

FOUR YEARS OF RANA PLAZA TRAGEDY ORCA Homes abode for 44 orphans

Many of victim families still pass days in misery

KM REZAUL HOQUE, Gaibandha

Forty-four children, who lost either or both of their parents in the Rana Plaza disaster on April 24 in 2013, are living in a homely shelter set up at Hossainpur village under Fulchhari upazila in the district, thanks to the initiative of Old Rajshahi Cadet Association (ORCA).

The organisation set up ORCA Homes with the cooperation of BGMEA beside Gaibandha-Balashi road on December 22 in 2014 to rehabilitate the children of Rana Plaza tragedy victims hailing from different districts.

They bear all the cost of the children, including food, schooling and healthcare, at the home set up in a three-storey impressive building with adequate space for playground, library and entertainment facilities.

The inmates, including 23 boys and 21 girls, live there in a homely environment, and attend classes at Hossainpur Muslim Academy from Play Group to Class VIII.

"The organisation will arrange adequate schooling for the inmates and help them to get employment. Help will also be extended for marriage of the girls after completion of their education. Seven people are engaged here to look after the children," said Shafiqul Islam, vice-principal of the academy, who is also working as the in-charge of the home.

"We are living here comfortably, but we often feel sorrow when our mothers' memory comes to mind," said Al-Amin of Aviram village in Pirgachha upazila of Rangpur, who lost his mother Fatema Begum in Rana

Plaza disaster. Afsana Akhter from Satbhangia village in Faridpur district said she and her younger brother Abdullah are staying at the home after losing their mother Beauty Begum in Rana Plaza disaster.

Of the over eleven hundred people killed in the tragedy, 49 were from Gaibandha district.

Besides, over a hundred people hailing from the district sustained serious injuries and nine others remained missing.

Rana Plaza disaster victims' families received Tk one lakh 45 thousand as government grant in three instalments, but no further help was provided during the last four years, said members of several families, adding that they are passing hard days after losing the only earning persons.

"My daughter Smrity Rani was an employee at Rana Plaza and she was the only earning member of our family. But she died in the disaster, leaving us in utter distress," said Sandhya Rani of Kismat Haldia village in Sadullapur upazila.

The conditions of the missing people's families are more miserable as they have hardly got any help from any quarter.

Many of the injured workers, who lost limbs in Rana Plaza disaster, became burden of the hard-pressed families.

Sonia Begum of Dakkhin Damodarapur village in Sadullapur upazila, who lost her right leg due to injuries in the disaster, was somewhat lucky as she got Tk 10 lakh as grant from the prime minister's fund and her husband set up a grocery shop with the money.

"We are living here comfortably, but often feel sorrow when our mothers' memory comes to mind," said Al-Amin of Aviram village in Rangpur's Pirgachha upazila.



Children of Rana Plaza tragedy victims in front of ORCA Homes in Gaibandha's Fulchhari upazila, which arranged homely shelter, food and schooling for the orphans.

PHOTO: STAR

2 girls, clinic staff raped

The alleged rapists arrested

STAR COUNTRY DESK

Two schoolgirls and a clinic staff were raped in Joypurhat, Pabna and Bogra recently, report our correspondents.

A schoolgirl was raped allegedly by a youth of a neighbouring village in Panchbibi upazila of Joypurhat on Sunday.

Police detained the alleged rapist Sabbir Rahman Sweet, 27, of Purba Ramchandrapur village.

Quoting the victim's family members, police said Sweet picked up the 13-year-old, made her unconscious by feeding sedatives and raped her at Bishwaspara village.

After regaining consciousness, the girl

sought help from the locals, who admitted her to Joypurhat General Hospital.

In Pabna, police arrested the owner of a private clinic early yesterday in connection with the case for raping a female staff of the hospital over three weeks ago.

The arrestee, Mizanur Rahman, 45, owner of 'Anisur Rahman Hospital' on Kheyaghat Road, was produced before a court that sent him to jail.

Away in Bogra, Shamim Hossain, 25, a Kamil (MA) examinee, who was arrested in connection with a case for abducting and raping a Class VIII student, was produced before a court yesterday that sent him to jail.

NOR'WESTER, LIGHTNING

Three killed in 3 dists

STAR COUNTRY DESK

An elderly man was killed and five others were injured as a nor'wester lashed the district town yesterday.

The deceased was Md Mozaffar Sheikh, 62, of Kismatprotappur in the town, reports our correspondent.

He died in wall collapse during the storm, said police. Meanwhile, two people were killed by lightning in Sherpur and Natore the same day.

A thunderbolt struck Urfula Begum, 35, and her husband Md Abul Hossain, 40, in Sherpur's Kalapara upazila during a heavy rain, reports a correspondent.

Urfula died on the spot while critically injured Abul was admitted to the upazila health complex, said police and locals.

In Natore, a youth was killed and two others were injured in a lightning strike in Lalpur upazila.

The deceased was Hafizul Islam, 25, of Walia village, reports our correspondent.



A maize field at Bamandanga village in Naogaon's Atrai upazila gets flooded as water from the rain-fed Atrai river inundated large areas during the last two days.

PHOTO: STAR

Croplands flooded in Atrai

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Crops on 1,000 hectares of land have been flooded due to surge of water in the Atrai river at Atrai upazila of Naogaon.

The water started rising from April 22, farmers said.

Atrai upazila Agriculture Officer KM Kawsar Hossain said crops on 1,000 hectares of land along the Atrai river were flooded by surge of water.

Landless farmers of Shahagola, Kalikapur, Ahsanganj, Pachupur and Bisha unions in the upazila cultivated paddy, maize, onion, pumpkin and garlic, either on the riverbed or the

banks of the Atrai river, this year.

Kawsar said around 96 percent of the onion and garlic have already been harvested, while maize and paddy are ready for harvesting.

Rafiqul Islam of Madandanga village said he cultivated maize on three acres of char land this year. He was preparing to harvest the crop after 15 days as it had matured, but all the plants were washed away as the water in the Atrai river rose suddenly after heavy rain on Sunday.

Damage to the crops will not be much if the water recedes quickly, but the farmers have given up hope as they do not see any sign of that, said Rafiq.

Shamsul Alam of the village said marginal farmers prefer producing crops on the riverbed and char areas of rivers as they can do it at less cost. "We do not need to own land. Besides, riverbeds and chars have fertile land," he added.

He cultivated paddy, onion and nut on two acres on the riverbed this year. "Water in the Atrai river usually starts rising in May, but it happened much earlier this year," he said, adding that he has given up of hope of saving his crop.

The continuous rain and sudden surge of river water will affect earning of the poor, Kalikapur union Chairman Nazmul Haque said.

Fair to promote mung bean farming

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Patuakhali

A day-long fair was arranged to encourage Patuakhali farmers in cultivating mung bean as the coastal district is the most favourable area for farming the green crop.

Small and Medium Entrepreneur (SME) Club of Patuakhali unit yesterday organised the fair with the help of Patuakhali Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCCI) and Bangladesh Institute of ICT in Development (BIID).

Over 100 mung bean growers from different parts of the district took part in the fair at Patuakhali Gymnasium Auditorium.

Sekander Gazi, who has been cultivating mung bean in Sadar upazila for a decade, said it is a very profitable crop.

"I got 25 maunds of bean from my two acres

of land by spending about Tk 10,000," he said. He earned Tk 5 lakh by selling mung bean at Tk 20,000 per maund last year, said Sekander.

Cultivation of mung bean in the areas is increasing day by day considering its low production cost and favourable weather, said local growers.

Md Nazrul Islam Matobbar, deputy director of Department of Agriculture Extension, said as Patuakhali is the highest mung bean producing district across the country, 83,940 hectares of land have been brought under mung bean cultivation here this year.

Mohiuddin Ahmed, president of PCCI, said "Mung bean from Patuakhali has been exported to Japan experimentally and we are trying our best to encourage growers to cultivate this crop as they can earn foreign currency easily."

'Arrest Marufa's killer'

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Jhalakathi

Students, teachers and people from all walks of life formed a human chain in front of Jhalakathi deputy commissioner's office on Sunday, demanding immediate arrest and punishment of the killers of Marufa, an HSC examinee from Nalchhity Degree College.

The protesters also submitted a memorandum to Jhalakathi deputy commissioner (DC) in this regard.

"My daughter was killed only for her guts to continue her study ignoring the torture of her in-laws since her marriage four years ago," said Marufa's mother Luky Aktar.

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Memo No: 25.39.0000.154.14.041.16/166

April 23, 2017

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

"Consultancy Services for Professional Accreditation Program in RAJUK"
Urban Resilience Unit (URU)

Subcomponent C3 (Package No: URP/RAJUK/S-8)

- This request for expressions of interest follows the General Procurement Notice for this project that appeared in UN Development Business online on May 20, 2015. The People's Republic of Bangladesh has received a credit from the International Development Association (The World Bank) in the amount of US\$173.00 million equivalent towards the cost of the Urban Resilience Project (URP) and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this credit towards payment under the contracts of Consultancy Services for "Professional accreditation program" that represents the second phase of a multi-phase national DRM program to build institutional capacity to mitigate the impact of disasters in the rapidly urbanizing cities of Bangladesh.
- This engagement will serve to improve the professional competency and ethical standards of practice of construction professionals to plan, design and construct buildings and structures that comply with the Bangladesh building code (new BNBC), related other acts, codes and regulations and international standards of practice in earthquake engineering. For Dhaka, the Authorized Officers of RAJUK act as deputized building officials for building code enforcement, according to the BNBC, Town Improvement (TI) act and the Construction Act 1952. However, currently they don't have competency in earthquake engineering.
- The Professional Accreditation Program is expected to improve construction standards, particularly in urban environments, to increase the seismic resilience of new structures, and to build expertise to deal with the risk posed by existing buildings and infrastructure. This would be achieved through greater competency of engineers in structural and earthquake engineering leading earthquake resilient structures being designed and built in the country. Success of the project will be measured by the number of engineers accredited to design seismic resilient structures.
- The objective of this component is to develop a new program aimed at delivering a recognized professional accreditation for engineers/architects/planner/technical personnel described above based on international best practices. A major effort will go into developing the legal, institutional and organizational mechanisms of the accreditation program under the objective of sustainability and professional integrity. The program will be pilot tested with technical personnel from RAJUK and other selected public institutions. The project includes the preparation of the candidates' selection criteria curriculum, passing criteria and delivery mechanism for the accreditation.
- The duration of the assignment is 36 months. The service will require both national and international inputs.
- RAJUK now invites eligible consulting firms to indicate their interest in providing above mentioned services. The Consultants should compose of reputable firms having similar experience in capacity building, training and education.
- Interested consulting firms must provide information indicating their qualifications to perform the services. EOIs should include brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, summaries of firm's financial, managerial, HR capability, availability of appropriate skills among key staff with short biographies (one paragraph), availability of physical, financial & human resources, and snapshots of relevant transactional experience. The language of the proposals and all submitting supporting documents will be in English. In case, supporting documents found in other languages must be translated in English language which shall be authenticated by the respective embassy in Bangladesh of the applicant. The EOIs would be reviewed on the basis of the following but not limited to:
 - Country and date of registration/ incorporation (age of firm)
 - Experience of the firm in conducting assignments of similar nature (Similar Nature and /or Complexity including cost and duration of the assignments)
 - Experience of the firm in other areas (Other experience including cost and duration)
 - Availability of professionals with appropriate skills
 - HR structure of the firm
 - Availability of resources (financial)
 - Availability of other resources – logistical and support services of the firm
 - Experience of the firm in other areas
 - Etc;
- Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications, but should mention whether the association is in the form of a "joint venture" or "sub-consultancy". In the case of "Joint Venture", all members of such "association" should have real and well defined inputs to the assignment and it is preferable to limit the total number of firms including their associates to maximum of 3 (three).
- The consultant will be selected under QCBS method in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers.
- Interested consultants may obtain additional information from the office at the address below during office hours i.e. 0900 to 1700 hours local time, Sunday to Thursday.
- Expressions of interest both hard (3 copies) and soft copy must be delivered to the address below in sealed envelop by June 04, 2017 during office hours. Only electronic format of EOI submission will not be accepted.

23/04/2017

(Abdul Latif Helaly)

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