

# Slavery levels in UK 'higher than feared'

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The scale of slavery in the UK is far larger than previously feared, according to figures showing that between 10,000 and 13,000 victims could be trapped.

Imprisoned domestic staff, women forced into prostitution, agricultural and factory workers and trafficked men, women and children are among those counted in analysis for the Home Office.

Data from the National Crime Agency's Human Trafficking centre last year put the number of slaves in the UK at 2,744, the BBC reported, but the estimate for 2013 is more than quadruple that number.

Nearly 36 million people worldwide, or 0.5% of the world's population, live as slaves, a survey by anti-slavery campaign group Walk Free says. The group's Global Slavery Index says India has the most slaves overall and Mauritania has the highest percentage.

In Britain, it is reportedly first time the government has made an official estimate of the scale of the crime, using statistical methodology and models to

estimate a "dark figure" that may not have come to previous attention.

The Home Office told the BBC the "tentative conclusions" of its analysis is that the number of victims is higher than thought.

According to the estimate, the victims included people trafficked from more than 100 countries - most commonly Albania, Nigeria, Vietnam and Romania - as well as British-born adults and children, the BBC reported.

Last year, three women from Malaysia, Ireland and Britain, were rescued from 30 years of slavery in London as part of a Maoist cult.

A 57-year-old victim, from Ireland, had secretly accessed a phone and called a charity to say she had been held against her will for decades.

Charities say modern slavery can include forced labour or bonded work, where people have to pay off debts, forced marriages, prostitution and domestic servitude.

The threat of violence against a slave or their loved ones, loss of wages or reports to authorities leading to deportation are frequently used to stop vic-

tims leaving.

A case handled by Anti-Slavery International shows how human traffickers lure victims in with the promise of lucrative jobs abroad.

A 26-year-old Lithuanian woman told the charity she saw an advert for cleaning and waitressing jobs in the UK and travelled to England with a man from the "job agency".

But when she arrived her passport was confiscated and she was forced to work as a prostitute to repay the cost of her travel.

The latest figures come as the Modern Slavery Bill, backed by Home Secretary Theresa May, passes through the House of Lords.

It aims to give law enforcement agencies increased powers to tackle offenders, provide harder punishments and better support victims.

Introducing live sentences for perpetrators, it also created an independent anti-slavery commissioner.

The Home Secretary called modern slavery an "appalling crime" that has no place in society in the UK or around the world.

## Reckless bus kills journo Zaglul Chowdhury

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left behind his wife, a son and a daughter.

He was last serving as consulting editor of the Financial Express.

Around 8:00pm, he was going to the ATN Bangla office in Karwan Bazar on a bus to join a chat show.

When the bus reached near Sonargaon intersection on Kazi Nazrul Islam Avenue, he tried to get off but the vehicle recklessly pulled away before he could.

Zaglul fell on the road and suffered severe injuries to his head, witnesses said.

He was taken to Mohona Hospital on Green Road and later to Comfort Nursing Home Private Ltd, where doctors declared him dead around 8:30pm.

"He received injuries in the left side of his head," said Dr Emran Hasan of Comfort.

Zaglul's body has been kept at the Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University mortuary.

His son Navid Ahmed Chowdhury told The Daily Star that the family would decide on when and where to have the funeral after Zaglul's daughter Antara Ahmed Chowdhury returns from the US.

Despite owning a car, Zaglul seldom used it and preferred public buses and rickshaws, his colleagues said.

Shyamal Dutta, editor of Bangla daily Bhorer Kagoj and the host of ATN Bangla talk show "Onno Drishti", where Zaglul was supposed to be, said he talked to the senior journalist around 8:00pm over the phone.

"He said he was nearby and would reach [the ATN Bangla office] soon. As he was late, I called him after half an

hour but got no response. I called him again around 9:00pm when someone picked up and said he had an accident," Shyamal said.

Witness Imrul Quyes, who was waiting for a bus at the crossing, said he saw Zaglul fall from the bus and roll on the road.

Imrul along with two other pedestrians took him to Mohona Hospital on a rickshaw.

Shyamal and the pedestrians, who took him to Mohona Hospital, alleged that doctors there were slow in treating Zaglul.

Tofazzal Hossain, manager of the hospital, said after Zaglul was taken to the hospital, they conducted a CT scan and found brain haemorrhage.

"He needed to be in an incentive care unit immediately and since the unit was not operational at our hospital, we suggested having him transferred to a hospital with an ICU," he said.

Mohammad Iqbal, officer-in-charge of Kalabagan Police Station, said they were looking for the bus driver.

President Abdul Hamid and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in separate condolence messages expressed deep shock at the death of Zaglul Ahmed Chowdhury and conveyed sympathy to the bereaved family.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Mohammad Nasim and Information Minister Hasanul Haq Inu in separate messages also extended their deep sympathy to his family.

Jatiya Press Club President Kamal Uddin Ahmed Sabuj and General Secretary Abdal Ahmed also condoled

his death.

Farid Hossain, bureau chief of AP in Bangladesh, said the professionalism that Zaglul practised was unmatched. "You do not see many journalists writing stories while travelling on a bus. Zaglul Bhai was dedicated and a workaholic," he said.

LIFE AND WORK

Zaglul was the longest serving journalist in BSS, according to the news agency. He was made its chief editor and managing director in November 2006.

During his time at BSS, he served as the diplomatic correspondent, special correspondent, head of BSS parliamentary team, foreign editor, and was in-charge of the human rights desk.

He was also known as an analyst on South Asian affairs.

He was associated with several prominent foreign media outlets such as the TIME magazine, Jiji Press of Japan, Times of India, Qatar News Agency and ABC News.

He was the BSS regional correspondent based in New Delhi in the early eighties. He was also a member of the executive committee of the Foreign Correspondents' Club in Delhi.

He was the assistant secretary general of Bangladesh Federal Union of Journalists (BFUJ) in 1977-78.

Zaglul represented Bangladesh in the United Nations General Assembly where he addressed the special political committee as a delegate.

He authored a number of books, including "Bangladesh's Relations with India, Myanmar and Nepal: The Impact on Citizens and Development" and "Global Flashpoint: South Asia and Middle East".

day's performances. He said his father would have been very proud to see him at such a festival. He also underscored the legacy of many great classical artists who were born and raised in Bangladesh.

"The Bangladesh government has plans to uphold the country's image to the world, and it will work with Bengal Foundation to achieve that," the ministers said.

Noted Indian artist Jogen Chowdhury commended Bengal Foundation for their multidimensional efforts to revive arts in Bangladesh, saying it required a rare combination to "dream, imagine, plan, and execute" any big idea.

Fifteen young Bangladeshi artists -- the first batch of students from the Bengal Parampara Sangeetalya -- opened the evening's performances in a classical chorus presentation of Raga Kalyan. They were followed by promising Bangladeshi sitar player Nishit Dey who presented Raga Puriya Dhaneshree, being accompanied by Iftekhar Alam Pradhan on tabla.

The evening began with 15 young Bangladeshi artists -- the first batch of students from the Bengal Parampara Sangeetalya, who presented a classical chorus on Raga Kalyan. They were

followed by promising Bangladeshi sitar player Nishit Dey who performed Raga Puriya Dhaneshree. He was accompanied by Iftekhar Alam Pradhan on tabla.

Coming next, vocalist Manjusha Patil performed Raga Chhayana and a thumri on Misra Khamaj.

After Pandit Sharma came on stage vocalist Asit Roy, versatile Carnatic vocalist Vidushi Aruna Sairam, vocalist Pandit Ulhas Kashalkar and sitar player Kushal Das. They each left the audience spellbound with their unique performances.

Organised by Bengal Foundation and presented by Square Group, this year's five-day fest will see for the first time the likes of Carnatic percussion icon Guru Karaikudi Mani, classical vocalist Vidushi Kishori Amonkar and sarod maestro Ustad Amjad Ali Khan.

Over 60,000 music enthusiasts registered this year for the festival in less than two weeks. Attendance on the first and second day reached 30,000 and 40,000 respectively, most of whom stayed till dawn through the cold and misty winter nights.

The Daily Star is a strategic partner to the event, alongside the Prothom Alo. Brac Bank is also supporting the initiative.

were brought to Patenga Jetty No- 15 on a fishing vessel around 11:00am.

Later, Lavlu told reporters that their vessel turned upside down after being hit by Bashundhara-8, a merchant vessel. He then found himself beneath the vessel and managed to swim out of it. He also found Nasir, who was injured in the collision, trying to stay afloat.

"We both tried to hold on to a side of the sinking vessel but it was going down fast. Then we found a plank and grabbed it to stay afloat," said Lavlu.

They swam for about half an hour in the dark cold sea but at one stage Nasir gave up in exhaustion.

Lavlu then tied Nasir with himself with a piece of cloth and swam for around two hours before the two were rescued by the crew of a fishing trawler -- Shatabdi.

Junior Officer Sajib was on duty at

the bridge of the vessel on that fateful night while most of the crew were sleeping.

"After noticing Bahundhara-8 heading towards us, we sent messages through radio and tried to draw its attention with our powerful lights as well but got no response."

"It then directly hit us and I fell unconscious," Sajib said, adding that he found himself aboard the Shatabdi after he woke up.

Marine Fisheries Office, Chittagong, an associated office of the Department of Fisheries, formed a five-member probe body led by its Deputy Director Mariam Sultana to investigate the accident.

The committee has been asked to submit its report by seven working days, said Director Nasiruddin Md Humayun.

## Phulbari calm

Dhaka-Dinajpur road link resumes after 10-hr blockade over clash

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Road communication on the Dhaka-Dinajpur highway resumed early yesterday more than 10 hours after it remained snapped as locals blocked the highway following a clash with BGB members in Phulbari upazila on Friday.

Villagers of Rangamati and Border Guard Bangladesh members of the 29 Battalion headquarters in Phulbari were locked in a clash over arresting the driver and helper of the truck that killed two BGB jawans around 1:30pm in Rangamati area on Friday. The duo was returning to the battalion headquarters by a motorcycle.

Hearing the news, BGB members of the battalion rushed to the spot. They then started vandalising roadside shops and charging truncheons on villagers accusing the locals of "letting the truck driver and his assistant flee", sources said.

The locals attacked the BGB members too. The BGB men then opened fire. At least 13 locals were injured in the incident. Three of them suffered bullet wounds.

Some 10 BGB jawans were also hurt in the clash, the BGB has claimed.

Protesting the attack, the locals blocked the highway around 2:30pm.

The upazila administration then held a meeting with the villagers. Local officials of BGB, Rapid Action Battalion (Rab) and police were present there.

As the administration assured the locals of meeting their demands, they withdrew the blockade around 1:00am yesterday, police said.

Rafiqul Islam, a villager, said they demanded compensation from the BGB for vandalism and asked the force to bear treatment costs of the injured.

Lt Col Zahedur Rashid, commanding officer of the Phulbari battalion, said they already had started investigating the incident.

Meanwhile, the bodies of the two BGB members were handed over to their families yesterday.

## Lobbying

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He added that the two-time prime minister was seen on TV sitting like a kid in front of Biswal as if the American official would right away hand her power. He also called the US assistant secretary a "two-penny minister".

Ashraf, also the LGRD minister, urged the BNP chief not to depend on India's BJP government either for a changeover in Bangladesh.

Addressing the triannual council session of the ruling AL's Khulna city unit at Khulna Circuit House ground, he came down hard on Dan Mozena, saying the US ambassador tried his best to postpone the January 5 elections.

"Mozena will leave Bangladesh for home next week as his job tenure has ended and so has his power," Ashraf said, adding that Bangladesh is not in a position that people like Mozena will determine changeover in the country.

## Bombs

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The team quizzed the principal accused in the Burdwan blast case, Sajid Rahmatullah, whose actual name in police record is Md Masum Mia Soleman of Narayanganj.

Joint Commissioner Monirul Islam of Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP), who is leading the team, said they were not sure what event, person or people would have been the target of the bombs.

"We also got this idea from the NIA [National Investigation Agency of India] investigators," he said, adding that the banned Jama'atul Mujahideen Bangladesh (JMB) network was developed in West Bengal with the help of Bangladeshi fugitive militants.

"Some local JMB activists also worked but it was the fugitives who led the establishment of the network," said Monirul.

The JMB militant crossed the border to escape arrest and took shelter in Indian territory, presuming that getting Indian national ID cards, ration cards or other cards would be easy, he said.

The Bangladeshi team, comprised of law enforcement and intelligence agency officials, concluded their three-day visit to Kolkata to share information on militancy with NIA.

During the visit, they held several meetings with NIA investigators.

The Bangladeshi team sought the help of the Indian intelligence agencies in locating JMB fugitives.

Their visit follows the NIA officials' tour of Dhaka earlier this month.

The October 2 explosion at a Burdwan house in West Bengal killed two suspected militants and left another injured. Several people, including Sajid, have been arrested in connection with the blast in Burdwan.

## Ex-MP Sakhawat held

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of Uttar Khan Police Station, told The Daily Star.

An investigation agency assigned to probe the crimes against humanity committed in 1971 has received a number of allegations of murder, mass killing and other war crimes against Sakhawat.

The probe that started on April 1, 2012, was half way through and the report of the investigation would be submitted to the prosecution once it was done, sources said.

The International Crimes Tribunal-1 issued a warrant of arrest against him on October 29 following a petition by the prosecution.

Abdur Razzaque Khan, investigation officer of the case, told The Daily Star the probe against the suspect was now ongoing and they had gathered evidence of his "involvement" in war-time crimes.

"We are getting information of his alleged involvement in mass killing, rape, loot and other crimes," he added.

OC Yunus Ali said they raided the building on information and arrested Sakhawat, who had been living there with his wife Mahmuda Khatun for about 10 days.

The war crimes suspect had earlier lived at Uttara Sector-6 but changed

the place, as people started to know about his whereabouts, the OC added.

Sakhawat's candidature in Jessore-6 constituency was cancelled over war crimes allegations after Jatiya Party had picked him for the January 5 parliamentary polls.

Locals and sources in the war crimes probe body say that Sakhawat was a central committee member of Islami Chhatra Sangha, the student body of Jamaat-e-Islami in 1971.

He joined the Razakar force during the Liberation War and was the in-charge of Hisladanga Razakar camp of Keshabpur, they allege.

After independence, Sakhawat went into hiding and resurfaced in 1986 as a local leader of Jamaat.

He contested the 1991 parliamentary polls with Jamaat ticket in Jessore-6 and was elected MP.

Later, he joined BNP and became a lawmaker again in the short-lived parliament formed through the February 15, 1996, elections. When BNP and Jamaat formed an alliance before the 2001 elections, he failed to secure nomination and contested the poll as an independent candidate.

He was expelled from BNP in connection with failing to maintain party discipline and he joined Jatiya Party afterwards.

## The last call

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around 30 nautical miles northwest off the Saint Martin's Island around 3:10am. Three of the 29 crew were rescued by a nearby fishing trawler. One of the rescued later died. Navy ships and choppers were scouring the area for the missing.

There were many like Soma at AK Khan Ghat in Banglabazar area, waiting for news of their dear ones still missing.

Ripon was holding a photograph of his brother Moktadir Billah, captain of the capsized vessel.

"My brother became father of a baby girl only 24 days back, 13 years after his marriage," Ripon said.

Moktadir called on his wife's phone around 9:00pm on Thursday and inquired about his child.

"He wanted to host a grand feast on his return from the voyage to celebrate the occasion. But everything is doomed now," Ripon said staring blankly at the sea in front.

Shefali Das was squatting on the ground and wailing. Her fisherman husband Hari Jaladas signed up for the voyage just four days after their daughter's marriage.

"My daughter's Jamai Bhatta [a post-wedding rite] was scheduled for last Friday. And on Thursday night, my husband over the phone asked me if the arrangements were done properly," said the 48-year-old.

"The news [of the capsized] came to us when we were preparing to begin the ceremony on Friday morning," said Shefali, a resident of Jelepara in East Madarbari area of the port city.

Four more people -- Badal Jaladas,

Ranjit kumar Das, Md Elias and Al Amin -- from her neighbourhood were missing in the capsized. Of them, Elias and Al Amin are cousins.

Visiting the ultra poor fisherman neighbourhood, this correspondent found Al Amin's elder brother Belal.

"My 18-year-old brother was jobless. Our cousin Elias found a vacancy in the fishing company and got him the job only eight days ago. Al Amin knew it was a risky job and did not want to join," said Belal.

"But we are too poor to let him stay out of work any longer. So, we were forced to send him to the sea.

"It was his first time in the sea. Perhaps the last time too," Belal managed to say before his voice choked.

Five of the missing crewmen -- Rabiul Awal, Md Monir Hosen, Md Jahir, Abdus Sattar and Habib Ullah Kaiser -- were from Kachua and adjoining areas in Chandpur.

Rabiul's elder brother Sohag said his brother phoned him on Thursday night and asked him to recharge his cell phone balance.

"Please send me the recharge quickly. I want to talk to others before I go out of network," Sohag quoted his brother as saying on the phone.

"This was his last request. My brother will never want anything from me," Sohag said before he burst into tears.

Not just Sohag, relatives of most of the missing fishermen were struck with despair by yesterday evening.

As if they had started to believe that the missing were dead by now, they said they wanted to get back the bodies at least.

## Santu threatens

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on the time and situation," he said while reading out a written statement.

The CHT Peace Accord was signed between the Awami League-led government and the PCJSS on December 2, 1997. It stopped a two-decade-long armed conflict in the region. However, many key provisions of the accord, including a functional CHT land dispute resolution commission and a taskforce, are yet to be implemented.

The peace accord was signed to ensure the rights of the Jumma people living in the CHT region, said Larma, also chairman of the CHT Regional Council.

"The issues in CHT pose political as well as national problems. The peace accord was signed in for the greater interest of the country. So it is the duty and responsibility of the government to fully implement the accord," the former guerrilla leader stressed.

He said the political situation in the CHT region had worsened as the government had been dillydallying about implementing the accord.

Referring to incidents of eviction of 21 Chak families in Bandarban, he said land grabbing, attacks and repression on the Jumma people were increasing day by day.

Following the signing of the accord, the then AL-led government remained in power for about four years during

which time many provisions of the accord were implemented. They included formation of a CHT affairs ministry, repatriation of refugees from India, passing the CHT regional council and CHT district council laws and formation of a peace accord implementation committee.

But the current AL-led government has done nothing more than handing over some activities of the hill districts to the district council authorities in the last six years since 2009, he added.

Pointing to the growing presence of fundamentalists and communal forces in the CHT day by day, he said the government, on the one hand, will keep on giving false assurances of implementing the peace accord and sponsor activities that go against the interest of the Jumma people on the other.

"The main motto behind all these is to turn a non-Muslim majority area into a Muslim majority area," alleged Larma in his written statement.

Senior leader Pankaj Bhattacharya, president of Nap Oikya, Ushatun Talukder, MP, Rabindra Nath Soren, president of Jatiya Adivasi Parishad, Numan Ahmed Khan, executive director of Institute of Environment and Development, advocate Neelufar Banu, among others, spoke at the press briefing.

## Saarc deals

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"Bangladesh believes that this agreement will be a milestone in regional cooperation and development," said the foreign minister, adding that Dhaka would play an active role so that the two deals were signed in the shortest possible time.

Referring to the bilateral meeting between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the minister said the two leaders emphasised the need for security cooperation and tackling terrorism.

Both the leaders agreed to work

together on this, he said.

"We have ensured that no terror act could take place against India using Bangladesh territory. We also expected the same from the Indian side," he added.

He said the Indian prime minister would visit Bangladesh once the Teesta water-sharing deal was finalised but the minister could not say when that would happen.

He, however, said West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee might visit Bangladesh prior to Modi's visit. "She has expressed her willingness to visit Bangladesh."