



Bangladesh Air Express International Limited

PLEASE CONTACT:
Head Office Tel : 9565114, Logistics Office Tel : 9884851, Fax : (880-2) 9886531, E-mail : dac@aeilogis.com
Chittagong Office Tel : (031) 721085, Fax : (880-31) 710106, Internet : fedcp@spctnet.com.smtp.
Air and Ocean-Forwarding • Customs Brokerage • Warehousing and Distribution • Express • NVOCC

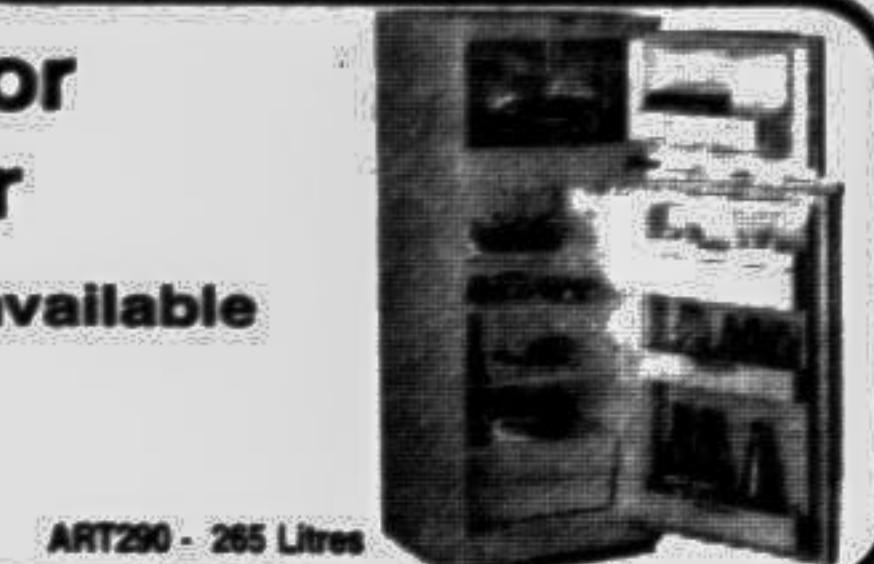


Whirlpool
HOME APPLIANCES

Transcom Electronics Limited
Authorized distributor in Bangladesh for Whirlpool Appliances, USA
Dhaka : 815307-10, 819625-9 Ctg : 716353, 723578
Khulna : 720304 Bogra : 6215

Refrigerator & Freezer

Instalment facility available



Crying behind the domestic bars

By Mir A Zaman



Education not for her

While this girl keeps the study of her employer's daughter clean, she herself doesn't have access to education.

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

one 'experienced' middle-class home-maker. I have to supervise every work she (the maid servant, a 10-year-old girl) does."

Everyday the girl sweeps and mops the floors, wash clothes, dishes and everything there is to wash. She gets only 300 taka per month. Abuse and occasional beatings are added incentives.

Hard work and harsh treatment, in most of the cases, are too much for the child domestics to bear and they quit the jobs. They escape from these 'prisons'.

For some girls, like cases narrated in Therese Blanchet's

landmark study *Lost Innocence, Stolen Childhood*, it goes way beyond abuse and beating. In her book published in 1996, Blanchet narrates the story of Alea, a child maid who was first raped at the age of 11 by her master's 17-year-old son, and then by the employer himself. At the age of 14, she was raped again by her employer in a new home.

Just over a month back, a police constable was arrested in the capital for allegedly raping his eight-year-old maid servant. Certainly, there are more such cases behind closed doors.

Most child domestics receive little or no salary at all, with the average income of the lucky ones being less than 200 taka a month. They have no set working hours, and work continuously from dawn till everyone goes to bed late at night. Still, the employers believe they are doing these helpless children a big favour and assume the role of a demi god in their lives. The verbal abuse and occasional beating "is for their welfare," said a 'benign' housewife of the two little girls helping her in domestic chores. "Otherwise, they would be out of the house in the dead hours of night."

Abdi is now under treatment at the Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). She has already been to the operation theatre. The doctors had to remove pus and blood clots from her wounds. She cannot see anything with her left eye and the right eye is not better. The doctors are still uncertain whether she would ever get her eyesight back.

The sorry tale Abdi is nothing new. In this country, the Julekhas send the Abdis to work as domestic hands in the hope that they will at least have two meals a day and have new sets of clothes couple of times a year. Above all, they will be safe. In reality, more often than not, their expectations are cruelly belied. The children soon find out that benignity is the last thing their employers can show to them. They realise they have bargained freedom for two meals a day. Secured life becomes synonymous to being secured inside four walls.

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

"Whenever they get the chance, they cut corners," said

"My employer never lets me

out of the house," said Yasmeen, a ten-year-old who has been working for a family in one of the capital's posh residential areas for more than a year now. "Even when they go out, they lock me inside the house, all alone."

Employers, however, think that is the wisest thing to do.

"Never let your servant go out, not even for a walk," said one housewife, an 'expert' in handling child domestics. "They cook up stories about us and spread them around."

Seldom there is a happy employer.

</