers were on leave because we were supposed to be deployed in Pakistan. The 20th Baloch Regiment was fully armed. If we had intervened, it would have been suicidal. The only chance of survival for EBRC soldiers was to escape into the hills.”

The attack began with the killing of EBRC’s Chief Instructor Lt Col MR Chowdhury.

His son, Colonel (retd) Mahmud UR Rahman Chowdhury, told The Daily Star, “When my father was entering EBRC from the officers’ mess, a platoon of the Baloch Regiment shot and bayoneted him to death.

“In early January 1971, MR Chowdhury, along with Brig Mahmudur Rahman Majumdar, Maj Ziaur Rahman (later president), Captain Rafiq-ul Islam, and Captain Oli Ahmed, had begun planning an armed rebellion in Chattogram. Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was aware of these plans, but since the Awami League was still pursuing a political solution, the uprising never materialised.”

“If Bangabandhu supported an armed rebellion from the start, this massacre might not have happened. The war would still have taken place, but we could have avoided such massive loss of life.”

**IN SEARCH OF WITNESSES**

Most of the Bangalee soldiers were martyred in the EBRC, but miraculously, very few survived.

The Daily Star collected names of the gallantry-awarded freedom fighters who were either serving or undergoing training at the EBRC on the night of March 25, 1971. However, none of them are now alive.

Dr Mohammad Kamal Uddin, a resident of Khondakia village (3km away from the cantonment) in Hathazari, said, “On the night of March 25, we woke up to the sound of intense gunfire. At dawn, we saw a few injured and terrified men near the Boro Dighir Paar. Their clothes were torn, and some were bleeding. They told us their weapons had been taken away earlier that evening, and they had barely escaped by crossing the hills.”

At Chittagong Medical College, Dr Mainul Ahasan treated many injured soldiers on March 26.

“Most of the wounded brought in on March 26 were Bangalee soldiers from the cantonment. Many died on the way due to excessive bleeding,” he told The Daily Star.

## Tamim’s health crisis shocks nation

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Tamim, the Mohammedan skipper, felt ill after the toss. Although the symptoms were downplayed at first and the cricketer was planning to fly back to Dhaka, his condition deteriorated.

Creditable on-ground response in coalition with medical teams before successful surgery prevented the situation from escalating. Tamim underwent a stenting surgery and remains under close medical observation at the KPJ Specialised Hospital in Savar.

“By the grace of Allah, his [Tamim’s] condition right now is better. He had a heart attack. For that, an angiogram, angioplasty and stenting was done. By the grace of Allah, the stenting was really smooth and efficient. The block [in his artery] has been completely

removed,” the hospital’s media director Dr Rajib Hasan told the media at a press briefing.

“He [Tamim] fell ill at around 9:00-9:30 am at BKSP. He was then brought here and his treatment began,” the physician added.

The initial plan had been to bring Tamim to Dhaka for better treatment but once he felt a bit better following initial treatment, Tamim went back to BKSP. But his condition became critical all of a sudden as was then taken back to the hospital where angiogram showed that there was a block in a major artery.

Following the surgery, Tamim regained consciousness and spoke to family members.

“His condition was critical. Even after the stenting, he is under observation and is still in a critical condition. It will

take some time. All of us are trying heart and soul. Everyone please pray for Tamim bhai,” the physician told the media.

There was a downpour of concern after news of Tamim’s heart attack broke. The BCB directors were slated to sit for a board meeting but the directors and other officials rushed to Savar with the meeting cancelled.

BCB president Faruque Ahmed expressed his gratitude to the medical teams at BKSP and KPJ Specialised Hospital for their timely and expert intervention. In a statement, he said: “We are very thankful to all the medics and specialists for their swift actions in this critical situation. The outpouring of concern for Tamim reflects how much he is loved and appreciated by the nation.”

### Vested groups

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counter it at any cost. Journalists have a crucial role to play here. Various issues are being made controversial, even some of which are not true. If you [journalists] present the truth before the nation, we will undoubtedly be able to overcome this conspiracy,” he added.

The BNP leader said that a vested quarter believes they will succeed in their conspiracy. “But if we work together, we can certainly resist it. Our first and foremost goal should be to establish the democratic rights of the people of this country...”

At the same event, BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir said a new conspiracy is underway to destabilise Bangladesh once again.

This conspiracy aims to push Bangladesh into a crisis once more. Key institutions – those essential for safeguarding the country’s independence and sovereignty – are being made controversial. In particular, efforts are being made to make the army controversial, he said.

Fakhrul said, “The objective is clear – just as the country’s independence and sovereignty were threatened under past fascist regimes, a similar attempt is now being made. There is an effort to make the army controversial, which has always stood by the nation in crucial moments.”

Addressing journalists, he said that journalists have always served as the conscience of the nation. In times of crisis, they have stood and provided the people with accurate news.

## Parties criticise

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raised concerns over the NCC spreadsheet.

“Instead of presenting the proposals directly, they are framed as leading questions. For example, the spreadsheet asks, ‘Do you support implementing the proposals through a constituent assembly? Answer yes or no.’ But the question of whether or not we agree on the concept of a constituent assembly should come first.”

However, he also stated that his party is cooperating with the consensus commission.

“We’re responding to each spreadsheet entry – where a ‘yes’ is needed, we are giving a ‘yes’ and marking it accordingly. Where a separate statement is necessary, we’re providing our own remarks. This is how we are cooperating fully.”

Criticising the spreadsheet, CPB General Secretary Ruhin Hossain Prince said most questions were unclear, incomplete, and one-sided, requiring further explanations.

“Simply marking responses without discussions would not be effective, and it would create misunderstandings.”

According to him, it would have been better if the commission had arranged dialogues over the proposals before preparing the spreadsheets.

Biplobi Workers Party General Secretary Saiful Haque said the approach adopted by the NCC to gather feedback was not appropriate.

He believes it resembles an NGO-style approach, where the commission is essentially guiding responses toward

the answers it wants in order to benefit a certain party.

“I don’t think this is the right approach to address the current political crisis. The political parties were unable to provide their actual opinions. With an MCQ pattern, [providing] meaningful input is not possible.”

Bazlur Rashid Firoz, general secretary of the Socialist Party of Bangladesh, made similar criticisms.

“Think about the constitution – it’s an important issue as it concerns the fate of the people of this country. We don’t think it’s possible to provide meaningful feedback just by choosing ‘Agree’ or ‘Disagree.’ Though there is an option for comments, I still believe rigorous explanations, logic, and counterarguments are necessary.”

However, the National Citizen Party (NCP), Gono Sanghati Andolan, and Rastro Sangskar Andolan believe the commission adopted this approach as an initial step.

“As we don’t have a better approach in front of us, I don’t think it’s that bad. If someone is unwilling to provide their feedback on reforms and simply rejects the method outright, that wouldn’t be wise,” said NCP Joint Convenor Sarwar Tushar.

He added that there are also options for comments and that further discussions will take place, emphasising that this is not a permanent framework.

Chief Coordinators of Gono Sanghati Andolan and Rastro Sangskar Andolan, Zonayed Saki and Hasnat Quaiyum, echoed similar views.