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Remembering Rowshan

MEMBERS PAY TRIBUTE TO ROWSHAN ARA BEGUM
OF THE BANGLADESH POLICE

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Sexual Harassment Is All Too Common in Bangladesh

By Farida Yeasmin, Deputy Police Commissioner, Dhaka Metropolitan Police

THE SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF CHILDREN IN Bangladesh has emerged as the most pressing and intractable social problem across regional, social and cultural boundaries. It's deeply embedded in the social structure of Bangladesh and it has put children's lives at risk in almost all parts of the country.

Over the past few years, we could not prevent horrific sexual harassment crimes, which affect the lives of many children, especially in Dhaka Metropolitan areas.

Throughout the last decade, there have been a number of sexual harassment cases where a middle-aged suspect (40 and older) has been accused of raping, molesting, or stalking a child who is 14 years old or younger.

Many times, the suspect will be a child's father, stepfather, grandfather, uncle, cousin, neighbor, teacher or doctor. Sometimes, suspects and children engage in "sugar/honey daddy" relationships, which involves helping out a child financially. Perpetrators may take videos and photos of the abused children and upload them to the internet.

The Effects of Sexual Harassment on Children

Sexual harassment affects children's confidence, productivity, their capacity to care for themselves and their overall health and quality of life. Children in this situation may develop long-term psychological issues that are difficult to overcome.

They often suffer from depression,

anxiety, phobia, low self-esteem, lack of trust, feelings of abandonment, rejection, chronic health problems, sleeping problems and the inability to pay attention. In addition to these problems, physical violence may result in serious threat, injury or murder if the victim does not leave the relationship.

Sexual Harassment Cases in Bangladesh

We hear many stories every day regarding the sexual harassment of children. In 66 percent of the cases, the criminal is a middle-aged suspect, according to *The Daily Prothom Alo*.

Mariya (fake name), was a 7-year-old who was victimized by a mentally ill middle-aged neighbor. This man not only molested her several times; one day he brutally cut her sexual organ using a blade. Her reproductive organ has been permanently damaged. She was so traumatized that she is afraid of any man, even her father.

Lota (fake name) was a 9-year-old homeless child who was molested and raped by her uncle. One day, he raped her, and she was taken to the hospital. After treatment, she survived, but permanently lost her reproductive organ.

Another 10-year-old named Pinky (fake name) was recently raped by her best friend's grandfather, who is 68. She became very scared. Her mother noticed her changed behavior and tried to get treatment; eventually, they visited a psychologist at the Dhaka Metropolitan Police's Victim Support Center.



Farida Yeasmin said that Bangladesh must deal with its sexual harassment problems.

Dealing with Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is an alarming issue. Are children safe and secure in their own house, at school or in public spaces? Is it only the responsibility of a state to protect children from sexual harassment?

Why are these suspects sexually harassing children? Is it sadism or perversion? Are they physically and mentally sick?

Lack of psychosocial awareness is one of the main reasons for it. Norms, ideas, values and customs of the country are not strict enough to make people fear the effects of sexual harassment.

Research suggests that most violent men refuse to get help through counseling and will continue to abuse children. We need to seriously think about the remedy to this problem.



A Tribute to
*Rowshan
 Ara Begum*
 of the Bangladesh Police

**Rowshan, a distinguished leader,
 was killed in a car crash in May.**
 By Members of the Bangladesh
 Police Women's Network

ROWSHAN ARA BEGUM, PPM, NDC, developed a passion for justice and equality starting in her childhood and adolescent years. After earning a Master of Social Science (MSS) degree from the University of Dhaka, she began her professional police career in February 1988. She served in a variety of high-profile positions including Assistant Police Commissioner of the Accounts Section, Reserve Office, Traffic Division and Training Unit of Dhaka Metropolitan Police, which is the largest police unit of Bangladesh Police.

Due to her dedication and hard work, she was the first woman police officer in the Bangladesh Police given the responsibility of a Superintendent of Police (SP) at the district level. She successfully performed her duty as the SP of the Munshiganj District from 1998 to 2000. She later served in different units as Deputy Commissioner, Additional Commissioner and Acting

Commissioner of Police. Throughout her career, she was dedicated to law and order, preventing crime, ensuring security for public life and establishing a people-friendly democratic policing system. She was twice awarded with the Inspector General Good Services Badge for playing an important role in controlling terrorist activities, arresting terrorists and recovering illegal drugs, arms and ammunitions.

Rowshan was a strong supporter of women's rights. She worked with communities, political leaders, journalists and others to create awareness of violence against women and children by championing women's rights issues including women's education and combating human trafficking. She received the Anannya Award in 1999, which is given to an outstanding woman in Bangladesh from the national magazine, *Anannya*.

Rowshan's International Reach

Rowshan's dedication to policing went beyond her national boundaries. She

served as a Crime Analysis Officer in a UN Peacekeeping Mission in Kosovo and as Chief-of-Staff for a UNMIS-UNPOL Peacekeeping Mission in Sudan. At the same time, she served as ex-officio of the President of Women's Network for UNMIS-UNPOL, which has members from 42 countries. She was also a valued recipient of the UNMIK Medal and UNMIS Medal.

At the inception of the Bangladesh Civil Service Women's Network in 2010, Rowshan was a member of its executive committee. She held the position of the Focal Point of the BCS (Police) Cadre as well as the joint secretary general of the executive committee of the Bangladesh Civil Services Women Network. She was the former President of the Bangladesh Police Women's Network (BPWN), and she actively supported engagement with community leaders, professional groups and NGOs (with special emphasis on women's rights). She was instrumental in obtaining approval from the Government of Bangladesh to host the first Asian Regional

Women Police Conference of IAWP, with the theme "Leadership for Police Women in Asia," in 2012. She was also the proud recipient of the 2013 IAWP (International Association of Women Police) International Scholarship Award.

Rowshan had attended a number of seminars, workshops and training programs both at home and abroad including an international strategic planning course in Police Staff College, Bramshill, England; a Leadership Course for Female Leaders in the International Academy, Bramshill, England; 50th Annual Training Conference in Newfoundland, Canada; IAWP's 51st Annual Training Conference in Durban, South Africa and IAWP's (Region-16) second Regional Conference in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

She also successfully completed a National Defense Course in 2015. The aim of this highly prestigious course is to prepare selected senior officers of the armed forces, the civil services and the allied countries to take more responsibility when it comes to the direction and management of national security and development.

Losing One of Our Own

Rowshan was happily married and blessed with a daughter. She was a source of inspiration to all the female officers of Bangladesh Police because of her prestigious career and her success story.

On the evening of May 5, at around 6:45, a vehicle of BANFPU-1, Rotation-12 carrying the delegation, who arrived at Kinshasa one day earlier, had an accident. The vehicle was carrying four people including Rowshan, Commander of BANFPU-1, Rotation-12 Farjana Hossain, Driver Constable Habibur Rahman and ASI Masum Ballah. A local truck hit the UN vehicle, and the driver of the truck fled the scene.

Rowshan, the leader of the delegation, was severely injured. Hossain was also injured, and both were taken to the hospital.

Later, it was confirmed that Rowshan had passed away. ❄



Rowshan received the Inspector General Good Services Badge twice.



Rowshan served as a Crime Analysis Officer in a UN Peacekeeping Mission in Kosovo.