



This fallen tree branch covered with clothes of all kinds is located at the capital's Suhrawardy Udyan, which has remained closed due to the pandemic. However, just because the gates are locked doesn't mean there is no one there, as floating people are taking advantage of the situation by occupying the park with their belongings. This photo was taken on Friday.

PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Children speak their minds

Taking part in online dialogue, they seek justice for rape, killings

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Children from different districts in the country demanded justice for the recent killings and rapes in an online dialogue yesterday.

They also highlighted the issues of physical abuse and mental health of children, early marriage, drugs, cyber bullying and safety measures taken against those, said a press release.

They placed those topics before the officials of the ministries of social welfare and women and children affairs, who were present at the event.

As a part of World Children's Day and Child Rights Week-2020, Save the Children, Bangladesh in association with six other organisations arranged the programme.

The week is being observed from October 5 to 11.

Speaking as the chief guest, State Minister for Social Welfare Ashraf Ali Khan Khasru said his ministry will stand beside the children to fulfil their logical demands.

If any non-government organisation is interested in working for the underprivileged children, the ministry will extend their helping hand, he added.

Onno Van Manen, country director of Save the Children in Bangladesh, stressed the importance of a state and its responsibilities towards children in their overall development.

He pointed out that child labour, violence, early marriage are the drawbacks in establishing the rights of the children.

Reassuring the attendees, Rafiqul Islam, director general of the Social Welfare Department, said the department is committed in ensuring child rights.

He also reminded the children to use the online platform with caution.

Women and Children Affairs Ministry Joint Secretary Md Mohibuzzaman and Director of Child Rights Governance and Child Protection, Save the Children in Bangladesh Abdullah Al Mamun were also present at the programme, among others.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on October 5 inaugurated the World Children's Day and Child Rights

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95 waterways accidents killed 149 in 3 months

Says report by 2 orgs

UNB, Dhaka

Although launch capsizes have decreased, accidents involving different types of vessels take place on inland waterways round the year, and deaths continue, said a report of two non-government organisations yesterday.

At least 149 people, including 22 women and 44 children, were killed, while 26 were injured and 58 remained missing in a total of 95 waterway accidents in the last three months.

The 58 missing victims were considered deceased, as they were not found, later raising the death toll to 207, revealed a survey of Green Club of Bangladesh (GCB) and National Committee to Protect Shipping, Roads and Railways.

The fatal accidents took place in different inland waterways and coastal areas between July 1 and September 30 across the country.

The survey was conducted by taking information from 24 national and 10 regional dailies, and nine news portals and agencies, says a press release.

The report said 86 people, including 10 women and 31 children,

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Law, enforcement of HC guidelines urgent

Speakers tell webinar on emergency medical services for road accident victims

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Formulation of law and enforcement of High Court guidelines are needed to ensure emergency medical services for road accident victims, speakers have said at a webinar.

While sharing statistics, Taqbir Huda, research specialist at Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST), presented a comparative analysis between the HC guidelines on such emergency medical services and provisions endorsed by the Road Transport Act, 2018.

"Provision no-13 of the guideline ensures protection of people who volunteer to help the road accident victims from police harassment and from obligation to give testimony before the court. Again, provision 14 states that it is the duty of police officers to ensure treatment for road accident victims. If ambulance is not available, police will use their own vehicles to take the victims to the nearest hospital. However, these provisions are not covered by the Road Transport Act, 2018," said Taqbir.

The Daily Star, Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust and ALAP jointly organised the webinar titled "Emergency Medical Services for Road Accident Victims" on October 9.

Barrister Sara Hossain, a Supreme Court lawyer; Dr Ashraf Uddin Ahmed, resident physician and assistant professor, in charge of medical emergency, BIRDEM; and Ilias Kanchan, Nirapad Sarak Chai chairman, spoke at the webinar.

It was moderated by Advocate Rashna Imam, founder, Academy of Law and Policy.

At the beginning of the session, the speakers presented statistics of road accidents.

According to Nirapad Sarak Chai, in 2019, 4,356 people were killed and 6,953 injured by road accidents. That means, on an average 11 were killed and 19 injured every day in the country last year.

Dr Ashraf Uddin Ahmed said, "All the doctors must have life support and basic trauma management training so that they can provide emergency care to any road

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Look beyond the perps

Political patronage of ruling groups allowed rape incidents to happen, say delegation of activists after visiting Noakhali victim

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Rape incidents like the one in Noakhali's Begumganj could take place due to political patronage of ruling groups and it is important to look at the source of power of these perpetrators, said a delegation of six women who visited the rape victim in Noakhali on October 9.

Led by Rahmuna Ahmed, a writer, researcher and anthropologist, the delegation issued the statement yesterday.

Other members of the delegation were Bithi Ghosh, a teacher and cultural activist; Jannatul Mawa, political activist and photographer; Mahfuza Haq, cultural and human rights activist; Shipra Bosh, development activist; and Taslima Akhter, organiser of workers and women's movement.

They visited Noakhali's Begumganj from Dhaka and exchanged views with a cross-section of society, including the Deputy Commissioner and Police Superintendent of Noakhali.

They also spoke to the rape victim.

The statement said the victim will not get justice if the ongoing movement is limited only to demanding arrest and punishment of the perpetrators. Questions must be raised and movement waged against the source of power of the perpetrators, who are patronised by the ruling force.

"It was not possible to ensure a safe life and safe movement for women keeping the source of power of Delwar gang hidden," the delegation said in the statement.

During their meeting with the Deputy Commissioner and SP of Noakhali and officer-in-charge of Begumganj Police Station, they called upon the authority figures to play the highest role in ensuring safety of the rape victim.

They also called upon all to wage a strong social movement against all incidents of rape and repression against women including the one in Noakhali.

While talking with the rape victim, they assured that she is not alone in the movement against rape. They also said her courage will strengthen the movement against rape and rape culture.

According to the case statement filed by the victim on October 4, the perpetrators including the main accused Badal, "Delwar Bahini" chief Delwar, Rahmat Ullah and Abdur Rahim, among others entered the house of the victim and beat up her husband on the night of the incident.

They took him to the adjacent room and tied him up.

Later, they tortured the victim and assaulted her while filming the incident on their phone.

At one point, locals gathered around the house hearing the victim's cry for help. The accused then threatened to kill her if she spoke about the incident, and left.

The victim, fearing for her life, fled her house and has been living elsewhere since then.

The perpetrators, however, contacted her

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My CITY, My HOME

Writing contest seeks entries from women

LABIBA KABIR, Star Books Desk

"Where do I belong? What is the character of my city? Who decides where is the power? Who do we celebrate and forget?" The identity and role of a woman as part of a city is fraught with expectations, restrictions, trials, and in some cases even freedoms.

These are the questions and issues a writing competition of UK-based organisation Sampad South Asian Arts and Heritage hopes to address, said eminent dancer and art director Lubna Marium, while moderating a virtual press meet held last week.

The competition is seeking submissions from women: short fiction, poetry, non-fiction, diary entries, and just about any written format that explore women's relationship with the cities they inhabit.

Submissions need to be within 1,000 words and sent in by December 30, 2020. Women aged 16 and above from Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the UK are eligible to participate. All interpretations of "city and home" are encouraged.

Write-ups in English, Bangla, and Urdu are welcome; the judges will be bilingual and fluent in all three languages.

In the third week of October, writing workshops with Selina Hossain and other eminent writers will be introduced, along with informal meet-ups, which will continue to serve as safe spaces for women even after the competition ends.

The winning entries will be published in a book to be launched in Bangladesh in June, 2021, and top three writers will receive £200 pounds.

The initiative is unique because it offers a platform for artistic and emotional engagement between women from all backgrounds, free of cost.

One of the biggest British Asian art-based organisations in the UK, Sampad has teamed up with dancer and choreographer Sharmila Banerjee, writer and yoga professional Shazia Omar, Lubna Marium, theatre actor Jyoti Sinha and many others to host the event.

Viqarunnisa Noon School and College, Sunnysdale School, Brac, IUB, Naripokkho and other institutions are expected to participate.

Submissions and queries can be sent to sampad.org.uk/project/mycitymyhome2020/.

Follow Daily Star Books on Facebook and @thedailystarbooks on Instagram for more book-related news.

Eight accused remanded over Ctg gang rape

Two confess, three remanded in another similar case in Savar

STAR REPORT

A Chattogram court yesterday placed eight accused including a woman on remand in connection with a case filed for gang-raping a housewife in the port city's Chandgaon area early Friday, reports our staff correspondent from Chattogram.

Inspector (Investigation) Rajesh Barua of Chandgaon Police Station said the court placed Jagangir, a CNG-run auto-rickshaw driver, also a key accused of the gang rape case, on a five-day remand while the rest seven on a three-day each.

The other accused are Md Yousuf (32), Md Ripon (27), Md Sujon (24), Debu Barua alias Jobayer Hossain (31), Md Shahed (24), Rintu Datta (30), and Monowara Begum alias Lebur Ma (55).

The court of the metropolitan magistrate, Khairul Amin, passed the remand order after police produced the accused before it with a seven-day remand prayer, said court sources.

Jahangir is known as an informant of Chandgaon Police Station, said locals. However, the law enforcers are yet to confirm it.

The incident took place around 1:30am on Friday and was led by Jahangir while the victim was returning home from Chattogram's Rangunia upazila.

The victim is now undergoing

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Durga Puja, the biggest religious celebration of the country's Hindu community, will not be the same this year, with Covid-19 playing spoilsport in the festivities. The home minister also said last week that no procession will be held for the ceremonial immersion of the idol. However, artisans across the country are still putting in the hours at their workshops, like this young man in Chattogram city's CRB area. The photo was taken last week.

PHOTO: RAJIB RAIHAN