

Moments of shock

EMRAN HOSSAIN

While many were still finding it hard to accept, scores of people were wailing and waiting at Nawab Katra Primary School gate the whole day yesterday to see their dear ones lost in Nimtoli blaze Thursday.

The bodies of the victims were kept in the two-storied school building.

They wait in the pouring rain and ankle-deep water with intolerable grief.

They lost their fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, in-laws and relatives all at once in Thursday's fire at Nimtoli, Old Dhaka.

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It's one life that comes and goes

JULFIKAR ALI MANIK and ARUN DEVNATH

The clock moved 15 minutes past midnight. A man, accompanied by his friends and relatives, arrived in the eerie neighbourhood of Nimtoli last night. He looked up into space and cried in near-silence.

Mahfuz Zaman Azad came straight to the fire site from airport, hearing the news that his 30-year-old sister Ayesha Siddiqua Shilpi and her two children died in Thursday's blaze.

Azad, now a businessman, has been abroad for the last 20 years, with 10 years in Australia.

"I got a phone call from Bangladesh. I wasn't ready for this bad news. I can't believe it

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PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

The light of day reveals damaged buildings and other structures yesterday, hours after Thursday night's inferno ripped through the neighbourhood of Nimtoli in Old Dhaka. Relatives, top, weep for a deceased whose body was taken to a nearby school from the morgue. More pictures on page 5 and 16.

Fire death toll rises to 117

Chemicals stored in residential building added fuel

KAILASH SARKAR and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

The death toll from Nimtoli blaze rose to 117 yesterday and may go up even further as most of those wounded are in critical condition, said a government official.

The cause of the fire, biggest since independence, could not yet be known for certain.

But one thing is sure chemicals had fed into the flames that gutted eight buildings and over 20 shops at Nawab Katra of Nimtoli in old part of the capital on Thursday night.

Mohibul Haque, deputy commissioner of Dhaka, said the rescuers have so far retrieved 112 bodies, and five of the victims have died in hospitals.

He said they have handed over 102 bodies to relatives, while the rest remain unidentified.

Given the condition of those injured it is very likely the death toll would increase, added the district administrator.

At least 40 people with severe burns were undergoing

treatment at Dhaka Medical College Hospital and Combined Military Hospital yesterday.

In Old Dhaka, neighbourhoods were sunk in gloom. They were battling to come to terms with the sheer scale of the devastation wrought by the blaze the night before.

The air was heavy with families wailing for the lost ones. Shops and buildings in ruins lined the rain-swept alleyways covered in thick mud blackened by chemicals.

Many locals were fuming over prevalence of chemical shops and go-downs, haphazardly set up transformers and electrical wires hanging precariously overhead.

They demanded immediate removal of those so that nothing like Thursday night's recurs.

Of the affected families, one has lost 11 members.

Locals said only those who were not in their houses or the shops could escape the disaster.

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SEE EDITORIAL

Wrong fire-fighting tools, building frenzy blamed

HELEMUL ALAM

The fire department's lack of readiness to deal with fire in dense neighbourhoods with narrow streets, and unplanned building boom in the capital were the reasons for the high number of casualties in Thursday's Nimtoli blaze, according to urban planning experts.

The blaze was just 300 metres from the Fire Service and Civil Defence Headquarters from where firefighters rushed to the spot right away, but could not do much to save the lives of the trapped residents.

"The fire spread to seven houses. So we tried to contain it first. If we were not very active, far more houses would probably be affected," Abdur Rashid, deputy director of Dhaka Division Fire Service, said.

The sheer number of fatalities has shown how helpless the situation could be in a case of fire in densely populated areas with narrow roads, like the old part of Dhaka City.

Almost no house in Old Dhaka is equipped with fire extinguisher, said Prof Mehdi Ahmed Ansari of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (Buet).

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Nation mourns today

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The country will observe a national mourning day today in memory of those killed in Nimtoli fire and Begunbari building collapse tragedies.

The national flag will be hoisted at half-mast at all government and non-government organisations today.

Meanwhile, special prayers were held at mosques and other places of worship across the country yesterday seeking salvation of the departed

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Runa's dream turns into nightmare

KAILASH SARKAR and SHAHEEN MOLLAH

Expatriate Jamil of Hossaini Dalan came home three months ago to marry 19-year-old Runa Akhter of Nimtoli in Old Dhaka. The engagement of the two was arranged on Thursday night.

Family members and relatives were in a festive mood as they gathered at Runa's house to celebrate the occasion. Amid all that fun

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SUNMOON STAR TOWER ৩৭, দিলকুশায় কর্পোরেট অফিস-স্পেস বিক্রয়



এককালীন মূল্য পরিশোধে ৩০% ছাড়!

এ সুযোগ ৩০ জুন, ২০১০ পর্যন্ত

২৫ তলা কমার্শিয়াল কমপ্লেক্স (১০ তলার নির্মাণ কাজ চলছে)

ঢাকার প্রাণকেন্দ্র ৩৭, দিলকুশায় বঙ্গভবন সংলগ্ন চারদিকে প্রশস্ত রাস্তা

সুবিশাল ২৫ তলা ভবন 'সান মুন স্টার টাওয়ার' এ

ব্যাংক, বীমা, সিকিউরিটি এক্সচেঞ্জ, বহুজাতিক কোম্পানী, হোটেল-রেস্টুরেন্ট সহ

গ্রুপ অব কোম্পানীর কর্পোরেট অফিস স্থাপনের অনন্য সুযোগ

@ প্রতিটি ফ্লোরে ৩০,০৫০ বর্গফুটের অফিস স্পেস

@ স্ট্যান্ড-বাই জেনারেটর (২৪ ঘন্টা বিদ্যুৎ ব্যবস্থা)

@ নিজস্ব ট্রান্সফরমার

@ ১২ টি সু-পারিসর হাই-স্পিড লিফট

@ মাল্টিস্টোর কার পার্কিং

@ প্রায় ৭০০ গাড়ী পার্কিংয়ের ব্যবস্থা

@ ৭.৮ মাত্রার ভূমিকম্প প্রতিরোধী

@ সিসিটিভি সহ নিজস্ব নিরাপত্তা ব্যবস্থা

@ অত্যাধুনিক অগ্নিনির্বাপন ব্যবস্থা

@ সেন্ট্রাল এসি সহ

আধুনিক
সকল সুযোগ-সুবিধা নিয়ে
দিলকুশায়
নতুন কর্পোরেট টাওয়ার



Location



Contact : Moon Group

বিশ্বস্ততার প্রতীক

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