



## GRABBERS FEAST ON BURIGANGA

The Buriganga is getting narrower every year as dumping of waste along the river banks between Sadarghat and Rayerbazar by land grabbers goes on unabated. Grabbers have been raising shanties, setting up small factories and even some residential and commercial buildings on the banks of the river. They deploy rickshaw vans to dump around 30 vans of garbage at selected spots in the river daily. The garbage is later burnt to make it solid. The van pullers even steal trash from city corporation trucks to do their job. After a year or two, as solid garbage is piled high, a new site is developed by the grabbers to set up installations.

PHOTO : ZAHED KHAN

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## 2nd bank faced malware attack

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succeeded in penetrating the targeted banks' systems, obtaining user credentials and submitting fraudulent SWIFT messages that correspond with transfers of money.

The cooperative has maintained that its core messaging service has not been compromised. But confirmation of a second attack on a bank will likely increase scrutiny on the security of a network used by 11,000 financial institutions globally.

In Bangladesh, cyber-security experts hired by the central bank said in a report that hackers were still inside the bank's network, monitoring the investigation into one of the biggest cyber heists in the world. Reuters reviewed parts of the report, but the source who shared the document declined to provide access to its full contents, saying the release of some details could hamper a multinational effort to catch the criminals.

BAE Systems, Europe's largest weapons maker, which also has a large cyber-security business, said it had uncovered evidence linking malicious software used in the Bangladesh heist to the high-profile attack on Sony's Hollywood studio in 2014 and other cases.

"What initially looked to be an isolated incident at one Asian bank turned out to be part of a wider campaign," BAE's cyber-security team said in a report it released yesterday.

BAE also said it uncovered malware that was recently used to target a Vietnamese commercial bank using fraudulent messages on the SWIFT money-transfer network. The malware operated "in a similar fashion" to the Bangladesh Bank hack, BAE said.

SWIFT also did not name the victim, and neither firm said whether any funds had been stolen.

Reuters was not able to independently confirm the findings of BAE's determination about similarities between the Bangladesh and Sony attacks. The US government has blamed North Korea for the attack on Sony's film studio, a charge Pyongyang has rejected.

BAE's head of threat intelligence, Adrian Nish, told Reuters that the company was only focused on the technical evidence that links the attacks, not determining who was behind them.

The report said the malware used against Bangladesh Bank exhibits "the same unique characteristics" as

software used in "Operation Blockbuster", a campaign documented by a coalition of security firms that dates back to at least 2009 and includes the Sony hack.

BAE asserted the Operation Blockbuster connection after analyzing tens of millions of malicious file samples, but the report acknowledged there could be alternate explanations for the similarities.

It is possible that multiple programmers shared the same code, or even that it was painstakingly recreated to confuse investigators, according to BAE.

### India says

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committed during the movement for the independence of Bangladesh in 1971," Vikas Swarup, spokesperson of India's external affairs ministry, told reporters in reply to a question on the execution of Jamaat-e-Islami leader Motiur Rahman Nizami yesterday.

Nizami was hanged in the early hours of Wednesday in Dhaka Central Jail for war crimes committed during the 1971 Liberation War of Bangladesh against Pakistan in 1971.

Shafiqul Islam, deputy inspector general of Chittagong Range Police, suspected Rohingyas were behind the attack as the attackers were speaking in the language used by the Rohingya community.

"We have got some names and are working on those," he told the BBC Bangla service.

He suspected the looted weapons would be used in criminal activities.

Maj Gen Mizanur Rahman Khan, director general of Ansar and VDP, told The Daily Star that an operation was underway to arrest the attackers since yesterday morning.

Rohingya Refugee Repatriation office sources said 19,000 registered

Rohingya people are living in the camp, set up in 1991 on the forest department land near Cox's Bazar-Teknaf highway adjacent to the Naf river.

Locals say relatives of the refugees often cross the river from Myanmar side and take shelter in the camp.

Meanwhile, Ali Hossain's death cast a pall of gloom over his house in Shakhipur of Tangail, reports our correspondent there.

"My father was so happy to hear my SSC results [published on Wednesday] and he told me he would come home as soon as possible. He is coming home, but dead," said his daughter Soma Akter.

## Yaba traders attack five journalists

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Faraj Uddin, Independent Television Cox's Bazar correspondent Tawfiqul Islam Lipu, his cameraperson Shariful Islam and Ekattor TV cameraperson Babu Kanti Dey.

They were undergoing treatment at Teknaf Upazila Health Complex.

Injured Lipu told The Daily Star that they had gone to Nazirpara village in the upazila around 5:00pm on a microbus to collect information about yaba trading in the area.

At that time, a group of people led by Nurul Haque Bhutto, 35, swooped on them with sharp weapons after knowing their professional identities, he said.

The attackers also snatched their cameras and mobile phones and vandalised the microbus, Lipu added.

Locals rescued them and took them to the hospital.

Bhutto is now on the run. Teknaf Upazila Nirbahi Officer Shafiqul Islam visited the victims at the

hospital. Two teams of police and Rab visited the spot.

Kabir Ahmed, inspector (investigation) of Teknaf Police Station, said Bhutto was a home ministry-listed yaba dealer. "He was accused in at least five cases and served different jail terms. We are trying to arrest him."

Meanwhile, journalists in Cox's Bazar yesterday gave a 24-hour ultimatum to the authorities to arrest the attackers.

## 7 mega projects gaining pace

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around five years. Back in 2009, following a Japanese study, the government had planned to build the country's first deep sea port in Sonadia off Maheshkhali. But now, the government has switched to a new location in Paira, off Patuakhali.

In the latest meeting of the Fast Track Project Monitoring Committee headed by the prime minister on April 27, officials discussed inclusion of another project as fast track: the Railway from Dohazari via Cox's Bazar to Gundum of Myanmar.

**PADMA BRIDGE: PROGRESS SATISFACTORY**  
Originally planned to be completed by December 2013, the much-troubled Padma Bridge Project is now making good progress and it is expected to be completed by 2018.

According to official reports presented to the Prime Minister on April 27, the project marked 65 percent progress in constructing approach roads at Jajira, 73 percent at Mawa, main bridge and river training, 21 percent. Thirty-four percent progress has been made in bridge financing.

The project that saw several cost escalations is now being implemented at a hefty cost of \$3.7 b. This cost jumped from \$2.9 b at 2010—when the World Bank had agreed to fund it. After the WB withdrew its promise, the government began implementing the project from 2014 using its own resources.

**METRO RAIL: PROJECT DEADLINE CUT BY ONE YEAR**

The Metro Rail project was delayed by five years and was set to be completed in 2020. But now this 20-km vital rapid transit project may finish before the deadline. Work on the first part of the project from Uttara North to Agargaon will begin from early 2017 aiming to be completed by December 2019. Works between Agargaon to Motijheel would also start in 2017—but it would be completed in December 2020.

The \$2.7b metro rail project got a shot in the arm upon receiving Japanese funding in February 2014.

On March 27 last, the government signed a contract with Japanese Tokyu Construction Company to develop the Metro Rail depot.

The project is currently facing some hurdle as certain roads were found not wide enough. Besides, an old temple stands on the way. The authorities are seeking a Tk 50 crore allocation to widen a road in the cantonment area and relocate Chakuli Temple from the Mirpur cantonment.

Once completed, the project would carry 60,000 passengers per hour and bring great relief to the city's notorious traffic congestion and delays.

This 20-km Metro Rail route, named Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Line-6, will be constructed from Uttara to Bangladesh Bank and will have 16 stops.

**ROOPPUR NUCLEAR POWER: PROGRESS SATISFACTORY**

The 2400 megawatt Rooppur nuclear power project has made significant progress as it has initialled a \$12.65 b financing agreement with Russia last December.

All preparatory construction works will be finished within this year, while certain field level works have been fully completed, a well-placed source said.

"We expect the financial agreement to be finalized by May, because we want to make advance payment from the next budget for equipment that takes around three years to construct," he said.

Bangladesh will hold a discussion with Russia over the state credit agreement on May 16.

Russian state company Rosatom began working at Rooppur in mid 2013 and is currently undertaking a techno-feasibility study under a half-a billion dollar loan.

Rosatom's sister concern Atomenergoproekt—which is undertaking the study has recently floated a tender for engineering survey, environmental monitoring and development of project documents for the Rooppur NPP site.

The government expects the construction of the nuclear reactor to start early 2017 and complete by 2020. The plant's trial operation target is in the following year but officials say the plant will begin operation from 2022.

**LNG TERMINAL: SIX YEARS LATE, BUT DEAL SIGNED RECENTLY**

After six years of floating the tender for the Liquefied Natural Gas terminal, Petrobangla on March 31 signed a contract with US based company Excelerate Bangladesh to build the floating terminal within two years investing \$500 million.

Part of this project is building a 90 km gas pipeline from Maheshkhali to Chittagong to connect to the national grid.

The government will spend \$1.5 b a year to import 500 million cubic feet of LNG per day from Qatar from 2017.

The LNG would be very costly, but it would not only diversify the country's primary energy sources—but also ensure that the gas-based industries and installations do not face a sudden death in the near future. It is expected that after mixing LNG with the national gas, the average price of national gas will have to be more than doubled to make it cost effective.

Excelerate Energy will realise \$159,000 per day as rent of the floating terminal and \$45,000 per day as operational charge. As a result, the price of each thousand cubic feet of natural gas from imported LNG would be at least \$3.2.

**RAMPAL POWER PROJECT: 2 YEARS LATE, BUT DEAL SIGNED RECENTLY**  
After initiating the project in 2010, the Rampal 1320 mw project suffered a delay of two years.

While there is widespread protest

about the location of the power plant, the India-Bangladesh joint venture company in March has awarded Indian company Bhel the Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) contract for the \$1.5 billion dollar project. It is expected to come into operation in 30 months.

**DEEP SEA PORTS: FEASIBILITY COMPLETED**

The government has shelved Sonadia deep sea port and has concentrated on developing the Paira Deep sea port off Patuakhali with the aim to begin operation in a limited scale this year.

Meanwhile, a British company HR Wallingford has completed the feasibility study for Paira deep sea port. This would guide the government in finalizing the implementation plan.

Construction works for the deep sea port will be implemented through 19 different tenders.

Meanwhile, the government is reviewing merits of proposals from China, UK, Belgium, Netherlands, Denmark and India. They are interested to invest more than \$15 billion.

The government has set short-term, mid-term and long-term goals for the port. In short-term, this year the government would facilitate outer anchoring of clinkering, fertilizer and other bulk ships.

In mid-term, the government would complete building a multipurpose and bulk terminal infrastructure by 2018 at a depth of 10 meter channel through dredging.

By 2023, a full deep sea port facility of 16 meter channel will be operational.

The Sonadia deep sea port remains as the eighth fast track project that could not proceed due to "lack of investors' interest." A 10-member committee has been given the responsibility to look into proposals from different governments and make a decision.

**MATARBARI 1,200MW COAL POWER PROJECT: PROGRESS SATISFACTORY**  
This project has full funding and its consultants are working from 2014.

The government's Coal Power Generation Company has acquired 1500 acres of land for the project. Ninety percent of boundary fencing of the project site has been completed and the appointment of the project's consultant is being finalised.

The project is actually taking a very long time to shape up because huge works were needed to develop the project site in Matbarbari close to Maheshkhali.

The authorities have selected a contractor in February to complete power plant and port site preparatory work and are now processing contracts for power evacuation and building a power substation.

With a price tag of \$4.6 b, this is one of the costliest power projects of its size in the world that will come with its own deep sea port to facilitate import of coal. The project will be completed by 2022.