

# The Worst Kind of Hell

## — A True Story

by Moushumi Nasser

This is a true story of a young woman who became the victim of an abusive boyfriend. The name of the victim has been withheld in respect for her privacy.



kick with his boots. ...times (I can't recall).

Then slowly I tried to get up, when he held my throat again and pushed me to the floor and spit on my face three times. He looked like a maniac (a psychopath maybe). That face will haunt me till the day I die. I did not want to fight back because there was no use, and I found that he was drunk and as usual (as for the last two years) he was saying things which are totally nonsense.

I lay on the floor and saw him taking off his belt. Knowing what was coming, I covered my face only and felt countless slashing on my back. I prayed for "strength" and someone to come before he killed me. I tried not to concentrate on him and I believe, that is how I got the strength to bear it.

When it stopped, I got up. Immediately he punched me on my face. I felt blood oozing out of my nose as I ran towards the bathroom. Then I tried to get up on my knees when his left leg came hard with a kick on my stomach when I was totally breathless.

That was the only time, I called out my friend's name and fell on the bed.

By this time my friend brought his friend and opened the door. As I ran into the bathroom to wash my face, his friend ran for ice and my friend tried to stop him as he came inside the bathroom to hit me for the last time on my left cheek just below the eye. No one was prepared for such a quick blow.

My friend dragged him out with the help of his friend and I fell on the basin only to watch the flow of blood.

It was 9:45 pm. I was taken to the clinic, where I was told to see an ENT specialist right away for the nose. The doctor and nurse helped to stop the blood flow, gave two injections and wanted to see the bruises on my body. A tiny part of my upper front teeth had been broken. I had terrible swollen black eyes.

My mother told me later that he had come to my parents that morning to tell them why we broke up and that we would remain friends and not get married. During the same evening, he called all the guests outside and told them the same thing. Then within 15 minutes he did such a horrifying thing to me!

I am totally confused about my five-year relationship with him.

People ask me why I didn't run or scream for help.

My answer is: a victim usually loses strength to run while being beaten. He could become more ferocious if I tried to run. Besides, my parents could never tolerate their

daughter being attacked like that. If I screamed or ran out, it's very well understood that my father would have gone to fight with him. Could an old man win in fighting against a strong monster? My father would have been physically assaulted, even my mother could be hurt by him, and the whole situation could get worse. But what really stopped me from screaming was that apart from the neighbours, the guests would know what was really happening. I was too ashamed.

Why didn't I file a case, when my parents insisted? First of all, his monstrous attitude reminded me of his worst capabilities and I was afraid that he'd become more ferocious after being released. Released? Yes. Because he has good connection with the police. Within 2/3 days he'd be out. The police officer when contacted wanted to know if we had enough witnesses from both sides. Yes, but the witnesses on his side would never come forward for me. So, I forgot about filing case. What's the use?

This is happening to a lot of women and everyone needs help, the way I need. Day and night, whether at work or at home with family, whether being busy with friends or with something else, whether alone or at sleep, I am haunted.

Most victims of such abuse do not talk about this kind of experience, because of many obstructions. The society is dirty, some people wait to spread the news to our shock the people we most trusted, become enemies.

But silence is our enemy. We need to win this fight. I would tell every woman not to make the mistake which I have made. Think twice, whenever you are in doubt, before letting yourself face these sort of incidents, no matter what, no man has a right to abuse a woman in this way. This is physical and mental torture. Physical pain and scars will go away but mental scars will remain all through life. Those who can survive with that, are very strong, bold and courageous and very lucky.

I am a working woman totally self-dependent, and could never imagine this kind of incident happening to me. But, nothing could stop me. I went to the office and everyone knew. Women colleagues were proud that I haven't been scared to hide myself. Why should I? My face showed how brutal a man can be — a man who boasts that he comes from an educated family, he is himself an MBA, that people offer him good job and that he is not just like other men?"

I am enjoying my freedom because I never felt free with him. Giving my parents, friends time, which for him I couldn't do because he was always keeping me busy with him.

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## Women on the Move

# More Girls Dropout of School in Meherpur

by M M Islam

VII and VIII receive Tk 360, and IX and X Tk 920.

Married students are not eligible for the stipend. Also a girl loses her stipend as soon as she gets married while in school.

But contrary to improvement, enrollment of girl students in different high schools in the district in fact, fell this year. The situation in the town is also disgraceful, said a school teacher.

An investigation conducted in Meherpur Girls High School, a non-government institution at the heart of the Meherpur town, showed that 140 girl students enrolled in the school in 1991. Of them, only 36 are appearing in the ongoing SSC examination while the rest left the school since '91.

Begum Badrunnahar, Head Mistress of the school, attributed the alarming dropout to early marriage and lack of

social and economic security.

"It's not unique to my school. It's a common scenario in schools throughout the districts," she said. "Our society is not yet ready to recognise the importance of female education, it's unfortunate." Badrunnahar lamented.

The students of Meherpur Girls High School are mainly from poor families with conservative backgrounds and cannot, therefore, avoid traditional practices like early marriage. The headmistress also pointed out various social nuisance, including teasing of school going girls by 'masts' as one of the factors making guardians reluctant to send their daughters to school.

Police agree that various social nuisance influence the conservative guardians to keep their girls indoors.

"It's a social problem, we will have to fight it socially. But the way our guardians are trying

to get rid of this menace cannot be supported. In the pretext of protecting their daughters, parents are destroying their future," said an aggrieved Thana Nirbahi Officer (TNO).

Apart from dropout and low enrollment, attendance of girl students is also extremely poor. According to a report, the attendance of 10,000 girl students at 46 primary schools in Meherpur thana headquarters is only 40 per cent.

Opportunities for admission are also limited for girl students. There are only two girls high schools in thana headquarters of the district where women constitute 50 per cent of the total population of 1.60 lakh.

There are allegations of corruption and irregularities in distribution of stipends which again is discouraging poor parents to send their daughters to school. — NEWS NETWORK



Non-formal Education — a solution for female drop-outs from school.

— Photo: Shehzad Noorani/UNICEF

## News Briefs

### Violence Against Women

The Daily Star (21.4.96): Sabita Rani, 21, was beaten to death, allegedly by her husband, at Munuria village in Sadar thana on April 20th. Daughter of Kalipada of Narayanganj village, Sabita was married to Monojit for 5 years. Sabita's guardian had to pay 16,000 taka in cash, a bicycle and a two in one as dowry. But this did not satisfy

Monojit who continued to torture Sabita asking for more dowry.

On April 20th Monojit beat her up demanding a television set. Police later recovered Sabita's body which was hanging from a branch of a tree near Monojit's house. The body was sent to the morgue for autopsy.

A case was filed with the police but Monojit has absconded since the murder.

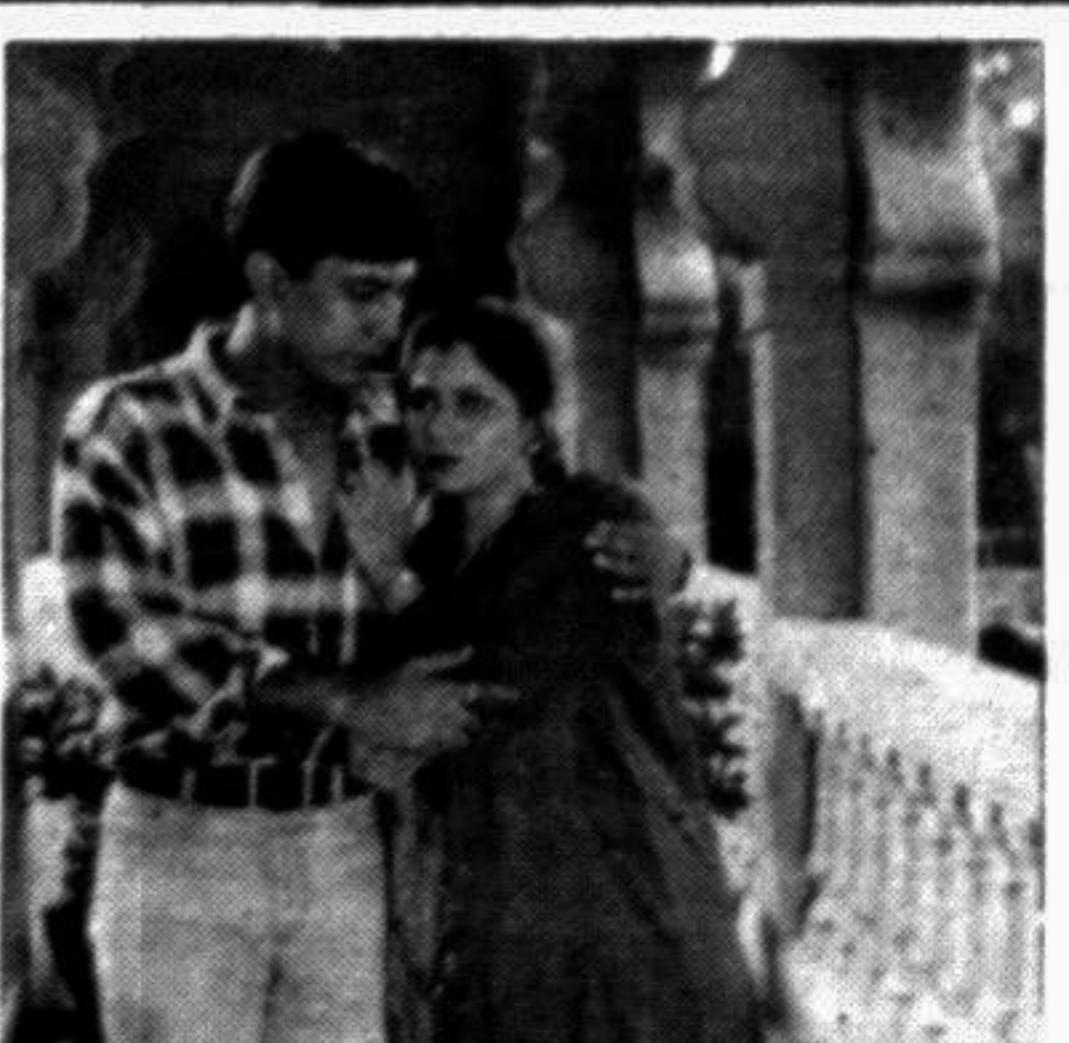
The Daily Star (12.4.96): (Khagrachari) Mahima Khatun, 21, a young housewife

drinking poison.

The Daily Star (19.4.96): (Chittagong) A young housewife was stabbed to death by unidentified assailants at Patharghatha in the city today.

The victim, Rekha Rani Das (32), was wife of Balai Banik a goldsmith. According to police and witnesses, a group of six miscreants stormed their house at about 11 am and stabbed her repeatedly. She was rushed to Chittagong Medical Hospital where the doctors declared her dead.

## The Daily Star Entertainment Guide



### STAR MOVIES

10:00 Duniya 10:30 The News 10:50 Business Roundup 11:00 Mano Ya Na Mano 11:30 Hum Paanch 12:00 Tara 12:30 Parapara 1:00 Asian Paints 1:30 Keon Rang 1:30 Ransa 1:30 Big Bang 1:30 Awanj Mustasa 1:30 Music Update Tokyo 1:30 Western: Butch And Sundance: The Early Days (Hindi Subtitles) 1:30 Family: Place At The Coast (Hindi Subtitles) 2:30 Comedy: Carry On Up The Khyber 15 (Hindi Subtitles) 7:00 India Star Five 7:30 Comedy: A Private Function 15 (Hindi Subtitles) 9:00 US Top Ten 9:30 Romance: Book Of Love 15 (Hindi Subtitles) 11:30 Gold: The Last Seduction 18 (Arabic Subtitles) 1:30 After Dark: Mirages 18 (Arabic Subtitles) 3:30 Alter Dark: The Mean Season 18 (Arabic Subtitles) 5:30 Comedy: Only The Lonely 15 (Arabic Subtitles)

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### Lamhe

11:00 Ghaave 11:00 Ghayee 11:30 Cine Matinee-Hindi Feature Film 2:30 Task Jhaak 3:00 Apne Jaisa Tapes 3:30 Mere Message Men Geet 4:00 Surf Wheel of Fortune (Game Show) 4:30 Fastie 5:00 O'Marie 5:30 The Three Stooges 6:00 Dennis The Menace 6:30 I Dream Of Jeannie 7:00 Ek Rang Lamma Hazaar 7:30 More Message Men Geet 8:00 Surf-Wheel Of Fortune (Game Show) 8:30 Ravan 9:30 Hospital 10:00 Ashar 10:30 Task Jhaak 11:00 Dekh Tamaas Dekh 11:30 Yeh Sadi Nah Hu 12:00 Zameen Baday Gays 12:30 Ravan 1:30 More Message Meni Geet 2:00 Yeadon Ki Barat

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### DD 7

8:10 Shastriyo Sangeet 8:20 Bindon 8:30 Sur Sangeet 9:00 Janan 9:30 Swamer Bazar 10:30 Ek Shilpi Onek Gaan 12:00 ETV Programme 12:30 Nabi Ganjer Daitya 1:00 Janan 1:30 Bengali Movie Club Film Show 5:05 Nepal Program 5:30

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### Bazar (serial)

10:00 Bengali Movie Club Film Show

8:00 Songs 9:30 Mere Sapna 12:15 Film Baatein 12:45 Khatron Ki Khiladi 3:30 Anne Samne Antakshri 4:00 Mere Hum Safar 7:00 Hit Hai Fit Hai 7:30 Tarana 8:00 Trailers 8:30 Cinema Cinema 9:00 Movies Masti Magic 9:30 Premiere 12:30 Film Baatein 12:45 Film Baatein, Shanker Lal

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### EL TV

9:30am Kishore Kumar Special 01:00 Bachchon 01:30 Saithi 02:00 Saithi Saith 03:00 Liberty Public Demand 9:30 Sisila 10:00 Top Of The Tops 10:30 Newsline 11:00 Kuch Pal Aap Ke Saith 12:00 Kishore Kumar Special

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### STAR PLUS

6:00 R D Burman Special 05:00 Devotional 06:00 Amitabh Bachchan Special 07:00 Party Time 08:00 Mohammed Rafi Special 09:00 Best Of The Best 10:00 Dhamendra Special 11:00 Love Love Love 12:00 Asha Bhosle Special 1:00 Tarane Aar Fasane 2:00 Rajesh Khanna Special 3:00 Wonder Wings Amar Prem 3:30 Zaike Ka Safar 4:00 Hit Thi Hit Hui 4:30 Lakshmi Advance Book 5:00 Young Buzz 5:30 Lata Mangeshkar Special 6:30 Ched Ched 7:30 Shadyatra 8:00 Saithi Saith 8:30 Liberty Public Demand 9:30 Sisila 10:00 Top Of The Tops 10:30 Newsline 11:00 Kuch Pal Aap Ke Saith 12:00 Kishore Kumar Special

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5:30am Infotainment (TMM) 6:00 Jagran 7:00 ZED-Naya A To Z 7:30 ZED- Management 8:00 ZED-Networking 8:30 Mere Ghara Ana 9:30 HFF: Ghar Ki Chirag (Rajesh, Neelam, Chunky) 12:00 Commander 12:30 Tol Mol Ke Bol 1:00 ZED-Chota Byte 1:30 Asian Sky Shop 2:30 Tara 3:00 Shakti 3:30 Film Chakkar 4:00 Film Deewana 4:30 Vimal Naye Tarane 5:00 ZED- Chota Byte 5:30 Hingri Ka Voot 6:00 Narkar 6:30 Double Trouble 7:00 Dillagi 7:30 Gaane Anjana 8:00 FLU 8:30 Film Chakkar 9:00 Kya Scone Hai 9:30