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# **GK Shamim's investment in resort business**

**Shamim is one of eight directors, and Tk10 crore has already been spent on a Tk200 crore project in Bandarban**



Another allegation has been made against recently arrested Jubo League leader GK Shamim for investing a hefty sum of money in a project to build a resort in Bandarban.

The Tk200 crore project – Sylvan Wye Resort and Spa – at Chaingya para village beside the Bandarban-Chimbuk road, will sprawl over 50 acres of land.

Shamim is one of the shareholders of the resort. Sources say that Tk10 crore has so far been spent on it.

On September 20, GK Shamim, also a top government-listed contractor, was arrested on charges of extortion and manipulating tenders. The Rapid Action Battalion also seized Fixed Deposit Receipts (FDR) worth Tk165 crore and around Tk1.8 crore in cash from his possession. Since then, law enforcement agencies have been investigating the source of the money.

A resolution of a meeting held on April 5, 2018 shows that there are eight directors of the resort. Apart from Shamim, the seven other directors are: Chairman Jashim Uddin Monto, brother of Chattogram-14 (Chandanaish) lawmaker Md Nazrul Islam Chowdhury, Managing Director Fazlul Karim Chowdhury, Deputy Managing Director Jamil Uddin Shuvo, directors SHM Mohsin, Umme Habiba Nasima Akhtar, Zia Uddin Abir and Jawad Uddin Abrar.

As per the meeting resolution, a copy of which was obtained by The Business Standard, 0.18 acres of land was donated to the Bandarban district police for setting up a police outpost beside the project site. A two-storied building was also built on the donated land for the outpost.

When contacted, Zakir Hossain Majumder, superintendent of police in Bandarban, said the process to hand over the land to the district police started prior to his joining.

He said that the land had been accepted after making sure that due procedure had been maintained, and with permission from higher authorities in the police. He added that he had just signed on behalf of the district police.

However, local people allege that the outpost was set-up there to provide security for the project.

Meanwhile, there are also allegations that six Marma families were evicted soon after the project was launched. Moreover, local people blame the project owners for constructing barbed-wire fences around the area, which hinders movement, and say that around 200 indigenous families live in fear of eviction from their ancestral land.

When contacted, Jashim Uddin Monto also acknowledged that GK Shamim is one of the directors of Sylvan Wye Resort and Spa, and that they have bought 50 acres of land for the project.

When asked how he managed to buy land in the hill district as an outsider, Jashim Uddin said he is a resident of Bandarban. When asked which area he is from, he did not answer.

Meanwhile, local people question how the project was approved in spite of specific guidelines for buying land in Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) areas.

Aung Chaw Mong Marma, president of the Corruption Prevention Committee in Bandarban, said action has to be taken against people who buy and sell land illegally in the CHT, otherwise land grabbers will not care a fig about rules, and will keep on grabbing land.

Juam Lian Amlai, Bandarban district president of the Movement for Protection of Forests and Land Rights in CHT, said indigenous people have been displaced by the construction of the resort.

The administration appears to be helpless before the power of these land grabbers, he said, and added that the government should take stern action against them.

According to the Bomang Circle office, as per the 1997 CHT Peace Accord, nobody is allowed to buy land in CHT areas apart from local residents. Deputy Commissioners and circle chiefs have to attest that someone is a local resident in CHT.

Asked about the allegation of land grabbing against the Sylvan Wye Resort and Spa, Deputy Commissioner Md Daudul Islam said they formed a probe committee immediately after the allegations surfaced.

They will take the next course of action after the probe committee report is submitted, he added.