



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS

Back in with abusers as the state fails them

NILIMA JAHAN

What forces abused women to return to live with their tormentors even after repeated incidents of domestic violence?

According to most victims, one of the major reasons is the absence of proper institutional support.

This includes shelter, psycho-social counselling, medical services and livelihood opportunities – the lack of which makes them unable to get out of an abusive relationship or home.

When they want to leave, they need to contemplate whether to stay with their abusers, or face homelessness – the fear of which makes them stay back and keep enduring torture.

Despite the existence of the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010, gender experts believe there has been no progress in this regard due to the lack of shelters for the victims.

Ruma, 33, a freelance voice artist, was brutally beaten up and kicked out of home at midnight by her husband just 20 days after her C-section.

This was her second abusive marriage – one which her in-laws never accepted.

She was even blamed by her husband and in-laws for the death of her infant son, who died from a congenital anomaly.

The very day her baby died, her husband fought with her and called her a “witch”. As she protested, he kicked her in the stomach where her incision was still to heal.

Devastated, Ruma had to leave the house, with just a suitcase, around 12:30am.

“After searching on google for a while, I found a government hostel nearby. However, I was not allowed to enter as the hostel doesn’t let random women come in for shelter, and that too at midnight,” she said.

“They were further apprehensive of letting me in seeing how disheveled I looked. They perhaps thought my being there would land them in trouble.”

She spent the night on the premises and left in the morning.

“I went to a friend’s house to get a glass of water. I waited at the parking lot as I didn’t want to embarrass her or myself in front of her in-laws ... I couldn’t even think of going to my relatives because I knew they would point fingers at me for not being the ‘perfect wife’.

“After roaming around the city with nowhere to go, with a heavy heart and intolerable pain, I had to return to my abuser,” said Ruma.

She added, “I tried escaping thrice, once by even attempting suicide ... I was not brave enough as I found the outside world to be even more dangerous than his [the abuser’s] home.

Rahela Begum is another such victim who had to go back to her drug-addicted abusive husband, even after she filed a case against him.

She had nowhere to go as her financially troubled parents could not take her and her two daughters in.

Her in-laws and neighbours made a mockery of her situation, saying going to the police to teach him a lesson was of no use.

According to a 2020 Human Rights Watch

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There are an estimated 15 additional NGO-run shelters for victims of domestic violence. In total, therefore, there are only around 36 shelters in a country with over 80 million women and over 64 million children.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina and State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Fazilatun Nessa Indira pose for a photo with the winners of Begum Rokeya Padak-2022 at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital.

PHOTO: PID

We have to build Bangladesh together

PM says on Begum Rokeya Day

BSS, Dhaka

Noting the advancement of women in Bangladesh, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said the nation must be built as a prosperous one with the participation of all.

“Amid this rise-and-shine of women in the country, we all have to build Bangladesh together,” she said.

The PM made the remarks at a programme marking Begum Rokeya Day and the awarding ceremony of Begum Rokeya Padak 2022 held at the capital’s Osmani Memorial Auditorium.

The other family members must actively participate in domestic duties for women to be able to leave the house and devote their time to activities that ensure income, she asserted.

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DHAKA-CTG HIGH SPEED RAILWAY PROJECT

China firm seeks to ‘build-own-operate’

Experts call for caution

TUHN SHUBHRA ADHIKARY

A Chinese state-owned company has proposed to implement Dhaka-Chattogram High Speed Railway Project by forming a company, where China will have an 80 percent share.

China Railway Design Corporation (CRDC), a subsidiary of state-owned China State Railway Group Co Ltd, proposed to implement the project following BOO (build-own-operate) model.

BOO is a project delivery mechanism in which a government entity sells to a private sector party the right to construct a project according to agreed design specifications and to operate the project for a specified time. Unlike the build-own-operate-transfer (BOOT), the private sector party owns the project and does not have to transfer it to the government entity at the end of the term, according to Thomson Reuters’s Practical Law Company.

As per CRDC, Bangladesh High Speed Railway Limited (BHSR), the proposed company, will be formed with funds from China and Bangladesh and will be responsible for investing and constructing the railway.

The company on November 12 sent the proposal to Railways Minister Nurul Islam Sujan. Railways Ministry recently asked Bangladesh Railway (BR) to give its opinion on the “unsolicited

proposal” by December 20.

This is the third proposal extended by different Chinese companies to implement the Tk 93,350.93 crore (\$1-Tk 84) project.

The Chinese proposals are coming at a time when prominent transport experts questioned the viability of such a huge-investment project. Some of them said BR lacks the capacity to complete such a “highly ambitious” project.

Dhirendra Nath Mazumder, the outgoing director general of BR, admitted receiving the proposal.

“We were asked to take ‘go slow’ policy regarding this project,” he told The Daily Star yesterday.

Last year, the Railways minister also told The Daily Star that the government would “go slow” with the project due to the massive cost involved.

If the project is implemented, an uninterrupted journey on the 224.64km route between Dhaka and Chattogram via Narayanganj-Cumilla-Feni will take 55 minutes. The journey will take 73 minutes with stopovers, according to the feasibility study.

THE LATEST PROPOSAL

CDRC, which was involved with the feasibility study and detailed design of the project, said the project will require \$11.1 billion. It said private investment in the project is not feasible because of the huge investment, making the public-private partnership (PPP) model not applicable here.

However, previous proposals of Chinese companies were under the PPP model.

A transport PPP expert told The Daily Star on condition of anonymity that the authorities have to think a lot before taking the final decision.

Most of the PPP projects follow the design, build, finance, operate and transfer (DBFT) model. In this model, the private company transfer the infrastructure after a specific time, he said.

But in the BOO model, the company retains ownership of the infrastructure “in perpetuity” which is closer to privatisation, he added citing documents.

CDRC said Bangladesh and China governments can jointly fund BHSR with Bangladesh accounting for 20 percent and China accounting for 80 percent.

Bangladesh will provide \$.34 billion in capital and \$1.35 billion in loans while China will provide 1.35 billion in capital and 5.42 billion in loans, reads the proposal.

According to it, the Bangladesh government will be responsible for land acquisition and other issues. Moreover, the proposal sought an exemption from taxation during the construction of the project.

It suggested that Prime Minister’s Office would set up a working group for the project to work with the Chinese government and relevant Chinese agencies.

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‘First look at yourselves, then at others’ Quader tells foreign diplomats

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Obaidul Quader, general secretary of the ruling Awami League, yesterday urged foreign diplomats not to ruin the friendship by intervening in the country’s internal affairs.

“Do not hurt the friendship [between your countries and ours] ... We have had bitter experiences in the past – in 1971 and 1975. But we still want to maintain our cordial relations with you. However, there will be crack in our friendship if you do so [intervene in internal matters]. No one will benefit from that ...”

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US honours Rozina for anti-graft fight

STAR REPORT

Rozina Islam, special correspondent at the daily Prothom Alo, has been awarded a special honour by the US for playing a significant role in the fight against anti-corruption through journalism.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken yesterday declared eight people, including Rozina Islam, from different countries of the world, who are champions in the fight against corruption, a Prothom Alo report read.

Blinken presented the Anti-Corruption Champions Award 2022 at the state department office in Washington DC on the occasion of International Anti-Corruption Day yesterday.

The award recipients are working with courage

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Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company (Pvt.) Ltd.
(A JOINT VENTURE OF BPDB, BANGLADESH AND NTPC LIMITED, INDIA)
UNIQUE HEIGHTS (BORAK), LEVEL-17, 117 KAZI NAZRUL ISLAM AVENUE, ESKATON GARDEN, DHAKA-1000, BANGLADESH.

INVITATION FOR BID
OPEN TENDER ENQUIRY (Domestic Competitive Bidding)

Date: 07/12/2022

Bangladesh-India Friendship Power Company (Pvt.) Ltd. (BIFPCL) invites bids from eligible bidders in Single Stage Two Envelopes (Envelope-1: Technical Proposal and Envelope-2: Financial Proposal) for the following package and details:

| IFB No | BIFPCL/OTM/Site C&M/2022/228 |
|---|---|
| Name of Package | Supply, Installation and Commissioning of VRF Centralized AIR Conditioning System for Guest House at Township, MSTPP, RAMPAL, BAGERHAT. |
| Tender Fee | BDT 1000/- (BDT One Thousand only) |
| Tender Security | BDT 2,81,000.00 (Taka Two Lac Eighty-One Thousand) only |
| Tender document Sale Period: | From 10.12.2022 (Saturday) (10:00 Hrs. (BST) to 01.01.2023 (Sunday) (17:00 Hrs. (BST) |
| Pre-Bid Meeting | On 04.01.2023 (Wednesday) at 11:00 Hrs. (BST) |
| Last Date & Time for submission of Bid (Technical + Financial) | Up to 15.01.2023 (Sunday) till 11:00 Hrs. (BST) |
| Bid Opening Date & Time (Technical Bid only) | On 15.01.2023 (Sunday) at 11:30 Hrs. (BST) |

For Qualifying Requirements, Scope of Work, availability of Bidding Documents and other details, please refer to detailed “Invitation for Bid” available at www.bifpcl.com and www.bpdb.gov.bd or may contact the office of the undersigned. For all other details, may please visit the website: www.bifpcl.com.

NB: If the Bid opening day is declared as holiday by the Govt. of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, Bid will be opened in the next working day.

(Md. Ziaur Rahman)
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Moody’s places Bangladesh’s ratings under review

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Major global rating agency Moody’s has placed Bangladesh’s long-held credit rating of Ba3 on review for downgrade, in a development that stands to make the country’s foreign transactions and borrowing tougher.

The move comes in response to Bangladesh’s deteriorating external position, which raises external vulnerability and government liquidity risks in a way that may not be consistent with its current rating, Moody’s said in an update yesterday.

Bangladesh’s “rapidly” declining foreign exchange reserves adequacy, acute energy crisis and dollar liquidity shortage have raised concerns about the government’s ability to service external debt payments.

“The inability of the government to arrest the deterioration of reserves despite the taka devaluation and implementation of unorthodox policy measures highlights the severity of the situation.”

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