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Attack on bauls a 'heinous act' Says Fakhrul

STAR REPORT

BNP Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir has condemned the recent attacks on baul singers, terming them "heinous acts".

Referring to Bangladesh's age-old cultural tradition, he said baul songs represent the timeless heritage of rural Bengal.

"Our bauls perform in every corner of the country -- in villages, fields and open spaces. I believe these attacks on them are carried out by religious extremists. This is unacceptable. Choosing the path of violence and vengeance is not befitting for anyone."

Fakhrul made the remarks while talking to journalists after inaugurating the newly constructed building of the district unit BNP office in Thakurgaon town yesterday afternoon, reports our local correspondent.

Earlier in the day, two baul artistes were injured in an attack while they were preparing to form a human chain on the Thakurgaon Judge Court premises, demanding the

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'832 bhorti gold doesn't belong to Hasina alone'

ACC says it was also stored under names of her family members

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Anti-Corruption Commission has recovered 832 bhorti (9,707.16 grams) of gold from two lockers at Agrani Bank, with documents showing the assets were not held solely in the name of ousted prime minister Sheikh Hasina.

The gold was reportedly stored under the names of several family members, including her sister Sheikh Rehana and daughter Saima Wazed Putul. The items include jewellery and gold models of a boat and a deer, said ACC Director General Akhtar Hossain at a press conference at the ACC headquarters in Segunbagicha yesterday.

He said the legality of the gold belonging to Hasina and her family members is under verification.

The lockers were opened on Tuesday at Agrani Bank's principal branch in Motijheel following a court order.

Hasina declared in her 2007 wealth statement that she held one locker at Pubali Bank and two at Agrani Bank.

ACC investigator Md Masudur Rahman applied to the court on September 14 to open them, and the Senior Metropolitan Special Judge's Court authorised the process in the

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জাতীয় প্রাণিসম্পদ সঞ্চাহ ২০২৫ (২৬ নভেম্বর-২ ডিসেম্বর)



সকল জেলা ও উপজেলায় নানা কর্মসূচির মাধ্যমে এই সঞ্চাহ উদযাপন করা হচ্ছে। এই উপলক্ষ্যে পুরাতন বাণিজ্য মেলার মাঠ, শের-ই-বাংলা নগর, ঢাকায় আকর্ষণ্য প্রাণিসম্পদ মেলা ও ফুড ফেস্টিভাল এর আয়োজন করা হচ্ছে। আপনি সপরিবারে আমন্ত্রিত।

উদ্দেশ্য:

- দেশীয় জাতের প্রাণিসম্পদ সংরক্ষণ ও টেকসই উন্নয়নের উকুজ হৃতে ধরা
- প্রাণিসম্পদ খাতে আধুনিক প্রযুক্তি, উৎকাবন ও সফল উদ্যোগসমূহের সম্প্রসারণ
- প্রাণিসম্পদ সুরক্ষা, রোগ নিয়ন্ত্রণ এবং পরিবেশবান্ধব গবাদিপত্র ও হাঁস-মুরগি পালনে উন্নয়ন
- গবাদিপত্র ও হাঁস-মুরগি পালনে অভিজ্ঞতা বিনিয়নের সুযোগ সৃষ্টি
- খামারিদের সাথে সরকারি ও বেসরকারি খাতের সংযোগ স্থাপন
- নারী ও যুবসমাজকে প্রাণিসম্পদ ভিত্তিক উদ্যোগ কার্যক্রমে সম্পৃক্তকরণ

প্রাণিসম্পদ অধিদপ্তর
মন্ত্র্য ও প্রাণিসম্পদ মন্ত্রণালয়

GD-2560



A man breaks down in tears in front of the burning high-rise residential towers in Tai Po, Hong Kong, China, yesterday. He said his wife was trapped inside one of the buildings.

PHOTO: REUTERS

Phantom bank account linked to S Alam Group

Investigators unable to trace account holder, suspect money laundering

MOHAMMAD SUMAN, Chattogram

More than Tk 549 crore sit idle for over a year now in an account of a suspected shell company linked to S Alam Group, but investigators and Islami Bank officials are unable to trace the account holder.

The account named "Top Ten Trading House" was opened on April 13, 2023, at Islami Bank's Khutunganj branch in Chattogram. Bank documents show the owner is Almas Ali, and the company's registered address is listed as 23/5 Gopalbagh Residential Building, Jatrabari, Dhaka.

Over the last one year, bank officials served six formal notices on the so-called account holder to appear before the bank, but he did not show up. Bank officials also visited both his stated permanent and present addresses, but failed to verify his existence, raising questions about who actually opened the account.

"The owner of this account has never come to the bank. In fact, we could not confirm if he is a real person," Muhammad Jamal Uddin, a senior vice-president and head of Islami Bank's Khutunganj branch, told The Daily Star.

In recent months, several groups allegedly linked to S Alam Group tried to withdraw funds from the account using fake vouchers and cheques, even offering bribes to bank officials, he said but did not give any names.

36 killed in high-rise inferno in HK
Hundreds missing

REUTERS, Hong Kong

At least 36 people were killed and 279 were missing yesterday after Hong Kong's deadliest fire in three decades ripped through high-rise residential towers sheathed in flammable bamboo scaffolding, authorities said.

More than 10 hours after the fire started in the northern Tai Po district, flames and thick smoke still engulfed the 32-storey towers as rescue workers swarmed the site and shocked inhabitants watched nearby.

The cause of the blaze was not immediately known, but it was fanned by green construction mesh and bamboo scaffolding which the government began phasing out in March for safety reasons.

Working through the night, firefighters were struggling to reach upper floors of the Wang Fuk Court housing complex, which has 2,000 apartments in eight blocks, due to the intense heat.

One 71-year-old resident surnamed Wong broke down in tears, saying his

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- ⌚ Account opened without verification; bank admits failure
- ⌚ Over Tk 600cr routed through multiple shell firms
- ⌚ Transactions linked to S Alam went unquestioned during AL regime
- ⌚ Post-Aug 5 changeover, 200 S Alam-linked accounts seized
- ⌚ ACC sues S Alam, former Islami Bank DMD Akiz Uddin

"When the account was opened, I was not at this branch. But officials who were posted at the time said they were forced to open it without following proper procedures and verifying documents," Jamal added.

ACC SUES S ALAM

The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), which is investigating the matter, analysed Top Ten's documents and identified two more shell companies -- Alam Trading & Business House

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HASINA'S EXTRADITION Delhi examining request, Dhaka expects response

STAR REPORT

India yesterday acknowledged receiving a request from Bangladesh for the extradition of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and said that the request was being examined.

"Yes, we have received the request. And this request is being examined as part of ongoing judicial and internal legal processes," Randhir Jaiswal, spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs, told reporters while responding to a question at a regular briefing in New Delhi.

Hasina has been staying in India since her ouster on August 5 last year.

Jaiswal said India remained "committed to the best interest of the people of Bangladesh, including peace, democracy, inclusion and stability in that country, and will continue to engage constructively in this regard with all stakeholders."

Earlier yesterday, Foreign Affairs Adviser Md Touhid Hossain said Bangladesh expects a response from India regarding the latest extradition request made after the International Crimes Tribunal-1 convicted Hasina for committing crimes against humanity during last year's uprising.

"I do not expect an answer within a week of Dhaka's request, but we do expect a response," he said during a press meet at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On Sunday, Touhid said that Bangladesh sent a diplomatic note (note verbale) to India through its High Commission in New Delhi seeking Hasina's extradition.

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Scientists 'astonished' as moss survives 9 months in space



INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

A study to see how moss would fare in the extreme environment of space has left scientists "genuinely astonished" after the plant was able to survive nine months outside the International Space Station (ISS).

Moss is one of the most resilient living organisms on the planet, capable of surviving in the harshest environments – from the peaks of the Himalayas, to the Antarctic tundra.

The plant species has also survived several mass extinction events, leading researchers to wonder how it would cope beyond Earth.

A series of lab tests at Hokkaido University in Japan were undertaken to see how a type of moss called spreading earthmoss fared under stresses like UV radiation, extreme high and low temperatures, and vacuum conditions.

Hundreds of moss sporophytes – the reproductive structures that encase spores – were sent to the ISS in March 2022, where astronauts placed them outside the orbiting laboratory for 288 days. They were then returned to Earth for further testing.

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