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10 BUSINESSES, HASINA FAMILY Tk 57,257cr in assets frozen at home, abroad

Shows progress report by joint task force investigating 11 priority cases

MD MEHEDI HASAN

Courts have frozen assets worth about Tk 57,257 crore, allegedly owned by 10 major business groups and members of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina's family, in over eight months from January.

The orders were issued as a high-level joint task force is investigating 11 priority cases -- one involving Hasina's family and the others S Alam Group, Beximco Group, Summit Group, Bashundhara Group, Gemcon Group, Orion Group, Nabil Group, Nassa Group, Sikder Group, and Aramit Group.

According to a task force document obtained by The Daily Star, Tk 43,385 crore of these assets are movable and Tk 13,871.56 crore immovable.

The document, outlining the progress of the investigations, shows that Tk 46,805.32 crore of the assets are in Bangladesh, while the remaining Tk 10,451.54 crore are abroad.

The Bangladesh Financial Intelligence Unit (BFIU) formed the task force on January 6, following a directive from the Financial Institutions Division of the finance ministry. The move came as the interim government ramped up efforts to recover funds allegedly embezzled or laundered abroad by Hasina's family and businesses linked to her regime.

In October last year, Bangladesh Bank Governor Ahsan H Mansur said \$17 billion to \$18 billion (Tk 2.2 lakh crore) was siphoned off through the banking sector alone between 2009 and 2023.

An official of the task force, requesting anonymity, said the majority of the 10 conglomerates laundered money to the US, UK, Canada, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Hong Kong, and other offshore jurisdictions.

The task force is now working with government agencies and key stakeholders in the destination countries to recover the laundered assets, the official added.

It is also planning to appoint international firms to seize assets abroad under the priority cases, and sanctions will be imposed via the UK, US, and UN on the sale or transfer of these assets, said officials.

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- Tk 46,805.32cr assets in Bangladesh
- Tk 10,451.54cr are in foreign assets
- These include Tk 17,215cr in bank accounts, company shares



A policeman strolls past a pile of seized vehicles that have been lying abandoned for years on the Chattogram court premises. Most have rusted away under the sun and rain, turning into heaps of scrap metal and making it difficult for commuters to move around the area. The photo was taken yesterday.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN

ROHINGYA CRISIS Political solution, not aid, only way out

Says new OHCHR report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The current humanitarian response to the Rohingya crisis is insufficient as political solutions are needed to ensure their safe and dignified return to Myanmar.

The Rohingya have called for active leadership by the UN, regional powers and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation to pressure Myanmar's actors.

They also urged the UN, states and international courts to secure guarantees from Myanmar authorities for an agreement and to ensure accountability for past crimes.

The refugees further demanded direct engagement with educated Rohingya representatives in shaping any roadmap for repatriation.

The findings were revealed in a new study

by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) based on testimonies of 125 Rohingya men and women in Cox's Bazar camps.

The report, "Rohingya Perspectives on Pathways to a Safe, Dignified, and Peaceful Future", comes ahead of the UN General Assembly High Level Conference on the Rohingya crisis and other minorities in Myanmar.

The Rohingya categorically rejected any possibility of living under the Arakan Army (AA), branding the group "terrorists" and "bandits", said the report, which was released on Tuesday.

More than 70 percent of the respondents believed the AA is seeking to "erase" the Rohingya in Arakan.

The others fear they would face forced labour, religious repression or confinement in camps if

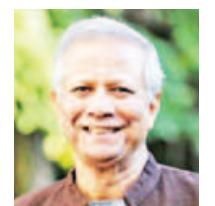
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Yunus seeks WB support to upgrade Ctg port

Calls for smarter financing to close \$4 trillion SDG gap

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Chief Adviser M u h a m m a d Yunus yesterday urged the World Bank to assist in modernising the Chittagong Port and recovering stolen funds.



"Chittagong Port is key to economic growth in the region -- let's develop it together," a press release from the Chief Adviser's Press Wing quoted him as saying to WB President Ajay Banga.

During a meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly, Yunus urged the Washington-based multilateral lender to support his government in recovering stolen assets.

Banga underscored the importance of robust reforms in the banking and fiscal sectors, stating they are essential for sustained, high-growth economic

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'Rab helicopters will strike from above'
Hasina heard telling Inu in audio evidence at ICT-1

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The prosecution yesterday played four phone call recordings between deposed prime minister Sheikh Hasina and three others at the International Crimes Tribunal-1. The conversations shed light on plans to suppress the July protests, including bombing demonstrators who blocked the Dhaka-Chittagong Highway in Narayanganj.

In one call with Hasanul Haq Inu, Hasina is heard saying, "...Army are not being allowed to enter Narayanganj ... We are landing paratroopers."

She added, "No, I am saying there is no need for casualties; they have put up barricades, fine ... They [paratroopers] will drop from the sky, then capture [protesters] from both sides ... and bombing will be done from helicopters ... Rab helicopters will strike from above."

Inu, president of Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal of the Awami League-led 14-party alliance, replied, "Okay... there will be sound-bombing from

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LOVE PEOPLE
GOD WILL
LOVE YOU**"

**HOMAGE TO THE HUMANITARIAN
SAMSON H. CHOWDHURY ON HIS BIRTH CENTENARY**

100 Years of

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