

What you read about human trafficking from **Bangladesh to Malaysia by transnational syndicates** is just the tip of the iceberg. Star, after investigation of over three months, will shed light on a crime

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Your Right to Know

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SLAVETRADE

booms in

DARK TRIANGLE

Transnational traffickers lured some 2.5 lakh Bangladeshi fortune-seekers through sea route in 8 years, held them in Thai jungles for ransom, used them as slaves

EMRAN HOSSAIN and MOHAMMAD ALI ZINNAT with SWAPAN PANDEY

MARTIN

Promising jobs in Malaysia, transnational human traffickers held about 2.5 lakh Bangladeshis captive in Thailand for ransom over the last eight years and realised crores of taka from them, The Daily Star can report.

Lured into the trap, many of the country's poor people make the voyage in cargo vessels through sea to Thailand first, hoping to cross into Malaysia overland.

But before the jobseekers can make it to their final destination, their dreams turn into a collective nightmare. Held in

crammed and filthy conditions in Thai jungles for months or even years, they are often beaten and starved for ransom. Thailand is a strategic location for

holding victims in remote mountains dotting that country's coast, said a Bangladeshi expatriate in Malaysia who turned broker.

"The migrants are confined in Thailand to realise the ransom before they are sent to Malaysia, because in the past some jobseekers fled from Thailand without paying. It is better to settle the business at the right time," he told this newspaper by phone on condition of anonymity.

Only on Saturday, the Thai

authorities found 26 bodies from mass graves where trafficking victims from Bangladesh and Myanmar are suspected to have been buried in an abandoned jungle camp located in Sadao district of Songkhla province.

In October last year, Thai police rescued 134 trafficked victims confined in a Southern Thailand rubber plantation deep in a jungle. The BBC had reported all the victims were Bangladeshis, but the Bangladesh authorities said 118 were Bangladesh nationals while the rest 16 were Rohingyas from Myanmar.

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THE PHONE CAMERA OVER

THE QR CODE TO GET THE

STORIES AND PHOTOS

OF OUR SERIES ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

WATCH OUT FOR PART II

People being abducted and shipped abroad. Traffickers find Rohingyas as their easy targets

Once home, victims -- some maimed, Victims caught by Thai or some mentally disturbed -- find Malaysian authorities for their homesteads gone and their intrusion bribe families burdened with loan Tk 20,000 - Tk 30,000 while in jail or immigration **HUMAN TRAFFICKING** Local brokers get between PREYING ON THE POOR Tk 5,000 & Tk 10,000 Cox's Bazar for luring each jobseeker Malaysian brokers charge Each each victim victim pays Tk 5,000 - Tk 10,000 for release from 'receive house' Tk 2,50,000 Godfathers in Cox's Bazar and From confinement in Thai jungle, no Teknaf get between victim can enter Malaysia without paying Tk 4,50,000 Tk 15,000 and Tk 30,000 Tk 2,00,000 - Tk 3,50,000 for each victim supplied Malaysian police, employers in ransom to the chain take half the monthly income of illegal migrants Jobseekers are robbed of their



Twenty bodies, exhumed from an isolated site in Songkhla near Thai border with Malaysia, are being properly buried yesterday.



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preparation

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500 killed in camps

INFOGRAPH DESIGN:

DS CREATIVE GRAPHICS

Says survivor; many who could not afford to pay ransom were shot or clubbed to death

BELONGINGS, like cell phones and

shoes, at their departure points

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THE NATION/ANN

Kuramia, a migrant, paid out Bt 95,000 in ransom to save his nephew Kazim, who was being held at a border camp. But he never saw him alive. His nephew's was among 26 bodies recently exhumed from a mass-grave

Avijit killing?

Rab, police doubt reported claim

STAR REPORT

Al-Qaeda in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) has claimed responsibility for the murder of writer-blogger Avijit Roy, AFP reported citing a US website that monitors extremist groups.

In a video posted on jihadist forums on Saturday, AQIS leader Asim Umar said his organisation carried out the attacks on Avijit and "other

blasphemers" in Bangladesh and Pakistan, according to the website of SITE Intelligence Group.

Police and Rab said they were yet to be sure about the authenticity of the post. SEE PAGE 2 COL 1

Qaeda unit behind Pintu dies in jail

It's a killing, says family; Khaleda blames PM, others for 'murder'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Former BNP lawmaker Nasiruddin Ahmed Pintu died of "cardiac arrest" yesterday.

He was 48.

The BNP assistant organising secretary was "brought dead" to Rajshahi Medical College Hospital from Rajshahi Central

Jail at 12:15pm, Brig Gen AKM Nasiruddin, director of the hospital, told The Daily Star.

Relatives of Pintu have left for Rajshahi to bring the body to Dhaka. His namaz-e-janaza would be held in front of the party central office in Naya Paltan at 11:30am today.

Rois Uddin, head of cardiology department at RMCH,

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PHOTO:

AMRAN HOSSAIN



Traffic not as heavy as usual in Dhaka yesterday since many opted to stay indoors amid the heat of the summer. The photo of the heat haze was taken in front of the Crescent Lake.

