

# **CORRUPTION**

**Under Begum Zia's Rule**

A compilation of extracts from newspaper reports  
on instances of corruption of the past BNP government  
under Begum Khaleda Zia's rule

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A compilation of extracts from newspaper reports on various instances of corruption during the last BNP government, under the rule of Begum Khaleda Zia



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Compiled by Aslam Sani

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***Begum Ziar Shashonamoler Durniti***

## *Introduction*

Down the annals of history, the three and a half thousand years of Bengal's past have been filled with pride, glory, joy and contentment. There have been times of loss too, of hardship, suffering, exploitation and shame. This history has been molded through the ages by a variety of rulers, political leaders, reformers and philosophers. They have striven to take the nation ahead in progress and development.

The Bengalis have been ever-vigilant against misrule and exploitation. At the end of the British rule, the two-nation theory led to the absurd formation of Pakistan. The 25 years of Pakistan rule were filled with regionalism, discrimination, irregularities, corruption and shameless looting of resources. The Bengalis rose against this injustice. They were determined to establish their rights, justice and to stand proud as a nation of honour.

In 1971, independence placed the Bengali nation in a position of respect among the countries of the world. But the looting did not end there. Certain quarters continued to plunder the wealth of the nation, leaving the exchequer empty and bare. While slogans declare that the party is greater than the individual, the country greater than the party, in reality the practice has been different. Once in power, the individual takes predominance over the nation, over the interests of the people. Misuse of power leads to politicisation, irregularities, disorder and corruption. These anti-state political leaders, activists,

ministers and members of parliament are not brought to justice. And even the bureaucracy takes full advantage of the situation.

The five years of Begum Khaleda Zia's rule have been a dark chapter in the history of the nation. The general people and the bureaucrats who supported the so-called nationalist BNP government had misappropriated millions of taka from the state and the people. BNP Chairperson Begum Khaleda Zia herself, her brother Maj. (retd.) Sayeed Iskander, her son Tarek Rahman and her sister Khurshid Jahan Chocolate amassed millions of taka from the banks. How can these loan defaulters be tried? How can we get back the default loans of their day when they themselves were the initiators?

Claimant to the battered suitcase and torn vest of President General Zia, Khaleda Zia came to power to create a chapter of unprecedented corruption. Starting from Khaleda Zia's two sons, her brother, brother's wife to the BNP ministers, MPs and party leaders, they all resorted to abuse of power to misappropriate millions of taka. The so-called tide of development swept only through lives of BNP's leaders and activists, it did not touch the people at all. An inquiry committee was formed to look into the corruption of Minister Majid Ul Haque, but the committee was never allowed to function. The parliamentary committee revealed the corruption of Sakhawat Hossain Bakul MP of BNP, but naught was done. In fact, he was nominated as an election candidate once again.

The BNP government violated the Constitution at every step. Only BNP persons were given appointments in all spheres of work and business. Those who could pay exorbitant bribes were favoured. Capabilities were not taken into account. Jobs were granted in accordance to the wish of the Prime Minister and in keeping with the ministers' lists. Even fertiliser dealers were appointed from among BNP supporters, leading to the

infamous fertiliser scandal. Eighteen farmers were shot dead as they demanded fertiliser. The government broke all records of bribery, corruption, nepotism and politicisation.

While claiming to be a democratic government, BNP's autocracy surpassed even that of Ershad. It lacked minimum tolerance for any party other than its own. This publication presents some examples of the corruption of the period 1991-95.

The five-year rule of BNP is filled with such instances of corruption. The political leaders of the country stood up against this corruption. Following are a few excerpts of statements against the corruption of Begum Zia's rule made at various seminars and symposiums by politicians some of whom have joined BNP or have now become BNP-minded.

- The BNP government is one of corruption, terrorism and a politicised administration. – **Moudud Ahmed** (Former Vice President of the Jatiya Party government & presently senior leader of BNP), *Inqilab*, 7 August '93
- Corruption and nepotism is being carried out in the name of development – **Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury** (former chief of NDP & presently senior leader of BNP), *Ittefaq*, 7 November '93
- A white paper must be published on the activities of certain corrupt ministers of the BNP government. – **Moudud Ahmed**, *Ittefaq*, 25 December '93
- The BNP government has presented the nation with terrorism, corruption and extortion. – **Moudud Ahmed**, *Janakantha*, 23 January '98
- The present government has failed to bring about any progress due to its limitless corruption. – **Moudud Ahmed**, *Janakantha*, 7 September, 1993



- Over the two years of BNP rule, corruption has spread throughout the country. – **Obaidur Rahman**, *Ajker Kagoj*, 20 March '93
- The government has crippled the economy with its corruption and nepotism. – **Obaidur Rahman**, *Janakantha*, 21 March '93
- BNP has doubled its corruption after coming to power in order to provide financial benefits to its leaders and workers. – **Matiur Rahman Nizami** (Secretary General of Jamaate-Islami which is now part of the BNP-led opposition alliance), *Bhorer Kagoj*, 11 July '93.
- The failure of this corrupt and unqualified government is now clear as broad daylight. – **Matiur Rahman Nizami**, *Sangram*, 20 March '95
- The BNP government wants to cling on to power by means of corruption. – **Matiur Rahman Nizami**, *Shakaler Khabar*, 14 August '95
- BNP is apprehensive of facing an election with the stigma of corruption upon its head. – **Matiur Rahman Nizami**, *Ittefaq*, 17 January '96
- The last five years' rule of BNP has been a rule of corruption, a misrule. – **Abbas Ali Khan** (Leader of Jamaat-e-Islami, now part of the BNP-led opposition alliance), *Sangram*, 24 February '96
- Corruption, terrorism, degeneration and frustration have gripped the social scene. – **Kazi Zafar** (Jatiya Party leader and former Prime Minister of JP government), *Banglar Bani*, 4 September '93
- Within a few days, the nature of corruption of the BNP ministers will be revealed. – **Kazi Zafar**, *Bhorer Kagoj*, 19 November '94

- The general public is not getting relief due to party power and corruption. – **Shafiul Alam Prodhan** (JAGPA), *Ittefaq*, 24 September
- Khaleda Zia's ministers, MPs and her relations are involved in corruption and pilferage. – **Shafiul Alam Prodhan**, *Sangram*, 7 April '95
- Millions of taka is now coming out of Ziaur Rahman's broken suitcase. – **Charmonai Peer**, *Ittefaq*, 13 November '95

Let all corruption of the past be brought to justice and let Bangladesh usher in a corruption-free and accountable administration.

**Aslam Sani**



## **Kagoj**

Wednesday, 15 May, '91

### CORRUPTION IN PURCHASE OF F-28 AIRCRAFT

## **Majed Ul Haque took 50 thousand dollar bribe**

The Minister in charge of Agriculture, Irrigation and Water Resources Major General (retd.) Majed Ul Haque was introduced to politics through Ziaur Rahman. He was an influential and policy making minister in the Cabinets of Zia and Justice Sattar. He was involved in many vital policy decisions of the government. However, he has not always been free of corruption in taking these decisions and has misused his authority. On 24 March 1982, Justice Sattar handed over power to the Army Chief at the time of HM Ershad, leading to the fall of the BNP government. Major General (retd.) Majed Ul Haque was one of the

main persons against whom specific charges of corruption, misappropriation of funds and abuse of power were brought and proven. He was sent to jail not for political reasons, but for being proven guilty of corruption.

Major General (retd.) Majed Ul Haque had been the Establishment Minister during the rule of Justice Sattar. At that time, he mediated a deal to purchase two F-28 aircraft at a price much higher than the market value. On one hand he received a huge bribe while, on the other, the government had to face considerable losses. According to sources in the Anti-Corruption Bureau, while he had been the Establishment Minister, he arranged a secret meeting between the Civil Aviation Minister at the time Obaidur Rahman and the Fokker representative regarding the purchase of the F-28 aircraft for Biman. He received 50 thousand dollars as a bribe to arrange and mediate this meeting. Though there was no need for Major General (retd.) Majed Ul Haque's mediation. The two F-28 aircraft were purchased without reviewing the market. Though he was not in charge of the relevant Ministry, he still went ahead to initiate the deal and actively played the role of a mediator. He blatantly misused his power. As a result of buying these two aircraft, Bangladesh Biman incurred a financial loss of Tk. 124.21 million approximately. This made Biman a losing concern. After the fall of the BNP government, this corruption was investigated under the martial law of Ershad. His was tried by a five-member special military tribunal headed by Colonel ABM Ilyas in 1982. He was

proven guilty, but in consideration of his age and his past contributions, he was given a light sentence of five years rigorous imprisonment and a Tk. 300,000 fine. Additionally, there were several allegations against him for misusing his position while in power to manipulate certain irregular promotions, appointments and transfers.

## **The Daily Sangbad**

Tuesday 2 May '93

### THE HOUSE AT 30 HARE ROAD HEATED DEBATE AT CABINET MEETING

## **Works Minister and engineers responsible for extra expenditure: Inquiry Committee Ministry's denial**

The inquiry committee, headed by Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank Shah Abdul Hannan, has unearthed considerable evidence pointing to irregularities in the construction of the 'palace' at 30 Hare Road. The committee holds the three Chief Engineers and the Works Minister responsible for the extra expenditure of Tk. 66.7 million. The Works Ministry has denied these

allegations, stating that the Ministry was in no way involved in any additional or irregular work at any time. The Cabinet meeting broke into an hour long heated debate yesterday, Monday, over the inquiry committee report and the Works Ministry's response. A certain Minister, during the meeting, referred to the editorial of *Sangbad* regarding the house at 30 Hare Road. Several members of the Cabinet felt that the public should be apprised of the matter as soon as possible as the government's decision to carry out an investigation into the matter had generated considerable interest. Instead of conducting a fresh inquiry, the Cabinet has ordered that the committee's response to the Works Ministry's statement be gathered within two weeks and submitted at the Cabinet meeting. Towards the beginning of 1990, the President at the time HM Ershad had issued a verbal order for the construction of a Vice President's Residence at 30 Hare Road in Ramna, Dhaka. A work order was issued in April that year for this task entailing an expenditure of Tk. 73.8 million. Work continued on this building even after the fall of Ershad's government in December 1990, up till February 1991. Work halted in March 1991. At the Cabinet meeting of 12 August 1991, it was decided that the work on the building be completed speedily at the stipulated cost.

Under the present government (BNP government), the amended cost estimate increased to Tk. 136.8 million was submitted for approval at the cabinet meeting of 30 November last year. The increased cost estimated annoyed the Cabinet and orders were issued to

identify the officers responsible for increase of expenditure. A press release informed the public about the decision to inquire into the matter.

The inquiry committee report has made eleven observations. The Works Ministry has issued a statement concerning the observations 3, 4 and 5. These points hold the higher authorities of the Works Ministry, including the Works Minister, responsible. The Works Ministry states that these observations had been made without giving them a chance to make their own submission. The Works Committee proposed that another committee be formed to inquire into the matter again to identify the responsible persons and put forward specific charges against them. The Cabinet did not accept this proposal.

The eleven observations of the inquiry committee:

1. The original expenditure for construction of the Vice President's residence at 30 Hare Road was Tk. 73.8 million. With increase in work, changes in specifications, additional work outside of the tender and increase in physical size of the project, the expenditure went up to Tk. 136.8 million. Additional costs were Tk. 66.73 million.
2. There is no justification in having rooms for the President, for the President's security force and the President's ADC in a house built for the Vice President. This proves the point that though the house being made for the Vice President, in actuality it was for the President.



3. In the summary prepared by the Works Ministry on 15 July 1991 for the Cabinet, no mention was made of work progress, the extended size of the building (26,000 to 32,000 sq. ft.) and the extra expenditure that would be required to complete the building. On the contrary, it mentioned a possible cut in expenses. The actual picture was not given to the Cabinet. As a result, the cabinet, in its meeting of 12 December 1991, could not assess the actual size and shape of the building. That is why the inquiry committee has held the Works Ministry's higher authorities, who drew up the summary on 15 July 1991, responsible.
4. The reason for the building's expenditure to increase was the size of 6000 sq. ft., the expansion, the addition of new items, payment of taxes, telephone line connection fees and the DESA electric line connection. These matters were required for the project, but had not been included in the initial estimate. On 29 August last year the Works Ministry ordered completion of three fountains which had not been included in the tender. Also, on 17 September at a meeting in the Prime Minister's Office, in the presence of the Works Minister, it was decided to demolish the house on 23 Bailey Road (Minister Tariqul Islam's house) and lush green lawn there. Extra expenditure would be definitely needed for such additional work, of which the Works Ministry was undoubtedly aware. The Ministry should have informed the Cabinet of the

matter and taken its approval to carry out the tasks which exceeded the tender value.

5. The supervisory committee formed by the Works Ministry was to take decisions on small details and help in rapid completion of the work. But the supervisory committee amended many items which were not in the schedule, though it had not been specified that the committee had the authority to do so. Though the Cabinet has said that the appropriate authorities would decide for what purpose the building was to be used upon completion, in three meetings the supervisory committee referred to it as the Prime Minister's residence in an attempt to influence this decision.
6. At a meeting on 6 August 1992, the Works Minister ordered that the construction of the building to be completed within 30 November 1992 for certain state programmes of SAARC. The relevant authorities drew up a memo for an additional Tk. 15 million on 3 September for the boundary wall, gate house, reception room, outer park area, sentry box, landscaping, etc. These matters were necessary anyway for any state-level building, so SAARC cannot be used as an excuse for increased expenses.
7. Tender was floated and the work was taken up without administrative approval. Once the work began, the Works Ministry issued orders to the contractor to carry out the work without approval of the tender and later tried to shirk their responsibility.

The main reasons for these irregularities were undue hurry over the project, unlawful interference by senior members of the government and unwillingness to follow the rules.

8. A review of two expenditure lists of the City Works Department and the E/M Public Works Department respectively was carried out and a comparison was drawn between the costs of the tender and the additional work costs. The increased expenditure for civil and sanitary works was 59 and 102 per cent respectively. The excuse for this increase was that during the time that the tender was floated the services design hadn't been prepared and the actual size and shape of the building was still not known. There was inadequate time to draw up an estimate and also a lack of coordination between various section of the Public Works Department.
9. The main reasons for the increased expenditure are: The details regarding various components of the project were not ready; unacceptable haste in drawing up the estimate; excessive haste in preparing and calling the tender; submitting the designs part by part after the beginning of the work; taking sudden decisions to take up work outside the schedule without due approval; lack of coordination between the project proponents.
10. Though the inquiry committee found the above irregularities, it did not find any proof of specific corruption.

11. In its overall considerations, the committee has said that the project expenditure could not be kept within the projected tender expenditure due to the addition of several items.

### **The Daily Janakantha**

Thursday, 24 June, '93

#### INITIAL REPORT PLACED IN PARLIAMENT

### **Parliamentary Committee at a standstill over inquiry into corruption**

The special parliamentary committee, formed to look into allegations of corruption against Agriculture Minister Majed Ul Haque and his Ministry, has come to a standstill.

This was stated in the initial report of the committee placed in parliament on Wednesday. After the Chairman of the committee Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali placed the report in parliament, a long debate ensued over the future of the committee. On Wednesday night Minister Majed Ul Haque informed the parliament that bringing about allegations without any proof of corruption was simply an attempt to tarnish the image of a Cabinet member.

After Minister Majedul Ul Haque issued a statement in the parliament giving his personal explanation, a second round of debate on corruption broke out.

Prior to this, Tofail Ahmed MP, who had brought about the allegations, said that he had specific proof of corruption.

The initial report of the committee stated that it had had 12 meetings in the past five months. The meetings mainly discussed the formulation of terms of reference. The Treasury Bench and Opposition members submitted separate proposals regarding the terms of reference. Two members were given the responsibility in the ninth meeting to find a solution to the matter. The report stated that despite their sincere efforts, they failed to resolve the stalemate in the committee.

After Speaker Sheikh Razzak Ali presented the report to the parliament, Awami League MP Col. (retd.) Shawkat Ali said, the parliament could not accept the report in this manner. He wanted to know of the committee's future.

The Speaker said that in accordance to the Rules of Business, there was no provision for immediate discussion or reaction on a parliamentary committee report. A separate notice has to be posted for such discussion.

Even so, a debate continued in the parliament on the issue.

Members of the Opposition said that the committee wasn't working in fear of corruption being revealed.

They proposed that the parliament be brought into confidence if necessary to fix the committee's terms of reference and bring an end to the standstill.

Members of the Treasury Bench said that it was unfortunate that allegations of corruption were brought about though no proof was found in court or in the investigations of the committee. Such allegations could be made at any time against anybody. They said that the present government was transparent and free of corruption. They called for the rules of parliament to be followed and that the report could be discussed in keeping with the rules.

Deputy Leader of the Opposition Abdus Samad Azad, Tofail Ahmed, Mohammed Nasim, Moudud Ahmed, Suranjit Sen Gupta, Sudhangshu Shekhar Haldar and Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury all took part in the debate. On behalf of the government, Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar, Barrister Rafiqul Islam Miah, Barrister Zamiruddin Sircar and Barrister Nazmul Huda participated.

During the discussion, the opposition members said that of the 12 meetings of the committee, news of eleven weren't broadcast over radio and TV though the parliamentary secretariat had sent the news to be aired. Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda responded by saying that the opposition was bringing about false allegations of corruption against the government out of their own political motives and to hide their own corruption. He said that false news could not be aired on radio and TV.

Chief Whip of the Opposition Mohammed Nasim brought about allegations of corruption about the Information Ministry. He said, *Dainik Bangla* was being published from London twice a week. The Information Minister's own person was appointed there with a salary of Tk. 70 thousand. Every week copies of the newspaper were being flown to London at a cost of Tk. 5000 and yet journalists within the country weren't being paid regularly. He said this was an instance of gross corruption.

The debate on the special parliamentary committee ended with no decision. The committee had been formed last July following allegations of corruption brought about by Awami League's Tofail Ahmed MP against Agriculture Minister Majed Ul Haque.

## **The Daily Sangbad**

Thursday, 7 October, '93

### TWO MPS LETTERS TO THE ENERGY MINISTER

## **Violation of rules in granting project work alleged**

Allegations have been brought about irregularities and violation of the rules in granting of work for three large

projects worth hundreds of millions of taka under the Ministry for Energy and Mineral Resources. Two members of the Ministry's standing committee made the allegations in a letter to the concerned Minister.

In the letter sent to the Energy Minister yesterday, committee member AKM Jahangir Hossain and Abdul Awal Miah said as a result of this discrepancy, there is fear of corruption and underhand manipulation. This has tarnished the image of an elected government's work process. The government will have to answer for this. In the letter they stated that as members of the standing committee, in no way could they bear the responsibility of the irregularity and violation of rules.

The letter stated that North Korea's South South Corporation was being given the Tk. 6.87 billion work for the Maddhyapara Hard Rock Mining Project. The Tk. 9.16 billion work of the Barapukuria Coal Mining Project was being given to M/s China National Machinery Import & Export Corporation. The same company was being given the Tk. 5 billion Second Unit Project of Rauzan 210 MW Thermal Power Plant. This company had set up the first unit as well. There are no allegations against the companies or countries that have been granted the work. The allegations are against the process of granting the work of these three projects. The rules in granting such work worth millions of taka have been overlooked.

The members said that according to the rules, such work calls for international competitive tender after which the work order is awarded to the lowest bidder.



This is applicable in the case of Suppliers' Credit as well. However, these rules were grossly violated in the granting of work for these three projects. Work orders were issued without any international tender. The rule for floating international competitive tenders in the case of suppliers' credit was not followed. The same companies may still have been awarded the work had the proper process been followed. It was said that national interests were completely overlooked in granting the work for these projects without following the rules of international tenders.

### **The Daily Janakantha**

Saturday, 26 June, '93

## **Will the case of misappropriation of Tk. 280 million be kept under covers?**

The Energy Minister and nine officials of Titas Gas Company have been accused of misappropriating Tk. 280 million from the government exchequer. Several corruption cases were filed against the officers a year and a half ago. A corruption case was filed against the former Energy Minister too. However, till now no action has been taken. On the contrary, they have

been promoted. Many of the officers arranged for these files to be kept under covers and have managed promotions for themselves.

This instance of corruption took place towards the beginning of 1989, in the Tk. 3.22 billion Brahmaputra Gas Transmission project. It was alleged that Tk. 280 million of the government was embezzled in two phases of drawing up the project's construction contract and its implementation. At the order of the head of the present government, the Anti-Corruption Bureau investigated the matter for a few months and towards mid '91 unearthed this scam. Two detailed reports were submitted to the Prime Minister's Office. The reports revealed the misappropriation of Tk. 205 million in one case and of Tk. 75 million in the other. The report brought about specific allegations of corruption against the former Energy Minister, former Managing Director of Titas Gas and a few others for misappropriation of Tk. 280 million from the government exchequer. The inquiry report of the Bureau stated that with the help of the Energy Minister, the lowest bidder for the project was not awarded the contract. Instead the work was given to the second lowest bidder by means of false information and approval of officials at various levels, with Tk. 205 million being embezzled from the government funds. Another Tk. 70 million was misappropriated after the work was granted and the project was under implementation, in collusion with the contractors, by means of violating the terms of the contract, abuse of power, unlawfully acquitting the contractors from

having to provide certain services and from carrying out non-profitable work items in the contract, getting low quality work done, not cutting payment for liquefied damage and other irregularities.

After the report on the corruption was approved by Heads of two governments, the Anti Corruption Bureau filed a case on 9 November 1991 at the Ramna Police Station for misappropriation of Tk. 205 million by the Energy Minister in league with certain officials and on 2 January 1992 with the Mohammedpur Police Station against nine officials of Titas Gas for the misappropriation of Tk. 75 million.

After filing of the cases, so far no steps have been taken to resolve them. Under the influence of certain quarters, this corruption involving misappropriation of Tk. 280 million has been kept under the covers. The Investigation Officer placed the chargesheet report with the higher authorities for the Prime Minister's approval on 24 August 1992. However, the chargesheet report has not reached the Prime Minister's Office as yet. Initiative has been taken by certain quarters to ensure that no chargesheet report is submitted about the misappropriation of Tk. 75 million by those accused in the corruption case. Influence was exerted in this regard by proffering false information. The main Investigating Officer was transferred. Then recommendations to absolve the accused of the charges were submitted for approval to the Prime Minister's Office in November 1992. The Prime Minister's Office sent the file back to the Anti-

Corruption Bureau in December '92, asking for an explanation of the differences between the inquiry report and the case report. The file was sent again to the Prime Minister's Office in February '93. The file was sent back to the Anti-Corruption Bureau in April '93, expressing dissatisfaction with the matter and calling for a re-inquiry. The files are now missing from the Anti-Corruption Bureau.

According to the service rules for government officials, these accused officials should be suspended and other measures taken against them until the matter is resolved. However, none of these rules have been enforced. On the contrary, they have been promoted.

## **The Daily Sangbad**

Thursday, 1 July, '93

### TOFAIL READS OUT MINISTER'S NOTE **Allegations of nepotism brought against Majed Ul Haque in appointment of teachers**

Awami League's Tofail Ahmed yesterday brought about allegations against Agriculture Minister Majed Ul Haque in the parliament once again.

During the discussion brought about by the opposition calling to down size the grant demanded by the Education Ministry in the budget, Tofail Ahmed read out a note written to a certain officer by the Agriculture & Irrigation Minister Majed Ul Haque on 15 June 1991 regarding the appointment of teachers to two schools in Magura. The Minister's note had 15 names for teachers to be appointed at Assistant Teacher level.

The note stated, "There are six vacant posts at the Magura Girls Schools and eight vacancies at the Boys School. These candidates also faced the teachers' interview in Khulna, but none of our candidates have been selected so far. As the appointments are to be made on a district quota basis, I request that the first 14 on this list be appointed on a priority basis." While Tofail Ahmed read out this note, the opposition members cried out, "Shame, shame!" The Agriculture Minister remained silent. Tofail Ahmed sent a copy of this note to the Speaker. He said, "I have brought about corruption charges against the Agriculture Minister. I don't know where this will lead, but things cannot continue in this manner."

He brought about allegations of corruption in the education sector, saying that bribes had to be paid from the very gate of the Shikkha Bhaban. It had been decided to prevent corruption in the appointment of primary teachers by using computers, but that never materialised. Yet the government spoke about transparency and accountability. He called for all MPs

to be given a lumpsum allocation of Tk. 200,000 each to improve education in their respective constituencies.

Awami League's Sajeda Chowdhury, Salahuddin Yusuf, JSD's Shahjahan Siraj and Jamaat-e-Islami's AM Riasat Ali criticised the government's failure in the education sector. Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar said that the government was committed to free the country of illiteracy by the year 2000.

He said that accusations of corruption were very common. Everyone had to jointly work to build a corruption-free society.

## **The Daily Sangbad**

Wednesday, 7 July, '93

### **Allegations of corruption against State Minister for Civil Aviation sent to standing committee for examination**

The opposition in parliament has brought about allegations of corruption against another member of the Cabinet. Rashed Khan Menon of Workers Party brought about these allegations against State Minister

for Civil Aviation Abdul Mannan. Despite objections from the State Minister himself and from his party, Deputy Speaker Humayun Khan Panni ordered that the allegations of corruption be sent to the standing committee of the relevant Ministry for examination. In Menon's notice put forward in this regard, it was stated that in last February the Civil Aviation Authority floated tenders for the construction of four boarding bridges at Zia International Airport. Six companies submitted their bids. China Machineries Corporation was the lowest bidder, with a difference of about Tk. 16 million from the others. However, the Civil Aviation Authority did not provide the lowest bidder with the work order, but without any approval of the authorities hurriedly called for a re-tender in order to give the contract to the US company Z Way though it was the third highest bidder. Six companies participated in the re-tender and the American company Z Way was shown as the lowest bidder and granted the contract. The government has been deprived of about Tk. 10 million due to this irregularity of the Civil Aviation Authority.

The State Minister said that not six, but nine companies had participated in the first tender. Since all of these had discrepancies, they were cancelled and re-tender called. In the second round there were six bids. Three of these were cancelled. Of the remaining three, the American company was the lowest bidder. The American company was also considered more qualified than the Chinese company due to experience

in export and details about boarding bridges. The State Minister claimed that there had been no irregularities in this regard.

Getting the floor once again, Menon said that it was clear from the Minister's words that this was not a matter of irregularity, but of corruption. He said that after he had put up the notice, an LC was hurriedly opened to bring in machinery so that no changes could be made. He said that this was a sort of contempt of the parliament. He said that having had dealings with the same company, Ershad was now in jail. This government was doing the same thing. There was something wrong somewhere. He called for his allegations to be sent to the Standing Committee for the Civil Aviation Ministry.

The Deputy Speaker then allowed the State Minister to speak. The Minister, somewhat agitated, said that if there had been corruption, then it was Menon who was speaking in favour of the Chinese for business interests. He asked that an inquiry be made into the matter and he opposed that the allegations brought against him be sent to the standing committee. The opposition members protested against the State Minister's statement. Menon said that if the State Minister could not prove his statement about business interests being involved in his defending the Chinese, then he (the Minister) would have to resign. He said that he did not belong to a party of thieves and did not have to go to jail for corruption. He said that he did not have to prove his honesty to the Minister.



Amid the agitation in the parliament, Deputy Leader of the House Professor Badruddoza Chowdhury arose and said that any allegation could be sent to the parliamentary standing committee. However, it was meaningless to repeatedly demand the resignation of Ministers. He said that State Minister did not work for Menon that he would have to resign at his orders. Only the Prime Minister had this right.

The Deputy Speaker ruled that the allegation be sent to the standing committee. Information Minister also alleged that Menon's business interests were involved in the matter. He opposed the sending of the matter to the standing committee. Seeing the rising agitation, the Deputy Speaker adjourned the session for the Maghreb prayer.

After the break, the debate started again, with Abdus Samad Azad, Moudud Ahmed, Suranjit Sen Gupta and Matiur Rahman Nizami on behalf of the opposition and Deputy Leader of the House Badruddoza Chowdhury and Works Minister Barrister Rafiqul Islam on the other. The Speaker said that he would study the matter and then cancel anything that may be unconstitutional. Barrister Rafiq called for the formulation of a new law, saying that if any allegation against a Minister was not proven, the complainant would be charged with contempt of parliament. The Deputy Leader of the House supported this.

The debate ended with the Information Minister in a false position. When he tried to speak against Barrister Moudud, the Speaker turned off his microphone. The

Deputy Leader of the House said that the Information Minister had withdrawn his statement.

## **The Daily Janakantha**

Friday, 15 October, '93

### **Corruption allegations of Tk. 250 billion against 22 ministries**

Allegations of corruption, misappropriation, embezzlement of funds and irregularities amounting to Tk. 250 billion have been made against 22 ministries and departments. A summary of these irregularities, corruption and embezzlement has been sent to the Prime Minister's Secretariat. The Prime Minister's Secretariat has instructed the Finance Ministry to submit a summary of the corruption, embezzlement of funds and irregularities in all the ministries and departments by 15 September. The Finance Ministry urged all the Ministries and departments to submit reports on irregularities. After repeated reminders from the Prime Minister's Secretariat, finally a report was made on allegations of various irregularities amounting to Tk. 250 billion in 22 Ministries and departments. The remaining 19 Ministries and

departments failed to submit reports on corruption, misappropriation, embezzlement of funds and irregularities. The Finance Ministry declared these 19 Ministries and departments to be defaulters. It is reported that on-the-spot investigation and audit will reveal an even larger sum of irregularities in these Ministries and departments.

The 22 Ministries and departments of which these allegations of corruption and irregularities have been made include the Home Ministry, Establishment Ministry, Health Ministry, Jute Ministry, Water Resources Ministry, Energy and Mineral Resources Ministry, Agriculture Ministry, Textile Ministry, Relief Ministry, Shipping Ministry, Fisheries and Livestock Ministry, Civil Aviation Ministry, Food Ministry, Telecommunications Ministry, Commerce Ministry, Youth Ministry, Cultural Ministry, Finance Department, Railway Department and the Statistics Department. The defaulter Ministries and departments include the Environment Ministry, Textiles Ministry, Social Welfare Ministry, Labour and Manpower Ministry, Works Ministry, Defence Ministry, Information Ministry, Women's Affairs Ministry, Land Ministry, Law Ministry, Education Ministry, Foreign Ministry, Parliamentary Secretariat, Cabinet Division, Science Ministry, Roads and Road Transport Division, Rural Development and Cooperatives Department, Local Government Department and Internal Resources Department.

**The Daily Janakantha**

Thursday, 25 November, '93

**ANTI-CORRUPTION BUREAU INQUIRY REPORT****Allegations against 10 officials  
including Energy Minister**

Ten officials, including the Energy Ministry and two Joint Secretaries, have been accused of resorting to irregular means in making a payment of Tk. 560 million in the guise of compensation to Saipem, the contractors implementing Petrobangla's North-South Pipeline Project. Investigations of the Anti-Corruption Bureau have brought about these accusations. The Bureau drew up a summary in this regard for the Prime Minister's approval. The summary is to be sent to the Prime Minister's Office shortly. Once the Prime Minister approves the summary, the Anti-Corruption Bureau will file charges against the accused persons.

The accused persons include Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources Dr. Khandakar Mosharraf Hossain, two Joint Secretaries of his Ministry AW Chowdhury and Senior Assistant Secretary Abu Alam Shahid Khan. The other six officials also accused are former Chairman of Petrobangla AM Lutful Matin, former Director (Operations) Maruf Khan, former Project Director M Badruddoza, General Manager (Administration) AH Nizami, Project Engineering Chief Mahbubur Rahman and General Manager (Marketing)

of Titas Delwar Bakht. This is the Anti-Corruption Bureau's second round of investigation into the North-South Pipeline Project.

The Anti-Corruption Bureau was given the task of this second round of investigations last August. The Bureau came up with these allegations after over two months of investigations. The report will soon be sent to the Prime Minister for approval. The Prime Minister will decide whether charges will be filed against the persons accused in the investigations. Once the Prime Minister takes a decision, the Bureau will go ahead to take legal action.

It may be mentioned that Petrobangla has incurred losses of Tk. 3.19 billion as the contractor failed to implement the North-South Pipeline project within the scheduled time. Instead of following the contract to extract compensation from the contractors for this delay, a payment of Tk. 560 million was made on the contrary to the contractors. After this huge misappropriation of government funds was revealed, till now no action has been taken against this sensational case of corruption. Instead, one action after another is being taken to cover up the incident.

News of this corruption concerning the North-South Pipeline project began to leak out from July '91. The matter came to the attention of the Prime Minister in December that year. The Prime Minister ordered the Anti-Corruption Bureau to immediately conduct an investigation into the matter. The Bureau finished its investigations and drew up its final report in February

1992. The report held the six officials, including the Chairman of Petrobangla at the time, responsible. The report also held a senior quarter in the Ministry responsible.

The matter of paying the project contractor Tk. 560 million, in violation of the rules, was raised for discussion in the Cabinet meeting towards the end of April '92. After a detailed discussion of the matter was carried out, it was decided to form a high-powered committee for an in-depth investigation into the matter. In accordance to the decision taken at the Cabinet meeting, a three-member high-powered committee, headed by Dr. Iqbal Mahmud, carried out a five-month long investigation and submitted a final report to the government in September '92. Dr. Iqbal Mahmud's committee held the Ministry and the Ministry's department's responsible for this corruption.

The report was discussed twice at meetings of the Cabinet held between 1 March '93 and 20 March '93. A heated discussion on the report took place in the parliament in the second week of March. At this stage, the meeting of the Cabinet held on 29 March decided that the Energy Ministry would take initiative to blacklist the contractor Saipem and the project consultant Pencol. It would be examined whether the Project Director would be justified in claiming Tk. 3.19 billion from Saipem for adhering to the contract and whether they could resort to an arbitration in this regard. It was also decided to take departmental and legal action against those identified by the committee

as being responsible for these irregularities and failure to uphold national interests. The Energy Ministry would send the relevant papers to the Anti-Corruption Bureau to look into the matters mentioned in the inquiry committee's report.

The Local Government Minister, Information Minister, Works Minister and Education Minister were given the responsibility to ensure the implementation of these decisions taken by the Cabinet. The Energy Ministry would take action in accordance to whatever recommendations they would jointly decide upon.

In accordance to this decision of the Cabinet, the Anti-Corruption Bureau carried out a second round of investigations and has accused the above-mentioned persons of corruption in the North-South Pipeline Project.

In the meantime, the committee of the four Ministers also submitted its report last August. The Energy Ministry and the Energy Secretary had concealed information in this regard from the government's purchase council committee and the Cabinet. All information regarding the contractor's failure was distorted and placed in a misconstrued manner before the council committee and the Cabinet. Without any approval of the government whatsoever, the Petrobangla authorities finalised the matter of making a Tk. 560 million payment to the contractors and in January '92 made a down payment of Tk. 50 million to the contractor. Yet Petrobangla doesn't have the authority to make a payment of even five taka without

the government's approval. This matter was also kept secret from the Cabinet. Instead of apprising the Cabinet of the justification of demanding Tk. 3.19 billion from the contractor as compensation for its failure, in accordance to the contract drawn up by the Project Director, the Energy Minister and Energy Secretary made all-out efforts to ensure a payment of Tk. 560 million to the contractor in the name of compensation. They provided the Cabinet with wrong information regarding the clauses of the contract. The committee has clear proof of the matter.

After the Cabinet took the above-mentioned decision at its meeting on 29 March '93, suddenly on 30 June '93 the contractor filed a case with the International Arbitration Court demanding payment of its pending dues for compensation. Of the Tk. 560 million committed by the government, Tk. 140 million was still due. In the Cabinet meeting of April '92 the decision to pay this Tk. 560 million was taken on certain condition. The condition was that if the contractor was responsible for the delay, the money for compensation would be extracted by Petrobangla or the government from the contractor and the matter would be settled through arbitration. Apprehending that this demand for compensation may arise, following the decision of the 29 March '93 meeting of the Cabinet, certain vested quarters got the contractors to file this arbitration case in advance so that the government would not make a fuss and end the matter there. However, the committee of the four Ministers felt that since the contractor had gone for arbitration against Bangladesh, the counter



demand for a Tk. 3.19 billion compensation could be a defence. It is not known how far the Energy Ministry has proceeded in this regard.

So far all the reports regarding the matter, including that of the Dr. Iqbal Mahmud committee, have blamed the Ministry and the Ministry's departments for the corruption. However, in the Anti-Corruption Bureau's second inquiry report, while the names of lower ranking officials of the Ministry's departments remain, the name of the senior official has been dropped. Yet, as the executive head of the Ministry, no decision was taken without the Secretary's approval. It was the Secretary who submitted the summary to the Cabinet meeting by which the payment of Tk. 560 million as compensation to the contractor was approved.

## **The Daily Janakantha**

Thursday, 6 January, '94

### **Energy Minister's abuse of power and incidents of other irregularities**

Allegations have been made against the Minister for Energy and Mineral Resources concerning abuse of power. The allegations concern procurement of

furniture for his official residence. He has also been accused of not paying his electricity bills.

According to the law, the Department of Public Works is responsible for providing necessary furniture to the official residence of any Minister. In this case, however, the Minister misused his power and has procured the furniture through Titas Gas Company, under his own Ministry. He procured this furniture while he was the State Minister for Energy. Later the Department of Public Works also provided furniture for his residence in keeping with the rules. And the pending electricity bills of the Energy Minister are from the time that he was a teacher of Dhaka University.

All information regarding his misuse of power to procure the furniture through Titas Gas Company is recorded in the minutes of 265th Board Meeting of the company held on 25 May 1991. The meeting had been chaired by Azimuddin Ahmed. In item 24 97 of the minutes, it is stated that by means of a letter (letter no. BEMR/APS-7/91/79) issued on 11 April '91, the company's Managing Director was requested to supply three sofa sets, 20 high quality chairs, three high quality secretariat tables, 15 ordinary chairs, two steel cabinets, curtains for doors and windows, 1552 sq.ft. of carpet, one bookshelf and other items of furniture on an urgent basis for the residential office of the State Minister's official residence. The cost of this furniture has been shown as Tk.237,810. The Managing Director even got a telephone call from the State Minister's office in this regard. Accordingly, three

sofa sets worth Tk. 99,500 and 1552 sq. ft. of carpet worth Tk. 50,307.68 of the State Minister's choice were supplied to his official residence. Purchase of the remaining items of furniture was held up after the State Minister assured the company that these could be provided later on. The Managing Director placed the expenditure of Tk. 149,807.68 for the State Minister's furniture before the Board for approval. After reviewing the matter, the Board stated that the relevant Department/Directorate was to provide furniture for the State Minister's residential office. The Titas Gas Company Board said that the supply of furniture by the company was not in keeping with the rules and instructed the Managing Director to refrain from such irregular activities. It was decided at the Board meeting that the PS of the State Minister and the relevant Public Works Directorate had to be informed that the Tk. 149,807.68 for the sofas and carpet had been given as a temporary loan.

At a later date, the Public Works Department also provided furniture, in accordance to the rules, to the Energy Minister's official residence. In the meantime, though the Board meeting had stated that the cost of the supplied furniture had been provided as a loan, till now neither the money nor the furniture had been returned. The Public Works Department authorities state that they had supplied the furniture to the Minister's official residence in keeping with the rules and it was not their business as to how any other furniture had been supplied there. The Works

Department was not obliged to make payment for any such supply. Titas Gas is now in a problem over the matter. They can neither get the money nor the furniture from the Public Works department. They can't even coordinate this 'loan' in their accounts. Bargaining in this regard has been continuing for the last three years between the Public Works Department and Titas Gas Company.

Sources in the Ministry state that the Public Works Department under the Ministry of Public Works is responsible for the procurement of furniture for the official residence of any Minister. The Department carried out its responsibility in due time. A Minister is entitled to Tk. 150,000 worth of furniture for his official residence. The furniture was supplied to the Energy Minister's official residence in keeping within this quota. If the Minister procures furniture from any other sources and by any other means, that is the Minister's responsibility. Why should the Works Ministry bear the responsibility?

The allegations of non-payment of electricity bills by the Minister date back about three years. He had been a teacher of Dhaka University at the time. He would live at the Dhaka University quarters at No. 14/E Fuller Road. The Energy Minister would live there from 1986 till August 1991. There is a pending electricity bill for the seven months between January 1991 till July 1991 amounting to Tk. 1494.60. This was confirmed on 22 December when the DESA authorities were contacted in this regard.

## **The Daily Janakantha**

Tuesday, 11 January, '94

### GOVERNMENT LOSES TK. 220 MILLION AT PETROBANGLA

## **No chargesheet even in 14 months**

The chargesheet of the corruption case regarding loss of Tk. 230 million of state funds for the purchase of Petrobangla's gas treatment plant, has not been issued even in 14 months. After completing primary investigation into this incident, the Anti-Corruption Bureau filed this case against three officials of Petrobangla, including the Chairman, in November '92. However, the case has remained pending for long as the chargesheet was not issued in time. After the Anti-Corruption Bureau investigated the matter and filed a case in keeping with the Prime Minister's instruction, 14 months have passed and still no chargesheet has been issued.

About eight months ago after completion of the final investigation into the case, the chargesheet report was prepared and submitted to the higher authorities of the Anti-Corruption Bureau for departmental approval. According to the rules, once the Director General and other senior officials of the anti-Corruption Bureau approve the report, it is sent to the Prime Minister's Office. After the Prime Minister approves the report, the chargesheet is issued against the accused. However, not only has this report failed to reach the

Prime Minister's Office, it has even failed to cross the process of the Anti-Corruption Bureau's departmental approval. Concerned quarters are surprised at this process.

This large sum of money was wasted by the purchase of Petrobangla's Glycol Dehydration Plant reportedly for the treatment of gas field gas. Estimated cost of the plant had been Tk. 94.5 million, but it was purchased for Tk. 323.63 million. This meant a loss of Tk. 229.13 million from government funds. While this plant was being purchased, Petrobangla has another such plant lying stored away, unused and yet this was bought at such an exorbitant price. While several technical committee's pointed out that it would not be wise to purchase this plant when already one of equal standard existed, Petrobangla went ahead to purchase it at the cost of a large sum of government funds. The Anti-Corruption Bureau's case has stated that the decision was taken to purchase this plant in '89 under grant from the Netherlands government for the Rashidpur-1 gas well under Second Gas Development Project. The estimated cost was Tk. 94.5 million. At the end of the year a tender restricted to certain countries including the Netherlands was floated. After the bids were opened in April '90, the lowest bid was about Tk. 365 million. But the earlier plant had been bought for Tk. 30 million. This gave rise to questions as to whether it would be profitable to purchase the plant. A seven-member committee with Petrobangla's Director (Operations) as convenor was formed to evaluate the

matter. In the evaluation report of 23 April '91, it was observed that in view of the existing gas fields in the country, it would not be profitable to purchase this plant. This would excessively increase the production price of gas. There was no justification technically either for purchasing this plant. The Glycol Dehydration Plant would only be used to treat gas. In that case it would be more effective in all ways for Petrobangla to buy the Silicagel. This would be both financially and technically sound and logical. In its report, the committee recommended that the Glycol Dehydration Plant not be purchased, but that the one lying unused at the Bakhrabad gas field be transferred and used at Rashidpur.

However, senior officials of Petrobangla were extremely displeased with this report. Another technical committee was formed in June '91 to reevaluate this purchase. This committee, headed by Petrobangla's Director (Planning) also recommended that the Glycol Dehydration Plant not be bought, but the unused plant be used in order to save millions of taka. The authorities then formed another five-member committee. The convenor of the first committee, Petrobangla's Director (Operations) was made convenor of this third committee. He had strongly opposed the purchase of the Glycol Dehydration Plant when he was convenor of the first committee. Mysteriously, this third committee recommended that the plant be bought for Tk. 365 million. This was approved by the 128th Petrobangla Board meeting.

After approval of the Energy Ministry, this was sent to the Netherlands for approval of the Dutch government. The Dutch government agreed to pay Tk. 322.63 million for purchase of the plant. This was approved by the Cabinet committee and finally the Prime Minister on 21 December '91. During this process of approval, mysteriously the report of the evaluation committee, the report of the replacement committee and the first negotiation committee report were kept secret. Then the Glycol Dehydration Plant was purchased.

Towards the beginning of '92 when a state-controlled paper printed a report on the purchase of this plant, the Prime Minister ordered the Anti-Corruption Bureau to investigate the matter. After its primary investigations, Petrobangla filed a case on 18 November '92 with the Motijheel police station against former Chairman of Petrobangla MA Lutful Matin, former Director (Operations) MA Faruk Khan and former Project Director PIED M Badruddoza for wasting Tk. 229.13 million of the government funds. Over the past 14 months, the chargesheet of this case has not been issued.



**The Daily Bhorer Kagoj**

Tuesday, 11 January, '94

**Committees formed, but no reports  
drawn up  
Reports drawn up, but guilty persons  
not identified  
Identified persons not punished**

A complete farce is being carried out in the name of investigations into corruption, irregularities and abuse of power. As the government-level inquiry committees fail to carry out their duties, the accused persons get off scot-free.

Since the present (BNP) government came to power, over two dozen inquiry committees have been formed. The results of these committees, comprising senior government officials, are nil. Many of the inquiry committees delay in submitting the reports. In fact, the reports never see the light of day. And in many cases where the reports are submitted, these are virtually ineffective as they fail to identify the guilty persons.

While the inquiry committees are formed upon recommendations of important bodies such as the Cabinet or the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC), they are not carrying out their responsibilities properly. As a result, innumerable cases of fund misappropriation, irregularities and abuse of power remain unearthed. While Ministers

criticise the bureaucrats at Cabinet and ECNEC meetings for ineffective investigations, this does not make any difference. The Ministers are putty in the hands of the bureaucracy.

The major committees formed during this government's rule to look into corruption, irregularities and abuse of power are: 1) The North-South gas pipeline scam; 2) Haripur oil contract; 3) Karnaphuli Fertiliser Company Limited (KAFCO); 4) Ashuganj power plant; 5) Haripur gas turbine plant at Demra; 6) No. 30, Hare Road House; 7) construction of former President's Secretariat; 8) renovation of Ahsan Manzil; 9) Rupnagar Project; 10) expenditure of the timber factory of the Works Ministry; 11) purchase of the Banglar Shika vessel; 12) purchase of two Pakistani ships; 13) purchase of dredger for the Chittagong Port; 14) rendering the Chittagong port multi-purpose; 15) making three of BIWTC's ships diesel-run; 16) construction of a swimming pool; 17) construction of an indoor stadium; 18) Saidabad water treatment plant; 19) embankment by the Chittagong City Corporation and 20) the committee to look into the 10 defaulters of the State Bank.

While the guilty persons have been identified in the reports on the North-South gas pipeline, the house at Hare Road and the purchase of a dredger for Chittagong Port, no penalty measures have been taken against them. In some cases re-investigation is being carried out. These include the Rupnagar Project; the purchase of the vessel Banglar Shikha; purchase of two

ships from Pakistan; construction of the former President's Secretariat, renovation of Ahsan Manzil, the timber factory and the Haripur turbine plant. The inquiry committee formed one year ago to look into 10 thousand telephone lines of T&T without any subscribers, depriving the government from annual revenue of Tk. 1 billion, is yet to submit its report despite repeated reminders.

### **The Daily Ajker Kagoj**

Saturday, 15 January, '94

## **Industrial units worth Tk. 2.5 billion being sold for Tk. 530 million to the private sector**

Attempts are being made to sell off textile mills worth Tk. 2.5 billion at an extremely low price. The government has about Tk. 1 billion in liabilities tied up in these eight industrial units, yet these are being sold off for a mere Tk. 538.5 million. This has given rise to heated debate in the Finance Ministry. Concerned officials state that such action can only serve to damage the country.

The government is selling off Madaripur Textile Mills, Barisal Textile Mills, Kishoreganj Textile Mills, Jufine Fabrics, Kohinoor Spinning Mills, Khulna Hardboard Mills and Sharmin Textile Mills. The estimated value of Madaripur Textile Mills is Tk. 213.01 million. The government's liability in this mill is Tk. 235.07 million, yet it is being sold at only Tk. 87 million. The estimated value of Barisal Textile Mills is Tk. 279 million. The government's liability is Tk. 225 million and it is being sold at Tk. 30 million. The estimated value of Kishoreganj Textile Mills is Tk. 191.78 million. Government liability is Tk. 172.25 million and it is being sold for only Tk. 76.1 million. The estimated value of Jufine Fabrics is Tk. 19.38 million and its government liability is Tk. 4.46 million. It is being sold at Tk. 12.5 million. Kohinoor Spinning Mills has an estimated value of Tk. 256.02 million. The government's liability here is Tk. 121.38 million and it is being sold at Tk. 120 million. The value of Khulna Hardboard Mills is an estimated Tk. 152.8 million with a Tk. 50 million government liability and is being sold for Tk. 87 million. The estimated value of Sharmin Textile Mills is Tk. 85.86 million, its government liability Tk. 118.59 million and is being sold for Tk. 117.6 million. The process is on for selling off three more similar mills.

The present market value of just the land alone of these mills is estimated to be about Tk. 500 million. The market value of the machinery, furniture and movable assets of these mills will be not less than Tk. 1.5 billion. A section of dishonest bureaucrats and certain

influential quarters are endeavouring to hand over these valuable assets at an almost negligible cost to the private sector. No tender was prominently placed in any national daily for the sale of these mills. A certain quarter is controlling the tender, sale and hand-over of the mills. While a section of industrialists still have heavy default loans amounting to millions of taka, this handing over of industrial units in the name of privatisation will have a detrimental effect on the economy, according a certain economist. Statistics show that 70 per cent of the country's private mills and factories have already closed down.

### **The Daily Bhorer Kagoj**

Saturday, 15 January, '94

## **Total of 3500 corruption cases against government officers and employees in one year**

During the 1992-93 financial year, a total of 3573 corruption cases and 4222 cases of violating discipline were brought against officers and employees of 46 ministries and departments. Eight ministries managed to finish 90 per cent of project

work under the Annual Development Programme. Eight ministers did not go abroad during the entire year. The Foreign Minister travelled abroad the most. After a long six months, the 1992-93 annual report of various ministries and departments, drawn up by the Cabinet Division, will be placed at a special Cabinet meeting at Bangabhaban this morning.

Of the 3573 corruption cases and 4222 cases related to violation of discipline mentioned in the report, 259 corruption cases and 3625 violation of discipline cases are of the Home Ministry alone.

The report states that no funds were released in the 1992-93 financial year for projects of the Jute Ministry. However eight ministries finished 90 per cent of project work, 13 ministries finished 80 per cent of the project work, four ministries finished 60 per cent, two ministries finished 50 per cent and one ministry finished 37 per cent of the project work.

The report also stated that the Industries Minister, State Minister for Relief, Telecommunications Minister, State Minister for Land, State Minister for Shipping, State Minister for Youth and Sports, State Minister for Science and Technology and the State Minister for Establishment did not go abroad on any foreign trip. The Foreign Minister travelled the most in 1992-93, spending a total of 124 days abroad. This, though, was less than the previous financial year of 1991-92 when he spent 146 days abroad.

The Finance Minister ranked next and his foreign stay was 111 days. The Education Minister came third in

the amount of days spent abroad with his trips totalling 51 days.

The total number of days spent abroad by all members of the Cabinet combined amounted to 889 days. This was 792 days in 1991-92. The report stated that in the 1992-93 fiscal, about 508 thousand cases were filed with the magistrate courts, including the Metropolitan Court. Of these, 336,620 were settled. During this time, 53 complaints were lodged against magistrates and other officers in the districts and thanas. Of these, 41 were resolved. The report also said that 154 complaints were lodged against DCs, ADCs, TNOs, Senior Assistant Commissioners and Assistant Commissioners.

The 1992-93 report recommended that the authorities endeavour to ensure that the officers and employees who have received training, manage to utilise their training and acquired knowledge appropriately.

In 1992-93, a total of 57,409 officers and employees received training in the country and 2111 officers and employees underwent training abroad.

Payment of radio licence fee fell in 1992-93 compared to the previous year. Radio licence fees paid in 1992-93 amounted to Tk. 5.16 million approximately. This was about Tk. 7.51 million in the previous year. PIB arranged relatively less press conferences, 36 in total in 1992-93, while this was 59 in 1991-92. There was a fall in issuing accreditation cards too, with 482 issued in 1991-92, falling to 396 in 1992-93.

Various ministries have drawn up programmes and reviews of progress of their respective projects over the last six months to be produced when necessary.

## **The Daily Dainik Janata**

Tuesday, 25 January, '94

### **Five million taka spent on posters for BNP's Dhaka Mayor candidate**

So far over Tk. 5 million has been spent on printing posters for the ruling party candidate of Dhaka City Corporation's mayoral election. Till now, 17 different types of posters of the BNP candidate Mirza Abbas have been seen around the city. Three or four of these posters announced him to be the BNP Dhaka City Mayor candidate even before official nominations. While debate still prevailed within the ruling party as to whether Mirza Abbas or Lt. Col. (retd.) Mir Shawkat Ali would be nominated as the Mayor candidate, BNP's youth front Jubo Dal put posters all around the city, calling for Mirza Abbas to be elected as Mayor. The first poster was brought out by the Demra thana Jubo Dal. Next the Dhanmondi thana Jubo Dal brought out another poster. Then one after the other, posters of



Mirza Abbas began appearing in the other thanas of the city. After he was nominated as the mayoral candidate on December 29, coloured posters were brought out, calling on the people to vote for the 'Khaleda Zia-nominated candidate' Mirza Abbas. All of these were preparatory posters. There were about five or six kinds of posters with about 8000 to 10,000 being distributed in each ward. About 900,000 posters of Mirza Abbas were distributed in total all over the city. Printing costs for these posters amounted to about Tk. 1.3 to 1.4 million.

After the allocation of symbols was completed on January 6, the actual posters were printed. About eight to ten kinds of posters with the cycle symbol flooded the city. Workers in various wards said that they received three to four times more of these 'cycle' posters than the preparatory posters. The moment any poster faded or was torn, fresh posters were stuck over them. Thousands of posters still lie in the homes of the party workers. These have been kept for the 'final' day.

Most of Mirza Abbas' posters have been printed on a 'complimentary' basis. Though 17 types of posters were printed, Mirza Abbas' campaign coordinator Haris Chowdhury has stated that their publicity cell had printed only two one-coloured posters. They reportedly had nothing to do with the other posters of Mirza Abbas on the city walls.

The question is, will the Election Commission accept this explanation of Haris Chowdhury? Chief Election Commissioner Justice Abdur Rauf has clearly said at

several meetings and functions that no excuse will be accepted to the effect that some other person printed the posters on a complimentary basis or somebody else got the slogans painted on the walls. All campaign expenses will be ascribed to the candidate and recorded in the candidate's file. If this is maintained, Mirza Abbas is in trouble.

### **Bhorer Kagoj**

Thursday, 3 February, '94

#### UPROAR IN THE BNP CITY COMMITTEE MEETING

### **Demand for resignation of Finance, Home & Food Ministers**

At the joint meeting of the ruling party BNP's Dhaka City Committee and its front organisations, demands were raised for the resignation of the Finance Minister, Home Minister and Food Minister. The meeting broke up in a loud uproar, amidst sharp criticism and chanting of slogans. The meeting had to be adjourned without fixing any fresh schedule.

The joint meeting was called at *Sugandha* yesterday to discuss the situation following the last City Corporation

polls. The meeting was presided over by Dhaka City BNP President and Food Minister Mir Shawkat Ali. Present at the meeting were the party's central Secretary General Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar, Mayor candidate Mirza Abbas, State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeq Hossain, Textiles Minister Maj. (retd.) Abdul Mannan, State Minister for Environment Gaeswar Roy, Salahuddin Ahmed MP, Amanullah Aman MP, Haris Chowdhury, Shafiqul Hasan Tripti, Maj. (retd.) Kamrul Islam MP and Syed Mohsin MP. The Dhaka City commissioner candidates were also present.

Major (retd.) Kamrul first addressed the meeting. He said that BNP's mayoral candidate had lost the City Corporation election due to the party's internal conflict. He directly held certain ministers responsible for the defeat of BNP's candidate. Mayor candidate Mirza Abbas spoke next at the meeting. He said that he had lost the election, but that was not a big deal. He said that lessons should be learnt from this defeat to avoid any bigger defeat of the party in the future. He said that if they simply nurtured problems within the party, the problems would just grow. So instead of increasing the problems, he said, preparations have to be carried out for the next parliamentary polls. After this, State Minister for Environment spoke, saying that the eviction of hawkers and the rule for retirement of government officers after 25 years of service were the main reasons of the defeat. This was followed by speeches by leaders of various front organisations and wards. The meeting became agitated. Most of those present

blamed the Finance Minister, Home Minister and Food Minister for the defeat and demanded their resignation. Slogans for their resignation resounded around the meeting venue.

The speakers said that the provision for retiring government officers and employees had been taken up by means of the golden handshake. However, even after retirement, these officers and employees hadn't received any money. The Finance Minister was responsible for this. And the Home Minister did not help the BNP candidates in the election. The speakers also demanded that stern action be taken against those who contested in the commissioner election even though the party hadn't nominated them. Certain leaders of the Mirpur area burst into tears while speaking at the meeting. They said that BNP's Mirpur area MP Syed Mohammed Mohsin hadn't worked in favour of the BNP candidates. They demanded that he been thrown out of the meeting. Syed Mohammed Mohsin MP left the meeting a little while after this.

The meeting was supposed to have continued for a long time and BNP Chairperson Prime Minister Khaleda Zia was supposed to have joined the meeting towards the end. However, the moment the Chairman of the meeting Mir Shawkat Ali arose to speak, the leaders and workers began shouting out slogans against him. He said that they should submit written complaints instead of shouting. He then adjourned the meeting. The meeting may take place again on February 8. Initiative may be taken to have Prime Minister Khaleda Zia attend the meeting.

**Bhorer Kagoj**

Tuesday, 8 February, '94

**Four ministers face criticism at BNP  
parliamentary party meet**

Four ministers had to face strong criticism of lawmakers at the BNP parliamentary party meeting yesterday. The four ministers were Home Minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman, Education Minister Barrister Jamiruddin Sircar and Food Minister Mir Shawkat Ali, who is also the President of BNP Dhaka City Committee. They were sharply criticised for various roles and activities.

The meeting was supposed to be held at the ruling party's conference room at the Jatiya Sangsad (National Parliament) building at three in the afternoon yesterday, but Leader of the House and Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia only turned up at quarter past five. The meeting was adjourned at quarter to eight in the evening. The meeting may be held again next Sunday.

The meeting presided over by the Leader of the House, was addressed by party Secretary General and Local Government Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar, Home minister Abdul Matin Chowdhury, Law Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz, Information Minister Barrister Nazmul Huda, Food Minister Mir Shawkat Ali, State Minister for Cultural Affairs Jahanara Begum, State Minister for Environment Gaeswar Roy, former Mayor

of Dhaka Mirza Abbas, Maj. (retd.) Kamrul Islam, Maj. (retd.) Akhteruzzaman, Barrister Ziaur Rahman Khan and others.

State Minister Jahanara Begum and Maj. (retd.) Kamrul criticised the introduction of the VAT system and the increase of gas and electricity rates. Maj. Kamrul said, just before the elections, circulars had been sent to the banks for the retirement of those who had completed 25 years of service. The Prime Minister asked if this had taken place. The concerned ministers said they weren't aware of any such thing.

Akhter MP said that the ministers weren't aware of many things. The bureaucrats did not listen to them. Many of the ministers lacked good images.

A State Minister said that the student front Chhatra Dal had been reduced to an organisation of leaders. Certain student leaders simply spent their time hovering around madam (the Prime Minister) to meet their own ends. Chhatra Dal did nothing for the election. Its leaders did not do any organisational work. The State Minister named some of the student leaders and brought about various allegations against them.

**Lal Sabuj**

Thursday, 17 February, '94

COMPLAINTS OF MINISTERS' CORRUPTION  
MADE TO PRIME MINISTER EVERY DAY

**Anti-Corruption Bureau wants  
Prime Minister's instructions  
concerning 17 persons**

Every day complaints of corruption are made against various ministers to the Prime Minister. Allegations of corruption against 17 ministers have been made so far. These complaints have been made to the Anti-Corruption Bureau as well. The Anti-Corruption Bureau has asked the Prime Minister for instructions in this regard. The Prime Minister is yet to issue directives. As a result, no inquiries are being made into the allegations.

Most of the complaints made to the Anti-Corruption Bureau are to do with local corruption of the ministers, untoward exertion of their influence and other irregularities. Most of the allegations were made anonymously. In these letters addressed to the Prime Minister, requests were made for intervention in the ministers' activities and demands were made for their resignation. The ministers against whom these complaints were made were Law Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz, Agriculture Minister Maj. Gen.

(retd.) Majed Ul Haque, Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman, Local Government Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar, Education Minister Jamir Uddin Sircar, Health Minister Chowdhury Kamal Ibne Yusuf, Energy Minister Dr. Mosharraf Hossain, Food Minister Mir Shawkat Ali, Planning Minister Zahiruddin Khan, State Minister for Industries Lutfur Rahman Khan and others.

A written complaint from 'conscious employees' against the Law Minister alleged that he had directly interfered in the appointment and transfers of sub-registrars. Corruption was resorted to in the transfer of sub-registrars. Large bribes were taken for transfers to Dhaka. This resulted in repeated transfers of sub-registrars leading to an abnormal situation. Oppressed local people complained against the Agriculture Minister in writing, saying that they were fed up with the arrogance of the minister's friends and relations. No trade or business could be conducted in the locality with the direct or indirect involvement of the minister's people. Similar complaints were lodged against the Foreign Minister Col. (retd.) Mustafizur Rahman. In a complaint against Education Minister Jamiruddin Sircar, it was said that the teachers' community had been held hostage. No transfers took place without the recommendation of the Education Minister and he had to be appeased to make this recommendation. In a matter of a mere six months, a teacher was transferred twice. The Education Minister's



immediate resignation was demanded. Another complaint state that money was taken in the name of school grants. These payments were being made with the approval of the ministers. The people of Jamalpur have complained against Local Government Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukdar, saying that they were fed up with Salam Talukder oppression and the arrogance of his friends and relations. His relations used to oppress the people at every chance they could get.

Though these complaints were sent to the Prime Minister, no action has been taken till today. A copy of the complaints has been sent to the Anti-Corruption Bureau. According to the rules, the Bureau is to investigate any written complaint. However, the Prime Minister's permission is required to start inquiry into allegations against ministers. The Bureau has asked the Prime Minister's Office what it should do in this regard. No reply has been given so far. Incidentally, the Anti-Corruption Bureau is placed under the Prime Minister.

**Lal Sabuj**

Thursday, 24 February, '94

## **A total of 1500 cases lie with the Anti-Corruption Bureau**

The Anti-Corruption Bureau working at a snail's pace due to pressure from certain influential quarters. About 1500 investigated cases of the past government and the present government lie with the Anti-Corruption Bureau. The future of these cases is uncertain. In the meantime, the Anti-Corruption Bureau is being obstructed in filing certain fresh cases.

There are over 3000 complaints with the Anti-Corruption Bureau regarding corruption and irregularities which took place during the rule of the last government. Investigations have been conducted into over 2000 of these. However, the Bureau has not been able to file cases against anyone other than 22 former ministers and 18 bureaucrats. Mysteriously, no case was filed against Zeenat Mosharraf regarding the Eskaton BCIC Rest House crockeries's scandal. Other than in the case of Ershad, the Anti-Corruption Bureau has failed to prove most of the allegations against the former Jatiya Party ministers. None of the former Jatiya Party ministers are in jail. Col. (retd.) Zafar Imam spent the longest time in jail. None of the charges brought against him could be proved. No cases have been

filed against any of Ershad's G-team bureaucrats. After BNP came to power, even though the State Minister for Land Kabir Hossain filed complaints of corruption against former Land Secretary Mokammel Haq, the Establishment Ministry has not taken any action against him. These allegations were not referred to the Anti-Corruption Bureau for examination. Intervention from influential quarters ensured this.

It has not been possible to draw up cases regarding many incidents at present. It is not even being possible to settle the cases filed over the past three years. It wasn't possible to take action against the present Chairman of T&T for illegally sending Tk. 5.3 million in the name of a Pakistani company. Political interference prevented any action being taken in this regard. Both bureaucratic and political influence is at work to stop any action against the corruption of government officials. An investigating officer could not take any measures regarding allegations of corruption against a state minister who had been involved in the misappropriation of wheat to be distributed at a children's home in Narail. There are many reasons why the 1500 cases lie inert in the Bureau's files. In many cases investigations have yielded nothing. Again, in several cases investigation has been obstructed by various quarters.

**Ajker Kagoj**

Tuesday, 1 March '94

## **Complaints against Law Ministry by three judges have not been investigated over the past year**

Three judges has brought complaints to the Prime Minister about a year ago concerning the corruption and nepotism of Law Minister Mirza Golam Hafiz. However, over the past year, no investigation has been made into these complaints. Three judges who submitted the written complaints against the Law Minister to the Prime Minister are, Additional District Judge Abul Mansur Ahmed. Additional District Judge Tarek Haider and District Judge AR Chowdhury. In the complaint, the judges stated that in violation of the rules, corrupt officers were being appointed to posts in Dhaka, at the Ministry and the departments under the Ministry. It was said that sub-registrars were direct victims of this matter. Just in order to earn large sums of money, departmental charges were being filed against them for any small reason. These officers accused in departmental cases were only left off the hook after they paid certain amount of money. For example, when a case of misappropriating Tk. 2.5 million was proved against Dhaka district Registrar AK Fazlul Haque, the Minister himself dismissed the

charges, instructing the accused to pay Tk. 2.5 million in installments to the government fund.

The allegations state that judgements are being made on the basis of appeasing certain quarters. Additional District Judge Zeenat Ara was sent four times abroad on training though there were other women judges senior to her. Assistant Judge Lutfa Begum had the 'qualification' of being born in Dinajpur and so the Minister himself sent her abroad for training, bypassing several senior judges. Then, when Assistant Secretary Faruk Ahmed was not found immediately when summoned by the Law Minister, he was simply removed from that post. While Deputy Secretary Abdul Matin was in training at PATC, he was threatened with dismissal and brought back to the Ministry without completion of the training. The Minister refused to give his approval for the promotions of Tarek Haider and Krishna Debnath from the rank of Sub-Judge to Additional District Judge as they failed to pay a large bribe. The Minister even disregarded the opinion of the Supreme Court full bench. Chittagong Bar and the people of the city boycotted the court of District Judge Khandakar Abu Bakr and he had to give a written pledge not to take bribes ever again. Yet he was later appointed to an important post at the Dhaka Administrative Tribunal. Copies of the complaints were sent to the President, Speaker and Chief Justice. However, the complaints have not been investigated as yet.

**Lal Sabuj**

Tuesday, 8 March '94

CORRUPTION IN PURCHASE OF CORRUGATED TIN

**Government loses Tk. 40 million  
No inquiry in two years**

When State Minister for Industries Lutfur Rahman Khan was in charge of the Relief Ministry, he caused the government losses of Tk. 42 million by giving permission to a fictitious firm M/s STM Traders to supply 1000 metric tonnes of corrugated tin. However, two years since the incident no inquiry has been made into the matter. The entire matter has been kept under covers by the intervention of certain influential quarters. According to the contract with the so-called firm STB Traders, 1000 metric tonnes of CI sheets were to be supplied for the Rohingya refugee camps. However, without the CI sheets even being provided, STM Traders drew the payment. Later inquiries revealed that there was no company by any such name. Even though the government suffered a large loss due to this intervention by the Relief Ministry, no inquiry was made into the matter. It has been learnt that the files in this regard have also been removed.

On March 7, 1992, at a meeting of the Ministry presided over by the Relief Minister at the time Lutfur Rahman Khan, the work order for the procurement of

1000 metric tonnes of CI sheets for the construction of Rohingya refugee camps was discussed. A list of quotations from eight firms in Chittagong and eleven in Dhaka was produced at the meeting. Of these, NG Saha Steel Industries Pvt. Ltd. of Chittagong fulfilled all the conditions and was identified as the lowest bidder. The Directorate of Relief also recommended that this firm be granted the work. While the decision to grant NG Saha Steel Industries the work was being discussed at the meeting, the bid of a firm named STM Traders came to light. The Relief Ministry reportedly used his influence to ensure that all present at the meeting accepted this bid. Though there is no provision for accepting tenders in this manner, no one objected due to the Relief Minister's stand. At the meeting the work order was issued for STM Traders to provide 1000 metric tonnes of CI sheets at the rate of Tk. 42 thousand per metric tonne.

According to the contract signed on a Tk. 50 stamp paper, the 1000 metric tonnes of corrugated iron was to be supplied within seven days of the work order being issued. It was decided that Eagle and Nippon brand 26 KG CI sheets of 8 and 6 ft. size, would be supplied at a godown in Halishahar of Chittagong. According to the contract, the bill would be paid in cash or cheque within seven days of the submission to the Relief Ministry of three copies of the bill and three copies of the receipts after supply of the second part of the goods. However, this was not followed. Influence was used to get the payment in advance. In a letter

written by the Director of the Relief Directorate on 26 June '92 to the Secretary of the Relief Ministry, it was stated that the CI sheets were not supplied in accordance to the specifications. The tin was not even supplied within the stipulated time. After that, the time for supply of the tin was extended by seven days. But there was no news of M/s STM Traders. On 20 September 1992, Deputy Secretary of the Relief Ministry Matiur Rahman Mridha sent a letter to Gias Uddin, proprietor of M/s STM Traders. He stated that the Directorate of Relief and Rehabilitation and the Cox's Bazar Refugee Relief and Rehabilitation Commissioner has informed the Ministry by means of letter and radio message that the corrugated tin supplied by the firm was of very low quality with the symbols of Eagle and Nippon brands 26 KG simply stamped on. These tin sheets were very thin and bent easily. It would not be possible to use them more than once. The letter also stated that the Ministry had instructed that the tin be supplied within seven days of the work order being issued and this was later extended to 14 days following an application by the firm. Even so, the corrugated tin was not supplied on time. No reply was received even after the Relief Ministry sent letters several times to M/s STM Traders. Then a peon of the Ministry was sent to the address of M/s STM Traders at 9/A Toyenbee Circular Road, Motijheel. The peon found no such office existing at that address. The firm was a fictitious one. Even though the government lost millions of taka due to the work



order being issued to this fictitious company, no charges have been filed with the Anti-Corruption Bureau in this regard. The Bureau, for some mysterious reason, has avoided the matter. The matter reportedly has been swept under the covers due to the influence of certain quarters.

## **Ajker Kagoj**

Sunday, 20 March '94

### **Three years of BNP's rule**

Three years of BNP's rule, under the leadership of Prime Minister Khaleda Zia, have been completed. During these three years, no significant developments have taken place in the country's political, economic, social and cultural fields. On the contrary, there have been clear indications of deterioration in several sectors. This is particularly noticeable in the deterioration of law and order, increase in terrorism on campus, uprising of communal fundamentalist forces and lack of discipline in the economy and the administration. The commitments made by BNP at the beginning of its rule three years ago regarding the establishment and institutionalisation of democracy,

sovereignty of the parliament, independence of the judiciary, restoring discipline to the economy and providing large scale employment opportunities, today are mere empty words. None of these have materialised. The BNP government has been accused of disregarding the parliament and politicising the administration and the judiciary. An essential precondition to democracy is full freedom of the press, including the radio and television. That has not been established. Even the undemocratic Special Powers Act has not been abolished. On the contrary, introduction of the Anti-Terrorism Act has impeded the progress of democracy. The state of the economy is even worse. The industries of the country are being destroyed in the name of free market economy. In these three years, another 4000 industries have shut down. Very few new ones have been set up. While it has been claimed that the current budget will decrease dependence on foreign aid, in actuality the dependence has increased. Investment has decreased. Inflation has increased. Per capita income has decreased. The national economy has been caught up in a vicious cycle of poverty and under-development.

It is yet to be seen how Prime Minister Khaleda Zia tackles the situation. BNP has only three years left of its term. Unless it can implement its political commitment to development, it will have to step down. It is to be seen what lies in store for Khaleda Zia and her government.

**Lal Sabuj**

Monday, 21 March '94

## **No steps in the last three years against corrupt bureaucrats of the last government**

No measures have been taken for long against the bureaucrats who were involved in corruption and irregularities of the last government. Most of the officials involved in these instances of corruption and irregularity have been promoted. Two of Ershad's G-7 Secretaries who have become ministers, have been protecting their bureaucrat colleagues over the past three years. As a result, no action has been taken against the 46 bureaucrats against whom cases had been filed with the Anti-Corruption Bureau during the interim government rule. Most of these bureaucrats have been let off the hook through the intervention of a high level in the government.

Bureaucrats encourage corruption cases against corrupt politicians. There have been cases against more or less all of Ershad's ministers. Many of them have been in jail. But none of the bureaucrats have gone to jail. On the contrary, despite the recommendation of a BNP State Minister, no case was filed against the influential Secretary Mokammel Haque. When State Minister for Land Kabir Hossain

took charge of the Ministry, he noted discrepancies of the former land Secretary Mokammel Haque. He wrote to the Establishment Ministry asking for action to be taken in this regard. The letter is missing. Similarly, complaints against bureaucrats of other ministries too have disappeared. But the bureaucrats prepare papers on the corruption of ministers whenever there is a change of government.

## **Ajker Kagoj**

Saturday, 2 April '94

### MISAPPROPRIATION OF TK. 3.5 BILLION OF CHITTAGONG PORT REVEALED EIGHT OFFICERS INVOLVED

## **Prime Minister's intervention needed for inquiry into corruption**

Sensational information has been revealed regarding misappropriation of Tk. 3.5 billion from the Chittagong Port. The Chairman of the Port, Member (Operations), Member (Accounts), Member (Finance) and other officers are allegedly involved in this scam. The officers of this corrupt ring, with disregard for the rules of the

concerned Ministry, unlawfully deposited millions of taka in 28 banks of the city, and drew the interest for themselves. The officers deposited the Port's money in various state-run and private banks in the name of their spouses and children.

The National Revenue and Audit Department discovered this sensational scam while auditing the operations of the Port. The audit team has ordered that the money deposited in various banks be immediately deposited back in the Port fund. The report of the nine-member special parliamentary committee formed for the Port also revealed that these officers were violating the rules by depositing money unlawfully in the banks and taking the interest for themselves. It was alleged that they were reporting a four per cent profit to the Port authorities though they were drawing an 18 per cent interest. Officially, that money was supposed to be kept in three banks.

A report of the National Revenue and Local Audit Department has stated that during the last five years, eight or nine of the top ranking officials of the port have drawn a minimum of Tk. 3.5 billion in interest from the banks. They were instructed to return the money to the Port fund immediately.

**Lal Sabuj**

Tuesday, 5 April '94

## **Misappropriation of finance by fictitious firm of Minister's relation**

Allegations have arisen concerning the misappropriation of thousands of taka by a relation of Local Government Minister Barrister Abdus Salam Talukder, in the name of a fictitious firm.

The Local Government Directorate of Engineering of Madarganj, Jamlapur, on January 7 had announced an auction of seven old bridges and culverts worth Tk. 170,587 in total. The auction was scheduled for January 13. A certain Mohammed Abdul Salam submitted an application to the Jamalpur Deputy Commissioner requesting that the culverts and bridges be donated as a grant to the orphans and needy children of the Baliyuri Forkania (Al Haj Munshi Abdul Ali) Madrasa. The Deputy Commissioner did not consider the bids that had been deposited. For some reason, at the instructions of Assistant Director of the Local Government, on January 13 the auction was suspended. On January 23, at the orders of the Deputy Commissioner, the seven bridges and culverts were handed over to the Madrasa as a grant.

However, investigations revealed that there was no existence whatsoever of any Baliyuri Forkania (Al Haj Munshi Abdul Ali) Madrasa. Mutawalli Mohammed Abdul Salam, the so-called Chairman of this fictitious Madrasa, was the father-in-law of Minister Abdus Salam Talukder's elder brother. Questions were raised as to why the government allocated these bridges and culverts to a fictitious institution without even investigating the matter at first.

## **Ajker Kagoj**

Saturday, 14 May '94

### **Serious allegations against 450 senior officials**

No action is being taken against 450 senior officials of the government even though serious allegations have been levelled against them. These allegations have been submitted to the Anti-Corruption Bureau, the police, the Prime Minister's Office, the Establishment Ministry and a number of other ministries. Though allegations of embezzlement of

government funds, misappropriation of government resources, misuse of national resources, abuse of power, violation of service rules and financial corruption have been brought against them, most of these charges remain unattended due to bureaucratic complications, delay in obtaining permission for inquiry and dishonesty of the officers in charge of the inquiries. Many ministers are at a loss in this regard.

A certain section of senior officials have been dilly-dallying over having to inquire into the alleged corruption at the Prime Minister's Office, the Anti-Corruption Bureau, the Establishment Ministry, the police department and other areas. Committees were formed to look into the corruption of the officials in various ministries. Despite the sincerity of the ministers, certain files remain pending year after year. Even after the Prime Minister most of the files on these matter remain laid on one side. The officials against whom corruption charges have been brought against are presently Additional Secretary, Joint Secretary, Senior Assistant Secretary, Deputy Administrator, Thana Nirbahi Officer (Sub-district Executive Officer), Magistrate, Executive Engineer, Additional Chief Engineer, Superintendent Engineer, Chief Engineer, heads of Corporation and Biman officials. There are several officers in the Water Development Board, T&T, the Education Board, PWD, RAJUK, the Port Authority and Railway



Department against whom corruption charges have been levelled. While the Ministries for Works, Establishment and Home Affairs have shown some activity in this regard, inquiry by the other agencies have been proceeding slowly. Political rather than administrative lobbying has created problems in the sector. In many cases the authorities simply has mislaid the papers.

Several ministers have complained to the Prime Minister's office expressing concern about corrupt officials. No steps are taken against them due to the manipulations of a corrupt bureaucratic ring. The Prime Minister has the right to directly dismiss such officers. Ministers, though, cannot do so because of the Rules of Business. The lack of attention, negligence and irresponsibility of committees formed to look into the corruption impede actual inquiries into corruption. The complaints of MPs are not paid any heed either. Nothing is done without the orders of Secretaries. In most cases, after the charges of corruption are proved, the corrupt officer is simply transferred. No monetary fine is imposed.

**Bhorer Kagoj**

Friday, 20 May, '94

## **No appointments-transfers at senior level without political orders**

The norms for appointments and transfers of officers of the administration, from the centre down to the field level, are more or less ineffective at the moment. Political orders have become the unwritten rules for the appointment and transfer of senior officers in the district administration and the ministries. Once the orders of the State Minister of the Establishment Ministry and the Secretary of the Ministry are sent to the officer of the concerned desk, only then are the files for appointment or transfer moved.

Up till the post of Assistant Secretary in the Ministries of Education, Law and Home Affairs, no appointment or transfer can be made without the approval of the concerned Minister. When an officer is to be transferred or appointed, officials of the Establishment Ministry ask him to bring a recommendation of the concerned Minister. The appointment or transfer of Deputy Commissioners (DCs) and Thana Nirbahi Officers (Sub-District Executive Officers) or TNOs at a district and thana level is controlled by the Minister and MP of that area. DCs and TNOs cannot get postings without the wish of the Minister or MP. Even if he does get a posting, the Establishment Ministry is obliged to

cancel it. This has disrupted the administrative chain. Due to political interference, the district and thana administration is losing neutrality.

The increase of political interference in transfers and appointments has created unrest among the officials. Leaders of the administration cadre met with the State Minister of the Establishment Ministry last week and expressed their grievances. They said that due to political influence, many unqualified persons were being placed in important posts. This was hampering the standard of administrative works. Deserving and qualified officials were not being correctly evaluated.

The officials, while discussing the matter with the State minister, pointed to the appointment of DCs. For long a 'fit list' had been followed in the appointment of DCs. The fit list would be drawn up by a selection committee headed by the Cabinet Secretary, selected officers from the Deputy Secretary rank on the basis of qualifications, seniority and an oral interview. The committee would submit a panel to the government for appointment of DCs. That was how DCs would be appointed. But this has not been followed for the past three years. The Cabinet Division's authority in this regard has automatically diminished. An unhealthy competition has begun among Deputy Secretaries to be appointed as DC. Lobbying is the main qualification for appointment. The officers of the administration cadre asked the State Minister to follow certain rules in the appointment of DCs. The State Minister assured them that he would look into the matter.

**Ajker Kagoj**

Monday, 1 August, '94

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST 30 ADMS, ADCS AND DCS

**Deputy Commissioners face pressure  
and undue influence from leaders  
and ministers of the government  
party**

Most Deputy Commissioners (DCs) in the country are reeling under pressure and undue influence from leaders and ministers of the ruling party. In the 64 district of the country, most DCs are facing political interference in economic development programmes, maintaining law and order and in the implementation of government plans. It has been alleged that political interference in the duties of the officials has been more than ever before. In the meantime, allegations have been brought against over 30 ADMs, ADCs, and DCs, accusing them of negligence of duty, misuse of power, corruption and handing over of government land and property to certain quarters. The allegations have been made to the Establishment Ministry, the Anti-Corruption Bureau, the Home Ministry and the Prime Minister's Office. Recently a number of OSDs (Officers on Special Duty) and six DCs were questioned by the Establishment Ministry. Certain DCs have allegedly even interfered in the judiciary.

There are allegations of negligence of duty and other excesses against the Additional District Magistrate of the concerned district regarding the damaging of Jute Minister Hannan Shah's vehicle last month. The ADM has been sitting next to the driver in the front of the car in place of the police security guard. This incited the people's anger and they attacked the vehicle.

The DC is given the important responsibility in the implementation of any government programme in the district. The district administration has faced difficulties in this regard since last year when the Prokrichi admin. BCS Action Council step up their agitation movement, this was pointed out by several DCs.

It has been seen that most of the allegations have been brought about by quarters close to party leaders and ministers. A certain DC has said that allegations are brought against them if they fail to give in to undue pressure or unlawful requests. While there is no basis for the complaints, 24 officers including ADCs, ADMs and DCs are being harassed in various ways. Ruling party leaders and ministers directly pressurise the DCs regarding programmes related to law and order, justice, land, agriculture irrigation, industries, commerce and relief for their party people. This is a violation of all rules. On 28 December 1991, the Prime Minister addressed a conference of the four Divisional Commissioners and 60 Deputy Commissioners. She called upon them to carry out their duties with no fear of any threats or biased pressure.

**Ajker Kagoj**

Tuesday, 9 August, '94

PRIME MINISTER WANTS TO KNOW SOURCES OF INCOME

**Five Minister of BNP make houses  
after coming to power**

Five ministers of BNP have made houses after coming to power. This has created a stir within BNP itself. The Prime Minister has asked for an account on the expenditure of these houses and the source of income. The Prime Minister has been unhappy with the reports she has received in this regard so far. She is quite annoyed, but the ministers have said that they have not made the houses with 'black' money. The money is clean. Other ministers, however, say that they can hardly run their families with the salary they receive. The making of these houses has served to tarnish the image of the party. It is not just these ministers, many MPs of BNP have become rich during their three years in power so far. These matters will be raised before the next election.

A certain minister received an allotment of three to nine kathas of RAJUK land. He has made a palace-like house on the land. Sources close to the minister say he has made the house with a bank loan. But there is no congruity between the bank loan and the amount spent on the house. This information has been conveyed to the Prime Minister.

Another minister who had left a diplomatic post given by Ershad, had come to Dhaka almost bereft of all riches. He would live in the house of a woman leader of BNP. He is now a State Minister. That former diplomat became an MP after which he took up business, floated a newspaper. He bought an apartment at the heart of Dhaka. The flat cost about Tk. 3 million. He even made an office in Tejgaon industrial area. His friends say that he did all this with his life's savings.

Another minister who has been with BNP from its start was in Pakistan during the liberation war. Before becoming a minister he owned a house in a posh area of the city. He made yet another house after becoming minister. He had businesses from before, but questions arose as to why he had to make another house after becoming a minister. Of course he did reply to this in the parliament, asking if ministers did not have the right to own houses.

Furor arose in the parliament over the corruption of yet another minister. He had been in the teaching profession. Yet several questions have arisen about him after he became a minister. His house has been made in another's name, but the matter has come out into the open.

Another state minister has made a house. The ministers say that the matter of ministers' making houses has been inflated out of proportion. They say that the fact that many MPs are making money by virtue of being in

the ruling party, is often overlooked. However, now all discrepancies are being investigated. The Revenue Department and the Anti-Corruption Bureau are active in this regard.

### **Dainik Janata**

Thursday 6 October '94

## **Government takes up Tk. 500 million budget to thwart opposition movement**

The BNP government has taken up a Tk. 500 million budget to thwart the programmes of the opposition movement and to highlight abroad the government's successes over the past three years. Over the past month, Tk. 100 million of the budget was spent. The remaining Tk. 40 million will be gradually spent from the party funds. The wealthy leaders of the party are contributing to this fund. BNP policy makers feel that the party's popularity can be assessed by coming out with programmes to counter the programmes of the opposition. BNP will hold rallies and meetings over the country to highlight its successes over the past three



years. At these meeting, they will reply to the accusations brought against them by the opposition. The news papers will be used in this regard. Government publicity will be stepped up on radio and television. The diplomatic missions will be instructed to take steps in order to promote the image of the government and its successes in the foreign press. The press wing of several diplomatic missions have been able to win praise in the foreign press for the Bangladesh government. Several politicians of developed countries have also been used for the purpose. Quarters within the ruling party have also asked for the cooperation of the local media in this regard.

The ruling party is also going to contact certain leaders of the opposition parties. Their main aim will be to create a rift over the caretaker government issue and to thwart the opposition movement. Certain leaders of the ruling party feel that this target can be achieved if the entire money of the allocated budget is spent. A leader of the opposition has commented that the government should take lessons from the past.

## **Subtle manipulations increase Jamuna Bridge's project costs by Tk. 1.91 billion**

By means of subtle manipulation, the Jamuna Multi-Purpose Bridge Authority (JMBA) has increased costs of Jamuna Multi-Purpose Bridge Project's river training component by about Tk. 1.91 billion and will formally begin work on the project today. Communications Minister Oli Ahmed will formally inaugurate the work at 10:30 this morning with the dredging work at the bridge's east end in Bhuapur.

The foundation of Jamuna Bridge has been inaugurated twice before. It was first inaugurated by President at the time HM Ershad and then later by Prime Minister Khaleda Zia. Tenders had been floated several times for the procurement of boulder, an integral component of the river training part of the project. The subtle manipulations were carried out by a re-tender of Alternative-1 and Alternative-2 tenders. In Alternative-1 it was said that the boulders could be imported from any country and in Alternative-2 it was said that the boulders would have to be procured from India, Nepal and Bhutan. Two foreign contractors tendered their bids in the scheduled time. Ham Van

Oord Joint Venture of Holland put forward a Tk. 11.10 billion bid under Alternative-1 and a Tk. 9.58 billion bid under Alternative-2. Boskalis Westminster Dredging BV put a bid of Tk. 11.27 billion under Alternative-1 and a bid of Tk. 9.19 billion under Alternative-2.

With the bids under Alternative-2 having a lower rate, the cabinet committee for government procurement decided to bring in boulders from the neighbouring countries for the river training work. As the lowest bidder, Boskalis should have won the contract. However, in disregard to the decision of the cabinet committee for government procurement, the contract was signed for Alternative-1 with Ham Van Oord, increasing expenditure by about Tk. 1.91 billion. By subtle manipulation, the lowest bid of Alternative-2 was not accepted. Instead the lowest bid of Alternative-2 was taken up. Boskalis was deprived of the work by a clever manipulation of the two alternatives. It is reported that inquiries into the matter will reveal further discrepancies.

**Dainik Janata**

Tuesday, 14 February, '95

**First report of Public Undertaking Committee in parliament**

*ABOUT 80 PER CENT OF THE COMMITMENTS MADE BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTERS REMAIN YET TO BE IMPLEMENTED*

About 80 per cent of the commitments made by Prime Minister, the ministers, state ministers and deputy ministers in parliament have not been implemented.

This was revealed in the first report of the Public Undertaking Committee in parliament. The report was placed in the parliament yesterday, Monday. Chairman of the committee Chief Whip Khandakar Delwar Hossain presented the report to the House. The report reviewed the progress of the commitments made in parliament from its beginning on April 5, 1991 till the 1993 budget session. The Prime Minister and other ministers made 348 commitments within that time, of which only 92 had been fully implemented. The remaining 256 have not been implemented as yet. The report, however, said that many were in the process of implementation. Again, it seemed as if some of the important commitments would never be implemented. Progress of these projects were not at all satisfactory.

One of the most unsatisfactory projects was the preparation of a national health policy. According to

the commitment, the committee for the health policy was to prepare it and present it to the government by 31 December 94. The report has not been submitted as yet. A 29-member committee, headed by the Health Minister, had been formed to draw up the policy. The report presented in parliament said that progress on the policy was not satisfactory.

Another important project was payment of compensation money to those who had to return home from Iraq and Kuwait during the Gulf War. In the first session of the Fifth Parliament, replying to a query by Monirul Haq Chowdhury MP, State Minister for Labour and Manpower Barrister Rafiqul Islam pledged to take speedy action in this regard. However, no progress has been made on this regard till today.

In the second session of the Fifth Parliament a commitment was made regarding the construction of a barrage at Kurigram based on a survey. Later it was said that there were no plans to construct any Dharla barrage at Kurigram. Similarly, the report pointed to several such projects which would be implemented subject to availability of funds.

The Prime Minister and ministers made 27 commitments in the first session, 41 in the second session, 33 in the third, 93 in the fourth, 9 in the fifth, 74 in the sixth, 26 in the seventh, 25 in the eighth, three in the ninth and 17 in the tenth.

**Sangbad**

Thursday, 2 March, '95

**Party pressure in appointing fertiliser dealers – administration helpless, farmers in a crisis**

The government initiative to supply fertiliser to farmers at a fair price remain restricted to paper work. The government has no control over fertiliser in the open market across the country. There are still reports of fertiliser being various places of the country. Fertiliser dealers are being appointed in every union upon government requisition. Though the Deputy Commissioners have been vested with the authority to appoint the dealers, they are helpless in face of pressure and lobbying from higher quarters. The ministers and Deputy Commissioners regularly receive letters complaining that the ruling party persons are receiving fertiliser dealership. There is still a dire fertiliser crisis in several places of the country. As the traders are not accountable, they sell fertiliser at any price they wish. The farmers are at a loss when they go to the market to buy fertiliser. Due to this situation, it is not being possible to reach the targetted of the IRRI-Boro crop this season. Over the past three months or more, the government has lost control over the fertiliser crisis. In an attempt to salvage the situation, the

government has announced several initiatives, including the import of fertiliser. The distribution system has been handed over to the Deputy Commissioner so as to ensure that farmers even in the most remote areas receive fertiliser.

At a high level meeting of the government on February 22, it was decided to identify one established fertiliser businessman per union and provides him with a maximum of 100 metric tonnes of fertiliser per day. As the official government dealer, he will sell fertiliser to the farmers at a fixed fair price.

Once this decision was announced, supporters of the government, who had never been fertiliser dealers, began lobbying with the ministry for dealership. Now the dealership at a union level is being given based on this lobbying and pressure from above.

Complaints are pouring in about party people being nominated as dealers. They are not paying heed to the prices stipulated by the government. The farmers are having to buy fertiliser at exorbitant prices and, in some cases, are not getting fertiliser at all.

The dealers are simply telling the farmers to come the next day or the day after. Yet the dealers are not supposed to be stocking fertiliser in their godowns.

Yesterday an inter-ministerial meeting was held regarding the fertiliser situation. It was decided to instruct Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation to

provide 10,000 metric tonnes of fertiliser everyday from the factories instead of the present supply of 8000 metric tonnes.

## **Sangbad**

Thursday 16 March 1995

### **Fertiliser market in limbo due to government's repeated intervention**

In a recent report of the International Fertiliser Development Centre (IFDC), based on a survey of Bangladesh fertiliser crisis, it was said that the government's repeated interventions in the marketing system of fertiliser had rendered the situation uncertain.

The report said that the prevailing crisis will last through March. It said that excessive export of fertiliser by Bangladesh Chemical Industries Corporation (BCIC), inefficient distribution centres and unlawful activities at the mills and sudden unnecessary changes in BCIC's fertiliser policy were responsible for the crisis.



IFDC prepared this report under the Agro-Industries and Technology Development Project funded by USAID. The report said that a the government intervened 10 times in the marketing of fertiliser between November last year and this February. Of all these interventions, the only appropriate decision was to increase the allocation of fertiliser for distributors from 5000 metric tonnes to 10,000 metric tonnes. The decision to halt export of fertiliser was appropriate too, but taken too late. The remaining decisions all added to the crisis.

**The BNP government is one of corruption, terrorism and a politicised administration.**

– Moudud Ahmed, *Inqilab*, 7 August '93

**Corruption and nepotism is being carried out in the name of development.**

– Salahuddin Quader Chowdhury, *Ittefaq*, 7 November '93

**BNP has doubled its corruption after coming to power in order to provide financial benefits to its leaders and workers.**

– Matiur Rahman Nizami, *Bhorer Kagoj*, 11 July '93

**Within a few days, the nature of corruption of the BNP ministers will be revealed.**

– Kazi Zafar, *Bhorer Kagoj*, 19 November '94

**Khaleda Zia's ministers, MPs and her relations are involved in corruption and pilferage.**

– Shafiul Alam Prodhan, *Sangram*, 7 April '95