

## One gang, 500 burglaries

MUNTAKIM SAAD

The first step of the operation: recce flats and apartments in different areas. Once the lights are turned off, the real action begins.

Information collected from these recces is then shared with three gang leaders, who specialise in cutting grilles, climbing up to 8th-10th floors like "spiders" and breaking locks.

"This 20-member gang has carried out at least 500 burglaries in different parts of the country in the last eight years since 2014," HM Azimul Haque, deputy commissioner at Dhaka Metropolitan Police Tejgaon division, told this correspondent.

Police came up with the information after arresting three of its members who were found involved in a theft incident in New Eskaton area. During the Eid vacation in April, New Eskaton resident Touhidul Islam and his family left their flat for their village home in Narsingdi.

When they returned after five days, they

**Arrestee Ismail is known as the "black spider" of the gang for his climbing skills. Arif is adept at breaking locks, while Komol's responsibility is to ensure a safe exit after the burglary.**

found the locks of three almirahs open and the grilles of the kitchen cut. Cash, gold jewellery and 18 wristwatches worth Tk 12 lakh were missing from the house.

After investigating the case for the last several months, Hatirjheel police tracked the gang. The three arrestees are -- Ismail Khan (30), Fahad Hossain Komol (26), and Arif Hossain (30). They were arrested in Dhaka on Wednesday.

According to Hafiz Al Faruk, additional deputy commissioner of DMP (Tejgaon Industrial Zone), arrestee Ismail is known as the "black spider" of the gang for his climbing skills. Arif is adept at breaking locks, while Komol's responsibility is to ensure a safe exit after the burglary.

Police also arrested jewellery trader Gopal Ghosh from Tantibazar who purchased stolen gold ornaments from this racket several times. According to the Crime Data Management System, Ismail has four cases against his name. Meanwhile, Arif has two while Komol four.

## NATIONAL GIRL CHILD DAY

# No country for our daughters

574 girls raped in last 8 months, says report of National Girl Child Advocacy Forum

NILIMA JAHAN

Although Sustainable Development Goals target ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against children by 2030, Bangladesh is yet to go a long way in this regard.

The reality is even worse for girl children. The latest report found that a total of 574 girl children were subjected to rape in the first eight months of this year, of whom, 84 were victims of gang rape and 43 were children with disabilities.

Another 87 girl children faced attempt to rape, said the National Girl Child Advocacy Forum (NGCAF) report.

Twenty of the children were killed after rape, it mentioned.

The report will be officially launched today.

NGCAF prepared the "Girl Children Situation Monitoring Report 2022", based on reports from 24 daily newspapers, in 13 categories from January to August.

The analysis also revealed that even one-year-old infants have also been victims of rape.

Although some perpetrators were arrested following the GDs and cases filed after many such incidents, most of them were released on bail later.

Moreover, they also threatened the victims and their parents with dire consequences.

The report did not find any information on final punitive actions taken against the perpetrators in any such case, though a High Court directive suggests the disposal of rape or murder cases within 180 days of filing them with Women and Children Repression Prevention Tribunals.

With such a reality, Bangladesh

**84** victims of gang rape  
**43** rape victims with disabilities  
**87** faced rape attempts  
**76** victims of sexual harassment  
**186** murdered after rape, harassment, family feud  
**181** died by suicide  
**136** abducted, trafficked  
**1,669** from 25 districts victims of child marriage

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- Enacting separate "Sexual Harassment Prevention and Remedy Act"
- Amend laws to shift burden of proof on perpetrators
- Stopping political and administrative shelter for perpetrators
- Gender-sensitive training for those involved in legal, judicial system

is celebrating National Girl Child Day today, with the slogan "Somoyer Ongikar: Konyashishur Odhikar" (Rights of girl children: a timely pledge).

The report also found that 76 girls were subjected to sexual harassment and torture from January to August 2021, of whom, one was a child with disabilities and 15 were subjected to pornography.

Most of the occurrences took place in

public places, including markets, streets, public transport, educational and religious institutions and in the confines of their own home, by family members, relatives, teachers and stalkers.

A total of 186 girls were also killed in this period, followed by rape, sexual harassment and family feud, while another 181 girls died by suicide, compared to the 153 in 2021.

During this period, three girl children were subjected to acid attacks due to family feud and rejection of affair proposals, while another 136 was subjected to trafficking and abduction.

Since the incidents of child marriage are not widely reported in the media, the forum received the data from its partners working in the field.

According to the data, a total of 1,669 girls from 25 districts became the victims of child marriage in the first eight months, while 589 incidents of child marriage were stopped with the help of local administration.

Thirteen girl children also faced dowry-related domestic violence during this period, while five were killed.

On the other hand, a total of 15 girls who worked as domestic help were tortured in the first eight months of 2022, of whom two were killed after the torture, while one died by suicide.

Focus group discussions with girl children at the field level revealed that about 1,000 girl children are being regular victims of cyber harassment, including inappropriate messages, distorted images, sexual innuendos and much more.

However, an overwhelming majority of the girl children did not complain against those, as they did not know where to go to seek remedies. Others refused to

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## 'Threats remain, but we're alert'

### Says DMP commissioner on security for Durga Puja

STAR REPORT



There are risks of militant attacks and online propaganda during Durga Puja, but police are vigilant, said Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) Commissioner Shafiqul Islam yesterday.

He said this a couple of days after Bangladesh Puja Ujjapan Parishad expressed concern about this year's celebrations.

The DMP commissioner made the remark while talking to reporters, after inspecting security measures taken for Durga Puja at the capital's Dhakeshwari temple.

Asked whether there is any risk, he said, "There are two kinds of security risks: one is militant attacks, and another is creating religious unrest by spreading propaganda. Our detectives are working to tackle these risks."

"We've been working on the risk of militant

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## Protest not permitted

### Rally against Eden College BCL leaders suspended

DU CORRESPONDENT

A rally protesting controversial activities of a section of BCL leaders of Eden Mohila College has been suspended as police did not give the protestors permission.

The protest rally of a group of guardians was supposed to be held around 11:30am in front of the college yesterday.

Rakhal Raha, one of the organisers, announced the suspension in a Facebook post, saying that the officer in-charge of Lalbagh Police Station asked them not to hold the programme.

Contacted, OC MM Morshed of the police station said, "The organisers did not take any permission from police before announcing their programme... We requested them to postpone it on security grounds."

Recently, a group of expelled BCL leaders brought some serious allegations, including being forced to do unethical work by blackmailing

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She is tired. She has been standing in this queue for hours. The child in her arms is impatient. He wants to go home. However, she has no other option as she needs to buy daily essentials from an OMS truck in front of a subsidised rate. It has now become common for people to stand in line for hours for these trucks as prices of daily essentials have been skyrocketing in markets. This photo was taken in the capital's Mirpur Mazar Road area yesterday.

PHOTO: RASHED SHUMON

## British national found dead in Uttara hotel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police recovered the body of a British national from a hotel in Dhaka's Uttara area yesterday morning.

The deceased, Dugald Finlayson (60), arrived in Bangladesh on a tourist visa and checked into Marino Hotel on September 20, police said.

On information, a team of police found Dugald in unconscious state inside the bathroom of a room around 10:00am.

He was rushed to a private hospital nearby where doctors declared him dead, said Jahirul Islam, officer-in-charge of Uttara East Police Station.

Quoting the hotel authorities, police said the British national had his dinner last night. He was seen entering his room in the CCTV footage.

As he did not respond when a Chinese friend

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## 'Set up vaccine plant by this fiscal'

Says JS body

RASHIDUL HASAN

Amid delays in completing the vaccine manufacturing and research plant in Gopalganj, a parliamentary watchdog yesterday asked the health ministry to finish all works and start making vaccines within this fiscal year (2022-23).

The parliamentary standing committee on health ministry came up with the recommendation in a meeting at Jatiya Sangsad Bhaban, with Awami League lawmaker Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim in the chair.

According to minutes of the committee's previous meeting, which was approved yesterday, the committee chief said minus election time, the present government only has a year of its tenure remaining.

The committee chief said after

fulfilling the demand of the country, it would be possible to export vaccines from the plant.

Selim asked the health ministry to prepare to place the draft bill on upgrading the drug regulatory authority to "maturity level-3", so that Bangladeshi vaccines can be exported abroad.

**The process for signing a memorandum of understanding with a US company to import vaccine raw materials is almost at the final stage.**

Placing the progress report on installing the plant before the committee, Ehsanul Kabir, managing director of Essential Drugs Company, which was selected to implement the project, said works to acquire land is ongoing. He said the process for signing a memorandum of understanding with a US company -- to import vaccine raw

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## Asian Tourism Fair-2022

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