



For the last seven days, two and a half-year-old Ananta had been pestering his mother to take him to see his father -- Sakibul Hasan. The Agartala resident is currently admitted to the Suhrawardy Hospital with dengue. As Sakibul's condition began to improve, Ananta's mother took him to the hospital yesterday. Seeing his father, the little started making up for the lost time right away.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

Kamrangirchar to become a 'business district'

Plan to be submitted in Dec

DIPAN NANDY

Dhaka South City Corporation is planning to build a business district -- similar to Shanghai or Dubai -- in Kamrangirchar, to attract global business tycoons through this project.

According to DSAC officials, Bangladesh failed to attract global business tycoons to set up their offices in Motijheel and other business hubs in the country.

However, global investment is the main target to be achieved by this project.

During a recent programme in the capital, DSAC Mayor Sheikh Fazle Noor Taposh talked about the project.

He said, "We want to offer global as well as domestic businesses the opportunity to set up offices in our newly planned central business district in Kamrangirchar."

According to DSAC sources, DSAC will build this commercial hub in Kamrangirchar, an island of 1,200 acres.

As per the draft plan, a high-rise convention centre, condominiums, high-end office buildings, auditoriums, a heritage museum, rooftop cafes and restaurants, an art gallery, green walkways, cycle lanes and stands, water taxi

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The proposed plan identified the geographical location, environmental aspect, advantage of various natural resources of the Kamrangirchar area surrounded by the river basin and its very close proximity to existing financial centres as its strength.

CTTC arrests two members of gang that takes Bangladeshis to Libya, confines them for ransom

AT A GLANCE

Total area 1,200 acres
Plan taken to attract global investments

WHAT'S IN THE PLAN

High-rise convention centre
Condominiums, offices
Auditoriums, museum, art gallery
Green walkways, cycle lanes
Water taxi jetty, water garden
Two bridges

MOHAMMAD JAMIL KHAN

They call it the "game ghar (house)".

Alluring Bangladeshis with a prospect of better life in Europe, a transnational gang first sends unsuspecting people to Dubai on a visit visa and then to Libya through Egypt.

For the journey, the criminals charge each person around Tk 9.5 lakh.

But there's a twist. The migrants are then kept confined to "game ghar" once they reach Libya. The gang's Libyan members then make ransom calls to the victims' family and demand a hefty amount.

If the ransom is paid, the criminals send the migrants to Europe on small boats through the Mediterranean Sea. They torture the migrants until ransom is paid.

The human-trafficking wing of Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime (CTTC) unit claimed to have got the findings after the arrest of two Bangladeshi members of the gang -- Md Alamgir Khan and Akteruzzaman Molla alias Kuddus Molla.

Asked why they call it "game ghar", investigators said to the criminals, this is just a game, like betting. Guessing whether the gang would get ransom and send victims to Europe, or whether to torture, is fun for them.

CTTC claimed to have arrested

Alamgir from Savar on October 30, after Moni Akter, mother of victim Alim Hossain Milon, filed a case with Hazaribagh Police Station.

According to the first information report and CTTC, Moni paid Alamgir Tk 9.50 lakh to send Milon to Italy in two phases.

Asked why they call it "game ghar", investigators said to the criminals, this is just a game, like betting. Guessing whether the gang would get ransom and send victims to Europe, or whether to torture, is fun for them. Interrogating arrestees, CTTC has come to know that around 13 Bangladeshis are now confined to the game ghar.

On information, CTTC officials conducted a drive in Faridpur and arrested Kuddus on early Wednesday.

Kuddus is the ringleader of the gang's Bangladesh side. Recently, he received a licence for a recruiting agency named "Ms Arfa Manpower Limited" and registered the business against a fake address, said ADC Tohidul.

"As per the offer, Alamgir used to collect people, take around Tk 9.5 lakh from each of them, and refer them to Kuddus. For bringing one person, Kuddus used to pay him Tk 40,000 to Tk 50,000," said the officer.

On information, CTTC officials conducted a drive in Faridpur and arrested Kuddus on early Wednesday.

Milon left Bangladesh in a flight on March 28 and called Moni five days after reaching Libya. A week later, Alamgir told Milon's family that local police caught him while he was going to Italy. So, the group needed Tk 6 lakh more to free him, reads the FIR.

Moni then sold a piece of land and paid the amount.

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TORTURED IN 'GAME GHAR'

CTTC arrests two members of gang that takes Bangladeshis to Libya, confines them for ransom

'Know the Constitution, know your rights'

Speakers tell discussion marking National Constitution Day

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Stressing the need to raise awareness about the country's Constitution, eminent jurist Shahidin Malik yesterday said there has been a significant lack of government initiatives in this regard.

"The government does not want that we [people] know about the Constitution," he said during a discussion.

Moulik Odhikar Surokkha Committee, a platform of rights activists, organised the discussion on "Fifty Years of the Constitution and Our Fundamental Rights" at the capital's Gonoshasthaya Kendra.

Bangladesh's constitution was adopted on November 4, 1972. This year, the government for the first time observed the day as "National Constitution Day".

Addressing the event, Shahidin Malik said people's fundamental rights, which are guaranteed in the Constitution, have gradually become "redundant" due to various interventions over the years.

The Constitution is a law that limits executive power and draws a line in this regard. The less people know about the Constitution, the more it is beneficial for the government, he added.

On shrinking space for freedom of speech, he said, "In our thoughts centring on fundamental rights, we cannot even think that 'freedom of speech' can be free." "[Instead, there is concern about] hurting sentiment," he added.

Prof Shahnaz Huda of Dhaka University's law department said as far as people are concerned, Part III of the country's Constitution is most important, as it cites people's fundamental rights.

It should be looked at how people or institutions who are responsible for protecting people's fundamental rights are doing so, she said.

Although the Constitution ensures laws contradicting people's fundamental rights cannot be formulated, there have been "black laws" passed by different governments in the past, said Prof Asif Nazrul, chairman of Dhaka University's law department.

He termed Digital Security Act (DSA) a "black law" and said although court orders in the past repealed such laws, this has not happened yet in the case of DSA.

He said when it comes to protecting fundamental rights, only the influential and wealthy benefit.

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2 killed, 3 hurt in road accidents

STAR REPORT

Two people were killed and three injured in road accidents in two districts yesterday, according to reports from our correspondents.

In Dinajpur, a pedestrian was killed and two motorcycle riders were injured as their bike hit the passerby in Ghoraghat upazila.

Karlis Mardi (32) from Abirpara village in Ghoraghat died on the way to the local upazila health complex, said police.

The injured -- Bullet (21) and Rakib Hasan, who are relatives -- were taken to the health complex. In Panchagarh, a youth was killed and another injured in a collision between a truck and his motorcycle in Sadar upazila.

The accident occurred on Panchagarh-Bangabandha highway at Charmile village in the morning, said police.

Mostafizur Rahman Rasel (32) from Hazipara in Thakurgaon died on the spot, said Jakir Hossain Molla, officer-in-charge of Tentulia Highway Police Station. The victim was returning home from Tentulia, said the OC.

Fair polls not possible under this government

Says Ganosamhati Andolon

DU CORRESPONDENT

The people won't get the opportunity to exercise their voting rights under the current government, said leaders of Ganosamhati Andolon yesterday.

"The government will tell everyone to vote. But no one can vote on the election day," said its chief coordinator Zonayed Saki at a rally in front of National Museum in Shahbagh.

"We are fighting to establish a democratic system... we are fighting for civil rights. However, what is the government (Awami League) doing? They are establishing fascism and authoritarianism," he added.

The speakers also alleged that the government is pushing the country toward a chaotic situation.

Man held with six gold bars at Dhaka airport

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Police yesterday seized six gold bars and ornaments, weighing around one kilogramme, from a person in the car parking area of Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka.

The gold carrier, Hossain Mahmud, 29, a resident of Fen's Daganbhuiyan area, was also arrested on the spot.

In addition, three laptops and two mobile phones were seized from him, said Aminul Islam, inspector of Armed Police Battalion (APBn).

The gold and electronic devices are worth around Tk 72 lakh, he said.

Mahmud was walking around suspiciously in the car parking area around 11:00am. The APBn's intelligence searched him and recovered the gold, said Aminul.

In primary interrogation, Mahmud said he received the golds from an unknown person at the airport and he was just a carrier, said Aminul.

"However, we could not dig out further information. We could not confirm whether Mahmud came from abroad or where he was going," said the official.

"He was handed over to the airport police," he said.

Contacted, the police station's sub-inspector Abdus Sattar said, "An APBn official filed a case in this connection. We are investigating the matter."



Prothom Alo Editor Matiur Rahman participates in a session of "Face to Face with the Reader", as part of an event marking 24th anniversary of the Bangla daily yesterday. On the occasion, a day-long festival, titled "Pathak Utsab", was organised at the capital's Bangla Academy.