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## Why so many crises amid dev spree?

Asks Rizvi

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

BNP Senior Joint Secretary General Ruhul Kabir Rizvi yesterday questioned why the country is facing a gas and electricity crisis if the Awami League government claims there has been development.

"Do they [the government] have any answer to this?" said Rizvi at a virtual press briefing.

Rizvi alleged that some BNP leaders and activists have died in police custody due to torture. "Our party men are being tortured both in prison and on remand," he accused.

"Many BNP leaders and activists have obtained bail but are not being released.

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A worker decorating a bookstall in Suhrawardy Udyan yesterday. The month-long "Amar Ekushey Grantha Mela", the country's largest book fair, is going to begin on the first day of February this year. PHOTO: AMRAN HOSSAIN, RASHED SHUMON

## No possibility of diplomatic crisis: minister

BSS, Dhaka

Law Minister Anisul Huq yesterday said there is no possibility of any diplomatic crisis in the country in the aftermath of the January 7 polls.

"There was a concern in your mind that a diplomatic crisis might take place. But after the election even you people have seen that there is no such possibility of diplomatic crisis in the country," Anisul said while talking to reporters.

The law minister was briefing reporters following his meeting with Indian High Commissioner Pranay Verma at his secretariat office.

"It is necessary to always clarify the application of laws and provisions in the development partnership with India as our neighbouring country," said Anisul.

"Legal infrastructures of Bangladesh and India have been almost similar for a long time. So, we always discuss the possibilities of changes already brought by India in their legal infrastructures, to Bangladeshi ones and vice versa," he added.

# Caught in 'easy money' scam

Fraudsters duped over 100 persons with promise of online jobs

SHUCHISMITA TITHI

Faysal Ahmed (pseudonym) found himself entangled in a web of deceit that began with a seemingly innocuous message on WhatsApp. A promise of an online job, offering payment for simple product or service reviews, lured Faysal into a fraudulent scheme that ultimately cost him a fortune.

He was added to a Telegram group named "Advanced Tasks 444". Initially enticed by the prospect of easy earnings, Faysal diligently performed the assigned tasks. For a while, he did receive payments - up to Tk 7,895.

Then the story started taking a dark turn. The fraudster, operating under the guise of a job provider, persuaded Faysal to register on a site called "C-Finance". He was asked to pay a registration fee of Tk 9,000. A few days later, he was told to deposit Tk 36,000, and the stakes kept rising. Faysal ended up paying a total of Tk 9.09 lakh in different phases, only to realise later that he had fallen into a trap.

But by then, it was too late. Faysal is not alone. He is just one of at least 100 Bangladeshi victims who have been targeted by a network of Bangladeshi and Chinese nationals orchestrating elaborate scams.

The modus operandi of the group is simple. At first, they try to entice youths by showing them a way to earn easy money. If that doesn't work, they employ blackmailing techniques like honey traps, said Saifur Rahman Azad, additional deputy commissioner of DB police. "Most of these scams are operated using



### RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ Don't deposit money without verifications
- ➔ Remain cautious while giving fingerprints to buy new SIM cards
- ➔ Stay away from MFS transactions with unknown people
- ➔ Communicate with law enforcers in case of fraudulence

pre-registered sims," he added.

The Cyber and Special Crime Divisions of the police's detective branch have uncovered the findings after an investigation following a case filed by Faysal on November 11.

Over the past two months, law enforcement has arrested over a dozen people in connection with such fraudulent activities.

On November 25, fifteen individuals, including a Chinese national, were arrested by detectives for their involvement in loan scams. On January 3 and January 14, eight more individuals and another fraudster, respectively, were apprehended in connection with similar schemes.

Despite this, unsuspecting individuals continue to fall victim to these deceptive gangs.

Take the case of Kamrul Hasan (alias), a Gopalganj resident, who recently received a call from a Bangladeshi number offering a freelance job that included tasks like subscribing to YouTube channels, liking Facebook videos, and providing reviews with 5-star ratings - all in exchange for what seemed like easy money.

Intrigued by the simplicity of the job, Kamrul decided to give it a try. Initially, he earned Tk 300 through mobile financial services by completing tasks such as subscribing to YouTube channels. Promised a gradual increase in salary for more tasks, Kamrul joined a Telegram group comprising 70 participants.

The fraudulent group then provided a list of mobile numbers, encouraging individuals to complete tasks by paying amounts ranging from Tk 2,000 to Tk 5,000, promising lucrative returns.

Kamrul, eager for more earnings, SEE PAGE 4 COL 7

## TOTAL BEEL HC issues injunction on earth filling

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday issued an injunction restraining Millennium City, a housing company, from earth-filling in Total Beel, a waterbody in Dhaka's Keraniganj.

In response to a petition, the court also ordered Rajuk, Department of Environment and Dhaka deputy commissioner to submit enquiry reports on the situation of Total Beel.

The HC also issued a rule asking the government to explain why their failure to protect the waterbody from encroachment should not be declared illegal.

The HC bench of Justice Mustafa Zaman Islam and Justice Md Atabullah issued the order and rule following a petition filed by Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association.

On September 16 last year, The Daily Star published a report titled "Total Beel in peril" stating that rampant illegal activities linked to the housing project were causing the shrinkage of the last wetland in Taranagar union.

## GULSHAN SHOPPING COMPLEX SC upholds HC's demolition order

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Appellate Division of the Supreme Court yesterday upheld a High Court verdict that ordered the authorities concerned to demolish the six-storey Gulshan Shopping Complex located in Dhaka's Gulshan-1, as the building was found to be risky.

A five-member bench of the Appellate Division headed by Chief Justice Obaidul Hassan passed the order after hearing two leave to appeal petitions filed by Zia Yameen, one of the owners of the structure, challenging the HC verdict.

Following a petition filed by two companies, Bani Chitra and Chalcchitra, the HC on December 12 last year ordered developer company Shanta Properties Limited to demolish the Gulshan Shopping Complex in 30 days.

Advocate Mostaque Ahmed Chowdhury, a lawyer involved in the case, told The Daily Star that Dhaka North City Corporation sealed the shopping complex on July 13, 2023 as the fire service and Rajuk in separate reports said the building was vulnerable.

## Gayeshwar, Nipun get anticipatory bail

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court yesterday granted anticipatory bail to BNP leaders Gayeshwar Chandra Roy and Nipun Roy Chowdhury till March 25 in seven cases.

Of the cases, six were filed against Gayeshwar with Ramna and Paltan police stations in connection with the incidents of violence centring BNP's rally in the capital on October 28 last year. One of the cases was filed against him over vandalism at the chief justice's residence.

The other case was filed with Keraniganj Police Station against Nipun for violence carried out during BNP's rally on the same day.

The HC also directed Gayeshwar and Nipun to surrender before the trial courts concerned by March 25 in the cases.

The bench of Justice Md Habibur Gani and Justice Ahmed Sohail passed the orders following seven petitions filed by the two seeking bail in the cases.

Yesterday, both the accused appeared before the HC bench for bail.

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24 - 27 JAN. 2024

Tomorrow!

ICCB International Convention  
City Bashundhara

12:00 - 20:00  
(Last day till 19:30)

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