

# CriticalLink commemorates Rana Plaza Disaster

SHAKILA SULTANA

CriticalLink is a volunteer organisation trying to build a network of trained first aid providers who will respond to any emergency situation. It has developed an app through which one can report an accident and volunteers will be notified immediately with the location of the incident where they can respond. CriticalLink was founded by Dr. Jennifer Farrell who is a Fulbright US scholar in Bangladesh.

On April 24, 2015 CriticalLink organised a commemoration event, paying homage to those who lost their lives and showing respect to those who saved injured people risking their own lives at the Rana Plaza disaster which happened two years ago.

In the first part of the event, volunteers of CriticalLink formed a human chain carrying placards and banners on the street just opposite Banani playground. Next, a seminar was held at NewsCred Dhaka.

Chief guest at the event was Asif Moyeen, Managing Director, Far East Knitting and Dying Industries. He mentioned that though his company provides proper facilities for their employees, many garment factory workers are not that lucky. Faiyaz Ahmed Khan, General Manager, Far East Knitting and Dying Industries, was

also present at the event.

Tanim Ashraf, a graduate from ULAB, who volunteered at the Rana Plaza disaster, shared his heart-rending experiences. Mirza Farzana, senior lecturer of law, from Daffodil International University spoke about the important labour acts, provisions and policies that are issued to date and to what extent those are implemented.

One of the active first responders of CriticalLink, S.M. Shefat shared his story of responding to an injured garment worker recently at Gazipur. He described the difficulties he faced while taking the patient to Dhaka Medical College.

After a short break, another volunteer, Muhammad Ferdaus (currently studying in USA) appeared on Skype to share his experiences of rescuing Reshma from Rana Plaza and a number of critically injured persons.

The experiences shared by the brave volunteers who saved many lives under such stressful conditions touched everyone. It should be mentioned that CriticalLink has won the National Mobile Application Award for Health and Environment.

To be a part of CriticalLink, please visit the Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/CriticalLinkApp?fref=ts>



## EXPLORE

# THE FRIENDLY TURKS

KIDWA ARIF

Istanbul, Turkey, is easily one of the most popular tourist destinations in the world. The historical locations, the rich culture, the mouth-watering kebabs and the comparatively cheap accommodation have made it a tourist favourite. I'll be sharing two experiences in Istanbul.

### #1

Our hotel was in the Sultanahmet Square. The hotel itself wasn't much but the location was perfect. The Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque were all in the vicinity. The Topkapi Palace was only a few minutes of walk away while the Grand Bazaar had direct tram from Sultanahmet.

So, we were out, walking and enjoying the scenery when a man approached us.

"Assalamualaikum. You are Muslims, right?" [Obvious from my mother's appearance].

"Ah! Me too, brother." He gave us a broad smile.

There was something in it that was very comforting. It seemed like he was genuinely happy to see fellow Muslims.

"We live a simple life. Five times praying. Halal earning. Masha'Allah."



When we asked him what he did, he said he was an agent for the Bosphorus tour cruises. We were planning to go on one since it's something you should never miss out on. So, we gladly bought a ticket for four with 70 Turkish Lira.

After our new friend had left, waving his hands and saying we'll meet again soon, we walked ahead. It hadn't even been 5 minutes when another person came to sell us the same tickets.

"Oh, we've already bought ours."

"For how much?"

"70 Turkish Lira."

"I could've given it to you for 40."

### #2

The Grand Bazaar of Istanbul, similar to our New Market, is always worth a visit. There isn't a better place for you to buy souvenirs and gifts for the relatives back home who'll be circling you like vultures when you're opening the

suitcases. The piled up goods in the shops, the shopkeepers calling out to the customers to check out their stuff, the crowd; I think it even kind of smelled like New Market but I'm pretty sure that was my imagination. But the following incident that I had encountered is what makes it like New Market the most.

When we were walking through the aisles, a pretty vase caught our eyes. The expert shopkeeper, naturally, noticed it. He invited us in and asked us where we were from. He was overjoyed when he heard we were Bangladeshis. He himself, turned out, was a South Asian.

He leaned in close to us and softly said, "If you were a European or American, I would've asked for 200 Turkish Lira. But Bangladeshis, Indians are our brothers. You can have it for 100."

But we were wiser. We weren't to be fooled by his charms. So, when we walked away with the vase, we had only paid 30 for it.

P.S: The intention of this article is not to generalise. The Turkish people, in general, are very friendly and amicable. Just don't believe everything the businessmen say.