

Court withdraws Shafik Rehman's arrest warrant

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Online Desk : A Dhaka court on Monday withdrew the arrest warrant issued against senior journalist Shafik Rehman in a case filed for plotting to kidnap and kill former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's son Sajeeb Wazed Joy. Earlier in the morning, the senior journalist surrendered before the court of Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Mahbubul Haque seeking bail. After hearing, the magistrate withdrew his warrant. Shafik Rehman appeared before the court around 10:30AM for surrender. On Sunday, the home ministry suspended the punishment of the veteran journalist and businessman Mizanur Rahman Bhuiyan for one-year in the case on a condition to surrender and file an appeal.

The ministry's Security Service Division issued a notification in this regard on September 22 following an opinion from the law ministry after Shafik Rehman and Mizanur Rahman appealed against the punishment. "We will file an appeal soon," said Shafik Rehman's lawyer Jaynul Abedin Mezbah after the court withdrew the arrest warrant today. After the court order, Shafik Rehman said to reporters, "The case was filed against me and others just to harass us. The government took away the people's freedom of speech, and we have been deprived of it as well. A false case was filed against me to stifle journalism and suppress the voice of the people."

On August 17 last year, Shafik was sentenced to seven years' rigorous imprisonment in the case in his absence and issued a conviction warrant against him. Mohammad Ullah Mamun, vice-president of Jatiyatabadi Samajik Sangskritik Sangstha; his son Rizvi Ahmed Caesar; and Mizanur Rahman Bhuiyan, a businessman in the US, were also sentenced to seven years in the same case in their absence. The case was filed on August 3, 2015, by the Detective Branch (DB) of police with Paltan Police Station. On Sunday (September 29), Mahmudur Rahman, former acting editor of the daily Amar Desh, was sent to jail in the same after he surrendered before the court of Dhaka Additional Chief Metropolitan Magistrate Md Mahbubul Haque. The magistrate rejected his bail prayer and sent to jail.