



Keraniganj fire claims entire family

Four-year-old lone survivor dies at burn institute

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Four-year-old Roja Moni died of her wounds at the Sheikh Hasina National Institute of Burn and Plastic Surgery in Dhaka yesterday after fighting for her life for four days.

She was the only survivor of the Keraniganj fire in her family.

On August 15, there was a massive fire at a chemical warehouse in Keraniganj that spread to adjacent houses. During this fire, the child suffered 30 percent burns.

Earlier, her father Sohag Hossain, 25, mother Mina Begum, 22, and one-and-a-half-years-old sister Tayeba Akhter died of burn injuries.

Her aunt Jesmin Akhter, 35, and eighth grader cousin Isha Akhter also perished in the fire.

At least 15 people sustained burns in the incident that broke out in Gadarbagh area.

Partha Shankar Paul, resident surgeon at the institute, said Roja died at 6:30pm.



The BNP yesterday afternoon took out two processions from the capital's Dayaganj and Gulshan-1 as part of a fresh agitation to press home its demand for elections under a non-partisan government. Story on page 3.

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS

GENDER STEREOTYPES

India's SC lists terms to be avoided in docs

REUTERS, New Delhi

India's Supreme Court released a glossary this week of "gender-unjust terms" it wants the legal community to avoid when preparing pleas, orders and judgments, and suggested some alternatives.

Among the changes recommended by the court's "Handbook on Combating Gender Stereotypes" are use of the word "woman" to replace terms such as "career woman", "fallen woman", "harlot", "seductress", and "whore".

Wednesday's document aims to help judges and the legal community to identify, understand and combat stereotypes about women, Chief Justice D Y Chandrachud, who led the effort, wrote in a foreword that thanked several individuals.

"Relying on predetermined stereotypes in judicial decision-making contravenes the duty of judges to decide each case on its merits, independently and impartially," he added.

The handbook advises use of phrases such as "street sexual harassment" instead of "eve-teasing", a term that is prevalent in India, despite having fallen out of use elsewhere.

It suggests "mother" to replace "unwed mother", and "sexually harassed, assaulted or raped" instead of "violated".

Use of terms such as "survivor" and "victim" are both applicable to describe those affected by sexual violence, it added, unless the individual concerned expresses a preference, which should then be respected.

Besides listing gender stereotypes, it exposes the flawed reasoning behind notions such as women being "overly emotional", "physically weaker", or "more nurturing".

It also takes aim at some ideas widespread in India's

SEE PAGE 6 COL 2

After floods, water supply dearth hits Ctg city

Ctg Wasa's water purification drops as its source becomes muddy

ARUN BIKASH DEY, Ctg

City dwellers of some areas are not getting the water supply they need as Chattogram Water and Sewerage Authority is in difficulty purifying river water.

Wasa officials said two plants that collect water from the Karnaphuli cannot cleanse the amount of water that they can usually do due to excessive muddy water.

The muddy water comes from hills and upstream with rainwater.

Residents of neighbourhoods in Agrabad, Halishahar, Chawkbazar, Katalganj, Dewan Bazar and Muradpur said they were not getting water supply regularly from the Wasa. Many of them were buying jar water or bottled water for drinking and other uses.

Amir Uddin, associate professor of Institute of Education and Research at Chittagong University, who lives in Agrabad Muhuri Para area, on Thursday said, "At times, there is supply water but the pressure is very low."

"Mud and moss is found in Wasa water and so we have to buy jar water."

He said he received clean supply water yesterday.

Tapos Barua, a resident of Katalganj area, said, "We had to suffer due to salinity in Wasa water when it was not raining for a long

time. And now after a week-long heavy rain in this region, we are suffering again for irregular water supply from Chattogram Wasa."

"We cannot afford to purchase bottled water and so we have to collect water from tube-wells from a distant place."

Contacted, Maqsd-ul-Alam, chief engineer of Chattogram Wasa, said the amount of water

We cannot afford to purchase bottled water and so we have to collect water from tube-wells from a distant place.
Tapos Barua
A resident of Katalganj area

purified by the two plants dropped by around 10 crore litre daily over the last one week as water at the intake points in the Karnaphuli is excessive muddy.

The plants collect water from the river and then supply to the city dwellers after purification, he said.

The two plants – Sheikh Hasina Water Treatment Plant 1 and Sheikh Hasina Water Treatment

Plant-2 – can purify 28.6 crore litres of water in 24 hours, said Maqsd.

Two plants could cleanse 18 crore litres daily in the last one week, triggering water crisis in the city, he added.

"But the situation is gradually improving and the amount of purified water has increased to 22 crore litres a day," he said.

Chattogram Wasa has four plants. The two other plants don't have the problem.

Contacted, AKM Fazlullah, managing director of Chattogram Wasa, said the plants can usually purify water with 500 NTU (Nephelometric Turbidity Units), a measure of the cloudiness of a fluid.

But due to heavy rain and flood, it was found that water at the intake points in the river was so muddy that it was measured as high as 1,300 NTU, he said.

"If we had gone for filtering the water with the full capacity of the plants, there could have been a problem," Fazlullah said, adding, "It would have required a lot more chemicals and the production costs would have gone up."

"At present, mud in water has gone down and now water in the intake points in the river is 700 NTU," he said and expected that the situation would be normal next week.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3

FLOOD IN THE NORTH

Water receding, sufferings linger

Flood-affected people lack food, drinking water

STAR REPORT

Thousands of people living in low-lying areas of several northern districts have been affected by flooding after adjoining rivers overflowed their banks.

The onrush of water from upstream contributed to the swelling of the Jamuna, Teesta, Dharla, and Dudhkumar rivers, said officials of the Water Development Board (WDB).

Although the floodwater has already started receding in these areas, vast areas of croplands and grazing fields remain submerged.

However, experts say the flood situation won't last long due to the less-than-usual rainfall in the greater Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna basin.

Contacted, Dr Rashed Chowdhury, applications scientist at Water, Climate, and Society, said, "Based on the current weather data, it is expected that the basin-wide rainfall will be less than normal this year, and as a result, there may be less-than-normal flooding in the country."

"At this stage, any possibility of higher-than-normal flooding is very unlikely," said Dr Chowdhury, also adjunct faculty at the Arizona State University (School of Sustainable Engineering).

SEE PAGE 6 COL 4

POST-COUP MYANMAR

UN appeals to military for more aid access

REUTERS

The chief of the United Nations humanitarian relief agency has urged Myanmar's ruling military to allow greater access to 18 million people in need of aid, describing the situation as critical as a post-coup conflict intensifies.

Returning from a three-day trip that included a meeting with top general Min Aung Hlaing, Martin Griffiths said a funding shortage was also complicating efforts to reach the third of Myanmar's population that was in need of assistance.

Myanmar has been locked in crisis since the military wrested back control after a decade of unprecedented reform under quasi-civilian governments.

The military's bloody crackdown on dissent led to the formation of an armed resistance movement that has battled security forces around the country, with clashes displacing more than a million people.

"Successive crises in Myanmar have left one third of the population in need of humanitarian aid," Griffiths said in a statement.

"They expect more and better from their leaders and from the international community."

The UN agency said fighting and natural disasters since the 2021 coup had led to a five-fold increase in the number of displaced people, from 380,000 to 1.9 million.

Griffiths said humanitarian relief organisations were struggling with insufficient resources and urged international donors to do more, with just 22 percent of the annual funding requirements received by mid-year.

He said he pressed the junta to expand access and expressed concern about civilians and restrictions and bureaucracy preventing aid groups from helping them.

S'pore company launches luxury cat cruises



AFP, Singapore

Cat owners in Singapore can now take their pets on luxury sunset cruises, perfect for pampered kitties who enjoy the finer things in life.

Onboard the tall ship Royal Albatross, the animals can lounge in custom-built "cat-bana" cages as their owners enjoy a four- or seven-course dinner beside them on deck.

The ship's operator introduced the cat-friendly sailings this month after dog cruises launched in 2021 proved popular.

For two-and-a-half hours, up to 15 feline and 130 human passengers sail along the resort island of Sentosa, enjoying views of Singapore's skyline and a short fireworks display.

SEE PAGE 6 COL 3



All sorts of three-wheelers that are illegal and unfit continue to run on the highways, causing congestion and often fatal accidents. The photo was taken yesterday from Dumuria Baratia area on the Khulna-Satkhira highway.

PHOTO: HABIBUR RAHMAN