

Women, adolescent girls most vulnerable during disasters

Says health minister marking World Population Day; awards 13 for contributions to protecting women, family health

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Women and adolescent girls remain utterly vulnerable to grim health hazards and sexual violation during disasters and conflict situations, Health Minister Mohammed Nasim told a discussion yesterday.

Citing that 90 percent of the dead in the 1991 cyclone in Bangladesh were women and children, he said, "Imams, political leaders and journalists while playing their respective roles should motivate people into protecting the dignity and rights of women during disasters -- man-made or natural."

"Many officials and field level health workers skip their duties...I call upon you to stop such malpractice...All of you from the director general down to a field worker have to play their respective duties or face the consequence," said the minister.

The discussion was organised by the ministry in the capital's Osmani Memorial Auditorium marking World Population Day.

This year's global theme is "vulnerable populations in emergencies". Bangladesh accordingly set its official goal that "women and children are to get first priority in danger and disaster situations".

Women, particular those pregnant, adolescent girls and children remain undefended against increased gender violence and sexual harassment in emergency, disaster and conflict situations and they need extra support, said

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Obituary

CITY DESK



Ariful Mowla Choudhury (Razy), a freedom fighter, died from a stroke on June 26 in California, USA, at age 60, says a press release.

He was the youngest of four sons of late Syed Ahmed Choudhury, a former secretary, and Begum Zebunnessa Choudhury of Bikrampur, Dhaka.

His namaz-e-janaza will be held today after Zohr prayers at Dhanmondi Eidgah mosque. Later, he will be buried on Baku Shah Mazar premises in the capital's Nilkhett.

His family acknowledges with gratitude the support and assistance of Jamie, a freedom fighter, Jamal Abedin of New York, and Sohel Rahman Badal of California in bringing the body back home.

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প্রধান কার্যালয়
ঢাকা।

সাক্ষাতকার গ্রহণের বিজ্ঞপ্তি

জনতা ব্যাংক লিমিটেড -এ 'এ্যাসিস্ট্যান্ট এক্সেলিউটিভ অফিসার-টেলর (এই-ও-টেলর)'
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এতদসংক্রান্ত তথ্যান্তি জনতা ব্যাংক লিমিটেড- এর ওয়েবসাইটে পাওয়া যাবে।
প্রয়োজনে অফিস চলাকলীন সময়ে হিউম্যান রিসোর্স ডেভেলপমেন্ট ডিপার্টমেন্ট,
প্রধান কার্যালয় (৭ম ফ্লোর), ঢাকায় যোগাযোগ করার জন্য অনুরোধ জানানো যাচ্ছে।

মোঃ সাজেদুর রহমান
উপ-মহাব্যবস্থাপক



Oblivious of its sanctity, a seller of old mobile phones occupies the premises of a memorial for Sector 10 of the 1971 Liberation War at the capital's Osmani Udyan, while its custodian remains equally indifferent. The photo was taken recently.

PHOTO: STAR

Seven robbers, 2 stolen gold traders held in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Detective Branch (DB) of police arrested seven alleged robbers and two gold traders, involved in trading looted gold jewelry, in the capital's Turag early yesterday.

Acting on a tip off, a team of Dhaka City North DB Police arrested Ibrahim, Al- Amin, Alamgir, Reaz, Khijir, Shahidul and Siddique with several sharp weapons and later held the local gold traders Abdur Rob and Abdul Halim. The team also recovered "looted" gold ornaments, weighing 2.25 tolas, from Abdul.

During primary interrogation, the seven admitted that they robbed houses in different areas especially near highways, said DMP Joint Commissioner Monirul Islam at a press briefing yesterday.

Detectives said they will seek remand for the seven for further interrogation.

Teenager commits suicide in capital

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A teenager allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from a window grille in her east Basabo residence in the capital yesterday.

Subujbag police said Poushitan Chang Grey, 16, daughter of Dudu Bastan Grey, a class-X student, killed herself after her mother rebuked her for not paying enough attention to studies.

India to study Bay of Bengal oxygen depletion

OUR CORRESPONDENT, New Delhi

Indian scientists will be looking at rivers flowing through Bangladesh to collect data and study the "dead zones" in the Bay of Bengal where oxygen level is nearly zero.

The National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) based in coastal state of Goa and Dhaka University have signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Ocean Studies, which also includes sampling of water from rivers in Bangladesh that eventually flow into the Bay.

"In the Bay of Bengal, we have thick oxygen-minimum levels between 150 to 600 metres. These are the areas where oxygen is nearly zero," said NIO Director Dr SWA Naqvi.

The increasing run-off of nitrogen

from agricultural fields in Bangladesh into the rivers which eventually meet the Bay of Bengal results in depletion of oxygen in the ocean, he said.

"What we think is that since these fertilisers are being continuously added to the system, there may be further depletion of oxygen. It will have an impact on environment as well as the ecology. That is why, we are interested in looking at the fate of nitrogen," he told PTI.

"We are interested in looking at fluxes of nitrogen from rivers into the Bay of Bengal as the biggest of these rivers flow through Bangladesh," the director said.

Sampling of water will help "to quantify how much nitrogen is washed in the water", he said.

"We are looking at cycling of nitrogen in aquatic system, both freshwater as well as ocean. Nitrogen that runs in

the water through fertiliser produces algae. There are harmful algal blooms which are formed. The excess nitrogen stimulates growth of algae, and when algae die they deplete oxygen in the water column," he explained.

"There are more than 600 sites in the world where coastal water has lost oxygen," added Naqvi.

"In South Asia, we are consuming huge amounts of fertiliser to boost agricultural production.

Most of these fertilisers are not utilised by plants and they get washed off... They run off in rivers and groundwater. It is an important issue from the environmental and human point of view," he said.

"High nitrate concentration in drinking water is not advisable as it poses health hazards and causes blue baby syndrome," he added.

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