

When homes become killing grounds

FROM PAGE 3
separate category. But between January and July, it received 29,161 calls reporting physical assault and 19,584 calls relating to mental abuse.

The latest Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) Violence Against Women Survey 2024, based on interviews with 27,476 women, paints an equally alarming picture.

Women are three times more likely to face physical abuse and 14 times more likely to suffer sexual violence from their husbands than from others.

Of the surveyed women, 70 percent reported experiencing at least one form of abuse – physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or controlling behaviour.

More than half (54 percent) said they had faced physical or sexual violence from their husbands.

Yet most victims remain silent – 64 percent never disclose the abuse, and only 7.4 percent seek legal action.

Experts say victims' silence is rooted in fear of damaging family reputation, concern for children, and the societal normalisation of abuse.

A lack of shelters, counselling, medical care, and livelihood support leaves many women trapped.

The lack of respect and recognition for women remains glaring in our society.

Within households, women are still not treated as equals, and their contributions often go unacknowledged. What is most troubling is that violence has become

societal normalised," said Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation.

She added, "When a husband raises his hand against his wife, unless the injuries are severe, the incident often goes unreported.

Family members rarely see it as something to protest, as the husband is regarded as head of the household and primary provider. Women from poorer families are even more vulnerable;

many parents, fearing social stigma and financial hardship, are unable to return valuable or seeking maintenance.

Nineteen out of 20 survivors interviewed had never heard of it. Police, NGOs, and community members rarely inform victims of their legal rights.

The ActionAid study also identified enforcement challenges, including overburdened and under-equipped officers, lack of training on the law, and insufficient coordination among agencies.

Victims are often directed towards informal mediation or other laws, such as the Penal Code 1860, the Women and Children Repression Act 2000, or the Dowry Prohibition Act 2018, instead of remedies under the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010.

The law provides for protection orders, residence orders, compensation for harm, and even temporary custody of children. But despite these provisions, enforcement has been weak," said Supreme Court lawyer Ayesha Akhter, legal specialist for the Gender Justice and Women Empowerment Cluster at Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST).

"The main obstacles are a lack of public awareness, insufficient dissemination of information online and

offline, and gaps in effective implementation," she added.

She also noted that information frequently fails to reach marginalised communities.

A 2020 ActionAid Bangladesh study, conducted by Dhaka University law professor Taslima Yasmin, analysed 90 case records and found that most victims and local authorities are unaware of the law. In districts such as Sylhet and Jashore, the Act is often known only for returning valuables or seeking maintenance.

In addition, eight short-term Victim Support Centres provide temporary stays of up to five days, though services are inconsistent, and many victims are allowed to stay only overnight.

Approximately 15 additional NGO-run shelters exist, bringing the total to around 36 shelters in a country with over 80 million women and 64 million children – far from sufficient.

Fauzia Moslem, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, said women must be empowered to make decisions about their own lives. "They need to organise themselves and participate at all levels of society, particularly in decision-making processes," she said.

She added, "The women's movement must be strengthened, and the justice system reformed so that people can genuinely experience justice. Society must be reconstructed to leave no space for violence against women."

she did not file a case after being severely assaulted. She replied, "If my husband is arrested, how will I feed my children?" Since the state does not ensure financial security for women after filing a case, many are forced to endure abuse in silence."

Her concern is real, as according to a 2020 Human Rights Watch report, Bangladesh has only 13 long-term government shelters for women and girls – seven Safe Custody Homes and six run by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs.

In addition, eight short-term Victim Support Centres provide temporary stays of up to five days, though services are inconsistent, and many victims are allowed to stay only overnight.

Approximately 15 additional NGO-run shelters exist, bringing the total to around 36 shelters in a country with over 80 million women and 64 million children – far from sufficient.

Fauzia Moslem, president of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad, said women must be empowered to make decisions about their own lives. "They need to organise themselves and participate at all levels of society, particularly in decision-making processes," she said.

She added, "The women's movement must be strengthened, and the justice system reformed so that people can genuinely experience justice. Society must be reconstructed to leave no space for violence against women."

Women are three times more likely to face physical abuse and 14 times more likely to suffer sexual violence from their husbands than from others.

Of the surveyed women, 70 percent reported experiencing at least one form of abuse – physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or controlling behaviour.

More than half (54 percent) said they had faced physical or sexual violence from their husbands.

Yet most victims remain silent – 64 percent never disclose the abuse, and only 7.4 percent seek legal action.

Experts say victims' silence is rooted in fear of damaging family reputation, concern for children, and the societal normalisation of abuse.

A lack of respect and recognition for women remains glaring in our society.

Within households, women are still not treated as equals, and their contributions often go unacknowledged. What is most troubling is that violence has become

socially normalised," said Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation.

She added, "When a husband raises his hand against his wife, unless the injuries are severe, the incident often goes unreported.

Family members rarely see it as something to protest, as the husband is regarded as head of the household and primary provider. Women from poorer families are even more vulnerable;

many parents, fearing social stigma and financial hardship, are unable to return valuable or seeking maintenance.

Nineteen out of 20 survivors interviewed had never heard of it. Police, NGOs, and community members rarely inform victims of their legal rights.

The ActionAid study also identified enforcement challenges, including overburdened and under-equipped officers, lack of training on the law, and insufficient coordination among agencies.

Victims are often directed towards informal mediation or other laws, such as the Penal Code 1860, the Women and Children Repression Act 2000, or the Dowry Prohibition Act 2018, instead of remedies under the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act 2010.

The law provides for protection orders, residence orders, compensation for harm, and even temporary custody of children. But despite these provisions, enforcement has been weak," said Supreme Court lawyer Ayesha Akhter, legal specialist for the Gender Justice and Women Empowerment Cluster at Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST).

"The main obstacles are a lack of public awareness, insufficient dissemination of information online and

wire fencing to keep the reclaimed land free from encroachment.

"We are yet to get any allocation for it," he said.

He claimed that even if the encroachers return, they would not be able to reoccupy the land, as fencing work would begin once the budget is approved.

"And if any new structures are built, we will demolish them again," he added.

Meanwhile, many individuals, including some from the list of previous encroachers, have already applied to lease portions of the reclaimed land, sources said.

But Tareq said they have no plan to lease out the land at this time.

117 acres reclaimed, but encroachers

FROM PAGE 4

According to WDB data, the agency reclaimed 117 acres of land from illegal occupation, which 39 influential individuals had long held illegally. Among them were a former city mayor, an ex-member of parliament, and several former ward councillors.

Land in both mouzas reportedly sells for Tk 10 to

12 lakh per decimal. Even at an average of Tk 10 lakh per decimal, the total value of the recovered land stands at around Tk 1,170 crore, officials said.

Contacted, KM Julfikar Tareq, superintending engineer of WDB Chattogram, said they had sought a budget from the ministry to install barbed

wire fencing to keep the reclaimed land free from encroachment.

"We are yet to get any allocation for it," he said.

He claimed that even if the encroachers return, they would not be able to reoccupy the land, as fencing work would begin once the budget is approved.

"And if any new structures are built, we will demolish them again," he added.

Meanwhile, many individuals, including some from the list of previous encroachers, have already applied to lease portions of the reclaimed land, sources said.

But Tareq said they have no plan to lease out the land at this time.

Thousands suffer as bridge collapses

FROM PAGE 4
in Muktagacha, alleged that the unplanned excavation by WDB caused the collapse.

To reduce public suffering, he said they have started filling the broken portion of the bridge with sandbags and are setting up a temporary bamboo

bridge.

Higher authorities have been informed to take urgent steps for reconstruction.

Atikul Islam, UNO of Muktagacha, said he had informed the district administration for further action.

Contacted, SM Abid

protect the bridge.

The matter has been discussed at the district coordination meeting. We mentioned that unplanned construction of bridges and culverts without properly maintaining the river boundary according to CS map is the main problem," he said.

occupied and recorded.

The event was presided over by Prof Kairul Islam Chowdhury, joint coordinator of the movement, and conducted by its member Dipayan Khisa.

Oikya NAP General Secretary Asadullah Tarek and Gono Forum Acting President Advocate Subrata Chowdhury also spoke.

Publish list of settlers, grabbed

FROM PAGE 3

Citing the rising number of settlers, he warned that within the next two decades, hill people could become a minority. "Without a political solution, there is no alternative," he added.

Shamsul Huda, executive director of Association for Land Reform and Development, said the main slogan of the

July uprising was ending discrimination, yet the interim government has ignored the hill issue.

He described "repeated dramas" around the Land Dispute Resolution Commission and alleged that attempts to activate it were thwarted by conspiracies backed by the government itself.

On the peace accord,

he said it is an agreement between the state and the indigenous peoples of the hills, and therefore, it must be implemented.

Presenting the keynote, Zakir Hossain, joint coordinator of the movement, and conducted by its member Dipayan Khisa.

Oikya NAP General Secretary Asadullah Tarek and Gono Forum Acting President Advocate Subrata Chowdhury also spoke.

ICT issues arrest warrants for ex-IGP

FROM PAGE 3

prosecution how Bogura police officials were involved in an incident that took place in Gazipur. The prosecution said although the SP and ASP were posted in Bogura, they were present in Gazipur during the killings. Why they were there will be investigated, the prosecution added.

The tribunal's investigation agency sought the warrants after

a preliminary probe into a complaint filed by the father of madrasa student Ibrahim, one of the deceased.

DMP's Counter Terrorism and Transnational Crime unit, along with its bomb disposal unit, SWAT team, and Gazipur police, conducted the raid from 10:00am to 3:30pm on the first floor of a two-storey

building on that day.

In 2016, seven people were killed at Noagaon Patartek in Harin area under Gazipur City Corporation during a drive codenamed "Operation Spate 8". They include Faridul Islam Akash, who allegedly had been trying to reorganise "Neo JMB" after the death of its coordinator Tamim Ahmed Chowdhury on August 27, officials said.

He also said after the death of Tamim, Akash was leading "Neo JMB", an offshoot of the banned outfit JMB.

After visiting the Patartek site, then home minister Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal claimed, "Those who were here [at the militant den] were all militants in some way. They were plotting to do something."

He also said after the death of Tamim, Akash was leading "Neo JMB", an offshoot of the banned outfit JMB.

He also said after the death of Tamim, Akash was leading "Neo JMB", an offshoot of the banned outfit JMB.

At the event, he presented the National Fisheries Award 2025 to this year's winners in recognition of their contributions to the sector.

food, yet we hardly remember those who work tirelessly to bring it to our tables. We only worry about whether the fish is cheap or fresh. Today is about remembering them," the chief adviser added.

Citing the case of a fish seller who had travelled overnight from Chattogram to Dhaka with fresh shing (stinging catfish), only to face

hostility while selling them, the chief adviser said, "That is just one example. People working in the fisheries sector often face enormous challenges."

"We are becoming so cruel that even fish may one day vanish from our fate. We dump all sorts of waste and toxins into water, but we fail to realise that these poisons are returning to the

Fish is our favourite

sector, we must be kind to nature and water.

If ecosystems collapse, fish

production will eventually stop," he cautioned.

He stressed that environmentally friendly farming methods and the active involvement of young people could help strengthen the sector further.

"Fish is our favourite

sector, we must be kind to nature and water.

If ecosystems collapse, fish

production will eventually stop," he cautioned.

He stressed that environmentally friendly

farming methods and the active involvement of

young people could help

strengthen the sector further.

"Fish is our favourite

sector, we must be kind to nature and water.

If ecosystems collapse, fish

production will eventually stop," he cautioned.

He stressed that environmentally friendly

farming methods and the active involvement of

young people could help

strengthen the sector further.

"Fish is our favourite

sector, we must be kind to nature and water.

If ecosystems collapse, fish

production will eventually stop," he cautioned.

He stressed that environmentally friendly

farming methods and the active involvement of

young people could help

strengthen the sector further.

"Fish is our favourite