FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF THE ACID SURVIVORS
12 May, 2009
In 1999-April 2009, 2882 persons were acid attacked from 2269 incident.

Statistics of Acid Attack 1999 to April 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Number of Incident</th>
<th>Number of Person Attacked</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May-Dec 1999</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>40 20 36 136</td>
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<td>2000</td>
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<td>2001</td>
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<td>109 3 23 234</td>
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<td>2002</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>338</td>
<td>203 151 87 411</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>150 66 73 320</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>217</td>
<td>150 70 32 272</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>134 57 20 251</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>109 46 37 192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>99 55 36 179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2188</td>
<td>1489 594 279 2099</td>
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Rehabilitation Services 2000-April 2009

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type of Support</th>
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<td>Educational Support</td>
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<td>Family Assistance</td>
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<td>Job Placement</td>
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<td>On the Job Training</td>
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<tr>
<td>SMS Development Training</td>
<td>71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>799</td>
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Legal Statistics of Acid Attack

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
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<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Brief of Chemilla Accident: 18 persons died among 30 persons injured on Nov. 06, 08
Date Up Dated Till: 10 April 2009
Voice
Quarterly Newsletter

Founder Board of Trustees of ASF
Mr. Kazi Fazliur Rahman, Former Adviser to the Caretaker President; Dr. Samanta Lal Sen, Plastic Surgeon; Advocate Sigma Huda, Secretary General, Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights (BSEHR); UNICEF Staff Association Represented by its Chairman Mr. Selim Ahmed; An O. Shiloin Kendro, Represented by its Secretary Mra. Khurshid Ern Ahsan; Bangladesh National Women Lawyers’ Association (SNWLA) Represented by its Executive Director, Advocate Salma Aftab; British High Commission in Bangladesh, Represented by its Deputy High Commissioner Mr. Stephen Turner; Cospi Represented by Its Country Director; Dr. Alessandra Ferr; Mr. Mahfuz Anam, Editor and Publisher, Dhaka Central Rotary Club, Represented by its President for the time being, Mr. Shawkat Hossain, Bangladesh Jatiyo Mahila Sangstha Represented by its present Chairman, Mrs. Ivy Rahman; Nari Pokkho represented by its member, Ms. Nasreen Huq.

Pragjyoti

Nasreen Huq

Nasreen Pervin Huq (1958-2008), fondly known as Nasreen Huq to her colleagues, comrades, friends & foes as well, is one of the trailblazers in Bangladesh’s history of women activists for social justice. After graduating with a Bachelor’s degree in Biology, Nasreen Huq went on to do her Master’s in Nutrition at University of California, Berkeley. After completion, she got back to the country in 1987 with a mission to contribute to the national development. She started working with Naripokkho on Women Health, Rights, Advancement & helped nurture voice heard from grassroots to international level to prevent maternal mortality & morbidity. From 1995, Nasreen Huq pioneered combating acid violence in Bangladesh. And, following this, in 1996, Acid Survivors Foundation came into being.

Nasreen Huq was one of the founding members of Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF). ASF made a significant progress under her pivotal role. In April 24, 2006 Nasreen Huq met a fatal accident & breathed her last. We, the ASF family, are still approved by her sudden demise. Our deepest respect for this valiant warrior of war against acid attack.

Tribute

Aftiki Roland

Aftiki Roland (1944-2004) was the General Secretary of the Arshi Union, the national women’s organisation. In 1996-97, she became a member of the National Executive Committee of the WAC (Women’s Action Committee) and the President of the Bangladesh Women’s Islamic Action Committee (BAWACO) in 1995. She was also a member of the National Women’s League and the National Women’s Commission. She was also a member of the National Women’s Commission. She was also a member of the National Women’s Commission. She was also a member of the National Women’s Commission. She was also a member of the National Women’s Commission. She was also a member of the National Women’s Commission.

Ivy Rahman

Ivy Rahman (1944-2004) was the Women’s Affairs Secretary of Bangladesh Awami League. A veteran women’s rights activist & a member of Trustee Board of Acid Survivors Foundation, Ivy Rahman embarked on active politics way back in 1996-1997. During the mass upsurge of 1968-69, historic national election of 1970 she played a pivotal role in organizing the women front for liberation war. During the tenure of 1996-2000, she started holding workshops on Family Law Reforms & made it a point to the then Govt., civil society and people at large. At that time, she was also in charge of jatiya Mahila Sangstha.

In her last 10 years, Ivy Rahman got more & more inclined to women causes. She gathered many practical knowledge about the inferior status of women in a male dominated, patriarchal political culture. Till the last day of her life, Ivy Rahman had been a close-to-heart person for the oppressed segment of society. In August 21, 2004 Ivy Rahman fell victim of the grievously attack taken place at Awami League meeting & passed away after battling for three days. We remember this gallant soul with solemn respect.
বাণী

আমি জেনে যুক্ত হয়েছি যে, এসিসি সারভায়ারস ফাউন্ডেশন (এএসএফ) এর উদ্যোগে দেশ এসিসি সারভায়ারস এর প্রথম আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন অনুষ্ঠিত হচ্ছে। এএসএফ এর ১১ম বর্ষপূর্বতে আমি ফাউন্ডেশন সংগঠনের সকলকে শুভেচ্ছায় জানাই।

এসিসি সরকার আমাদের সমন্বয়ের এক সম্প্রীতির অধ্যায়। যুক্ত; সর্বোচ্চ এসিসি সরকারের শিকার। এ ক্ষেত্রে আমাদের সকলের কার্যকরীতার প্রধান আন্তর্জাতিক অনুষ্ঠানে অংশ নেওয়াতে আমি অনুমোদন জানাই। সরকার সরকার নাতিনী এর সর্বাধিক সমকালীন মহিলাদের মধ্যে আমার আন্তর্জাতিক পরিচয়। আমি অন্য কর্মক্ষেত্রে এরকম অংশ নেওয়া আরো নায়কত্বীয় চূড়ান্ত পদক্ষেপ করবে।

এসিসি সরকার অপরাধের পরিবর্তে এবং সমাজের অধিকন্তু অঙ্গ। তাদের উপর চিরকালের পরিবর্ধন এবং সমাজ পর্যায়ের পরিবর্ধন স্তরের অন্যতম ক্ষেত্র। এই অংশে আমার কর্মক্ষেত্রে শীর্ষে আমি অবদান জানাই। এসিসি সরকার ও আত্মসংরক্ষণ পুনরুদ্ধারের পূর্বসূচী এসিসি সরকারের ফাউন্ডেশনের কর্মকর্তা প্রশিক্ষণ। এই উদ্দেশ্যে আমার অন্তর্দিক অবস্থান হাতী একবিঃ এই বছর আরো অবদান রাখতে সম্মত হবে।

আমি এসিসি সারভায়ারস ফাউন্ডেশন এবং এই সম্মেলনের সকলকে কামনা করি।

খোদা হাফেজ, বাংলাদেশ চিকিৎসা এলাকার সচিব।

মোঃ জিজিদু রহমান
বাণী

এসিড সারভাইভার্স ফাউন্ডেশন-এর ১০ বছর পূর্তিত এর সকল সফল ও কর্মীকে জানাই আন্তরিক অভিনন্দন।

এসিড সারভাইভার্স ফাউন্ডেশন বিশ্ব ১০ বছর যাবত এসিড স্বাস্থ্যের বিষয়ে পশ্চাৎবর্তী চিকিৎসার চিকিৎসা ও পুনর্নির্দেশনা কাজ সম্পত্তি ও আমরাকার সাহায্য করার সাহায্য করা - যা আমাদের প্রশস্তনিত। বর্তমান সরকারও এসিড স্বাস্থ্য প্রতিরোধ ও নির্মূলনের ব্যাপারে অত্যন্ত আন্তরিক।

মূলত দুনিয়ার এসিড স্বাস্থ্যের শিকার। নারীর এলিমেন্টরি সাহায্য সম্পত্তি ও প্রতিরোধ করার মাধ্যমে সমাজের অসুস্থ অঙ্ক করার এ অঙ্কের বাস্তবায়নে সরকারের পাশাপাশি বেসামরিত অর্থায়নসমূহ ও সমাজের সুস্থতার আন্তরিকতার হাত বাড়িয়ে দিতে হবে।

সকলের এরকম জন্য আমরা সরকারের সবপ্রধান বাংলাদেশ, জাতিগত জনক সম্প্রদায়ের শেষ প্রতিষ্ঠান এক এবং সমাজের সমস্ত স্বাভাবিক সম্পত্তিতে সম্পত্তি হবে আমাদের দৃঢ় বিশ্বাস।

আমি এসিড সারভাইভার্স ফাউন্ডেশনের উদ্যোক্তার সম্মুখে কথনা করি।

জয় বাংলাদেশ, জয় বাংলাদেশ শেখা হাফিজা
বাণী

এসিড সারভেইরস ফাউন্ডেশন এর ১০ম বর্ষ পূর্তি উপলক্ষে এসিড সারভেইরসদের প্রথম আন্তর্জাতিক সম্মেলন হচ্ছে যেনে আমি আমন্ত্রিত।

এসিডময় বাচ্চাদের চিকিৎসা, পরিবহন ও সমাজ নির্দিষ্ট করার জন্য সরকারের পাশাপাশি এসিড সারভেইরস ফাউন্ডেশন তাদের বিভিন্ন ধরনের সেবা কর্তারকে অবহেলা রেখেছে। এদের বিচার ব্যবস্থা ও আইন প্রায়োগিক সম্পর্কে আরও অধিকক্ষেত্রে জনকল্যাণমূলক করার চেষ্টা আমরা সবই একযোগে কাজ করে যাচ্ছি। এই ধর্মবাণিজ্য আইন পর্যায়ে জাতীয় এসিড নিয়ন্ত্রণ কাউন্সিল এবং জেলা পর্যায়ে জেলা এসিড নিয়ন্ত্রণ কাউন্সিল গঠন করা হয়েছে।

অনুষ্ঠানটি এসিড সহিংসতা নিষেধাজ্ঞার কমিশনে অনুষ্ঠিত হবে যেন কর্মচারি চূড়ান্ত লক্ষ সমাজের সকল শ্রেণী; শেখা নির্দেশনায় সমাজের সকল দিকের মানুষকে উদ্দেশ্য করে সহিংসতা মোকাবেলা সম্পৃক্ত করতে সক্ষম হবে এবং আমা একথানা করি।

আমি এসিড সারভেইরস ফাউন্ডেশন এর সর্বীশিয় সাক্ষাৎ করার করি।

জয় বাংলা, জয় বাংলা।

২০২৩ সালের ১৩শে জুলাই ।
(এসিডময় সারভেইরস ফাউন্ডেশন)
বাণী

এলিউড সারভেইলারস ফাউন্ডেশন' এর দশম বর্ষপূর্তি উদযাপনে আমি অতুল্য আনন্দিত।

এলিউড নিকেল একটি আনন্দিক ঘটনা। 'এলিউড সারভেইলারস ফাউন্ডেশন' এলিউড সারভেইলারস নিকেল অস্তরে মানুষের জীবনের চিকিৎসা, পরিচর্যা, সমাজে তাদের পুনরুদ্ধার ও পুনর্জীবন এবং এলিউড সারভেইলারস নিকেল করার লক্ষ্যে দীর্ঘ সময় ধরেই সফলতার সাথে কাজ করে আসছে।

সরকারি ও বেসরকারি প্রতিষ্ঠানের সেরা এজেন্টের ইনিউমেইস এলিউড নিকেল সমাজে অনেকটাই করে এসেছে। এলিউড আজার অ্যাকেই একক সমাজিক ও আর্থিক ভাবে ধর্মরক্ষণ হয়ে সামাজিকভাবে সমাজের উন্নয়নের মূলধারের তাদের নিজেদের দৃষ্টিকোণ রাখছে।

বর্তমানে সংক্রান্ত গণসাধারণে বৃদ্ধির মাধ্যমে এলিউড বিরোধী গণসমূহের আরও পাতিলিগ করলে আমার সমর্থনের প্রতীক।

আমি এলিউড সারভেইলারস ফাউন্ডেশনের সার্বিক কাজে কাজ করছি।

(এলিউড হক মোতাকা শহীদ

মীর জাহাঙ্গীর কুলী হক

চেমনা মুক্তি সংগঠন

প্রথম প্রস্তাবনা সংস্থান

প্রথম প্রস্তাবনা সংস্থান

প্রথম প্রস্তাবনা সংস্থান

প্রথম প্রস্তাবনা সংস্থান

প্রথম প্রস্তাবনা সংস্থান
Message

I have the utmost pleasure of welcoming you to the first 'International Conference of the Acid Survivors'. This also marks the 10th anniversary of 'Acid Survivors Foundation' in Bangladesh.

Today is 12th May 2009. Ten years ago, a unique organization was formed by a group of dedicated Bangladeshi citizens with the help of Dr. John Morrison. I was deeply honored to be its first chairperson. It would not have been possible for ASF to come into existence without the support of UNICEF and CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency).

The 'acid attack' issue was first noticed in 1998 when late Noreen Huq and Nargiokho had identified it during their regular monitoring project on violence against women. It took us three years to break the silence! The contribution of late Ivy Rahman (our Founder Board Member) during this time, will always be deeply acknowledged. She had always inspired us to work tirelessly in order to achieve our goal.

Within the first three years of its inception, ASF's prevention activities had been able to stop the rising trend of acid violence in Bangladesh. Since then the downward trend has been continuing and the annual total number of acid violence in Bangladesh is much less than what it would have been without any intervention!

ASF has been helping thousands of victims of acid violence with medical, legal and social reintegration support. This has been possible only because of invaluable contributions from many distinguished people and organizations, both at home and abroad.

The success of ASF in Bangladesh has stimulated formation of similar entities around the globe. Currently, there are newly-formed ASF in India, Pakistan, Nepal, Cambodia and Uganda.

We are immensely happy to see our sister organizations here with us today to celebrate the courage of acid survivors worldwide. I wish all the success to the first 'International Conference of the Acid Survivors'.

Kazi Fazlur Rahman
Founder Chairperson, Acid Survivors Foundation, Bangladesh

তথ্যসূত্র

এলিসে সারাইকাঙ্য ফরাইনেশন-এর পক্ষ থেকে সকলকে আজ্ঞাতি করা। এলিসে সারাইকাঙ্য কাউন্সিল-এর প্রশাসন তথ্য প্রকৌশল এবং এলিসে সারাইকাঙ্য প্রথম আধুনিক সংস্থা। এলিসে সারাইকাঙ্য কাউন্সিল-এর প্রশাসন সারাইকাঙ্য, সমাজী সারাইকাঙ্য লেখকদের প্রতিষ্ঠান, সেন্ট সারাইকাঙ্য সারাইকাঙ্য, সেন্ট আইল্যান্ডস সারাইকাঙ্য, প্রশাসন এবং এলিসে সারাইকাঙ্যের সাহায্য সকলকে অভিনব করে।

সারাইকাঙ্য সংস্থার একটি সারাইকাঙ্য বিষয় সারাইকাঙ্য অপারেশন সারাইকাঙ্য কোম্পানি সারাইকাঙ্য রায়া। যে একজন সারাইকাঙ্য মুখ্য সারাইকাঙ্য সারাইকাঙ্য সারাইকাঙ্য শাখা। প্রশাসন এলিসে সারাইকাঙ্য কাউন্সিল-এর সাহায্য সারাইকাঙ্য করে। প্রশাসন এলিসে সারাইকাঙ্য ফরাইনেশন-এর সাহায্য সারাইকাঙ্য কাউন্সিল-এর সাহায্য সারাইকাঙ্য করে।

এলিসে সারাইকাঙ্য ফরাইনেশন-এর মাধ্যমে সারাইকাঙ্য শুধুমাত্র সারাইকাঙ্য অনুমতি প্রদান করে। প্রশাসন এলিসে সারাইকাঙ্য কাউন্সিল-এর সাহায্য সারাইকাঙ্য করে।

আমাদের আশ্চর্য এবং এলিসে সারাইকাঙ্য শুধুমাত্র সারাইকাঙ্য কাউন্সিল-এর সাহায্য সারাইকাঙ্য করে। প্রশাসন এলিসে সারাইকাঙ্য ফরাইনেশন-এর মাধ্যমে সারাইকাঙ্য অনুমতি প্রদান করে।
I would like to send you my greetings on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the foundation of the Acid Survivors Foundation. I recall very clearly my visit to your Rehabilitation Centre on my visit to Bangladesh in 2002, when I met staff, trustees and survivors and was much impressed with the dedication of everyone in helping the survivors with medical treatment, rehabilitation, legal and moral support and other services. I understand since then you have gone on to develop a very successful prevention campaign.

I would like to congratulate everyone at ASF on their achievements. Not only do you continue to provide first-class services but the number of attacks has declined dramatically. Bangladesh is notable in that your successive Governments have acknowledged the problem of acid violence and worked with you to initiate effective action to combat it. This is a great credit to you all.

I know that acid violence is not confined to Bangladesh but is present in a number of other countries and that Acid Survivors Foundations based on your model have been established in Uganda, Cambodia, Pakistan, India and Nepal. Acid violence is a subject that is difficult to highlight, prevent and treat. Your expertise will have been of inestimable value to these organisations and the individuals whose lives they have saved and changed.

To trustees, staff and survivors of ASF I send my congratulations on your achievements and wish you success in your future endeavours to end the problem of acid violence.

A message from Her Royal Highness, Princess Anne
Background of Acid Survivors Foundation

I was horrified at what I discovered. Acid violence is one of the most terrible forms of violence against women. My initial voluntary work soon turned into a full-time commitment.

Dr. Jhon Morrison

Firstly, I would like to send my personal congratulations to all the trustees, staff and survivors at ASF on the occasion of your 10th anniversary. And secondly, I send you greetings as chair of the Acid Survivors Trust International (ASTI) in London. I thought it might be interesting to recall how I became involved in both ASF and ASTI.

I came to Bangladesh in 1997 to be with my wife, Dr. Terri Kelly, on her appointment as senior education advisor for the UK's Department for International Development at the British High Commission in Dhaka. Shortly after arriving in Dhaka a film was made about acid violence and shown in several western countries and offers of help came to the British High Commission from countries overseas. I offered, as a volunteer, to co-ordinate those offers of help. The first major piece of practical action was to send six survivors to Spain for plastic surgery. From these very early days Dr. AJM Salleh & Dr. SL Ser at Dhaka Medical College Hospital and the late Ms. Nusrat Huq of Naripokkho gave practical, professional help and guidance. This was my introduction to the problem of acid violence. I was horrified at what I discovered. Acid violence is one of the most terrifying forms of violence against women. My initial voluntary work soon turned into a full-time commitment.

Naripokkho was working on this issue as an aspect of domestic violence against women - before my first involvement but, after due consultation, those of us involved in the issues agreed that a single-issue, focused and dedicated NGO could be very effective in providing the specialized, dedicated responses required. Pre-eminent amongst the first activists was the ASF founder, and first Chair, Mr. Kazi Fazur Rahman. Two international organisations who gave considerable help in forming ASF were UNICEF and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

ASF was launched as a new NGO at the Press Club on 12th May 1999 and I was deeply honoured to be asked to become the first executive director. The first major problem was the lack of financial resources. ASF had no money whatsoever. What we did have was an office and administrative support from CIDA. As we got our message that we were working on the problem of acid violence the response from the people of Bangladesh was tremendous. Fund raising events were held, people, the garment industry helped and UNICEF staff association came to our aid. One woman sent 95 taka in a used, brown envelope saying that this was all she had in her purse but we would use it to help women acid attack survivors. This response encouraged us. We gradually grew.

After six months we opened our first "Tikana," a 20 bed nursing and rehabilitation unit in a house provided by the British High Commission (and furnished and equipped by the British Women's Association). The trustees determined that ASF would not only provide medical aid but also legal and rehabilitation services. It would also work to prevent acid attacks.

ASF developed and succeeded because of the way in which it worked with other organization. Dhaka Medical College Hospital was a partner from the beginning as were NGO's involved in human rights issues. The international donor community also began to help and without the major grants from them ASF would not have been able to expand to have its own 40 bed hospital unit, a thriving Tikana and a legal and rehabilitation team.

The major challenge faced by ASF was how to stop acid attacks. When I left Bangladesh in 2002 to accompany my wife on her new posting to Uganda there were almost 500 people attacked each year. And the number was growing. A major prevention campaign was started with the Government leading the way by introducing new laws. Many important celebrities from the third world of show business, TV, theatre and sport joined the prevention campaign. The Press was tremendous, with The Daily Star in particular mobilising its readers. That campaign has been a great success.

It was with great sadness that my wife and I left Bangladesh in 2002 after five of the most stimulating and enjoyable years of our life. What I did not expect to find when we arrived in Uganda was acid violence. I worked with others to start the Acid Survivors Foundation - Uganda based on the model of ASF in Bangladesh. I came to understand that acid violence is not just a Bangladesh problem but is a hidden form of violence against women in many countries and is, in fact, a worldwide problem. There are now Acid Survivors Foundations in Uganda, Pakistan, Cambodia, India and Nepal. Those ASPf's have been helped by a British NGO in London that I helped to start, the Acid Survivors Trust International (ASTI). ASTI raises resources and helps support the ASPf's by, for example, recruiting and funding assignments of surgeons and nurses to visit the countries.

ASF has, then, become an example of what can be achieved in the struggle against acid violence. It has inspired and provided a model for other countries. ASF should be very proud of what it has achieved in ten years. It is not only ASF that should be proud but so too should the people and Government of Bangladesh. They acknowledged and recognised that they had a problem and mobilised to overcome it. The fact that acid attacks have been reduced by over 75% since their peak year of 2002 is a tremendous credit to the trustees, staff, survivors and people of Bangladesh. I congratulate you. I look forward to the day in the not too distance future when acid attacks have all but been eliminated from this beautiful country.

My wife, Terri, and I regarded it as a privilege to work in Bangladesh. It is also an honour that we gratefully appreciate to be invited to share the 10th anniversary with you. We wish continuing success.

Dr. Jhon Morrison: Founder Executive Director, ASF Bangladesh & Executive Chairperson, Acid Survivors Trust International, UK.
Mark Lowcock

BANGLADESH'S election was a great achievement: free, fair and even festive, with a massive voter turnout. But, as I return to this remarkable country after four years, what sticks in my mind are the vivid images, flashed across our screens, of women queuing patiently to vote on that chilly December day. Of the 82 million Bangladeshis that were registered as voters, 41 million were women: hugely impressive for any country.

This was a powerful symbol of women's advances in Bangladesh during the last 10 years. And there's more. Birth rates have halved, the gender gap in infant mortality and education has narrowed or closed altogether; microcredit has improved both the status of women and their earning potential. Large numbers are finding opportunities in garment factories.

To meet the potential of half a nation's citizens, these are important steps. But this is a long staircase to climb. It's a harder climb when, in Bangladesh one woman dies from childbirth every hour of every day; when girls in Bangladesh are five times more likely than boys to drop out of school at grade one. This potential is untapped while half of all women remain illiterate and women trail dramatically in pay rates and property-ownership; one in five female-headed households in Bangladesh earns less than Tk 28 per person per day.

And the plight of violence against women grows uglier. That it is commonplace does not mean we can turn a blind eye. It's perhaps the most widespread and tolerated denial of all human rights. Scarcely credible that in the 21st century, among women aged 19-44 worldwide, domestic violence accounts for more death and ill-health than war, traffic accidents or cancer.

In the UK one in four women will be the victim of domestic violence at some point in their lives. It claims the lives of two women in my country every week. And it costs those victims' employers and the state in the UK billions of pounds a year.

In Bangladesh, fewer than half of all women report feeling safe going out alone, even in their own neighbourhood. And in a recent study more than half of women questioned in Dhaka reported at least one incidence of physical or sexual violence in their lifetime.

Let us be in no doubt: the punching, the kicking, the raping, the isolating, the mocking and the killing that shame us all is the world's most substantial and insidious brake on human development. Change can come. Last Wednesday I met survivors of acid violence particularly appalling and horrifying crime. The Acid Survivors Foundation (ASF) is doing amazing and inspiring work providing support to thousands of women and children who have been victims. Equally important is tackling the causes and dealing with the perpetrators. Acid attacks have fallen significantly in recent years in Bangladesh as a result of the work of the ASF, supported by the media, the justice system and government leaders. Other gender problems can be tackled in the same way.

A democratic government with a convincing mandate can achieve a lot. Promoting women to prestigious positions and increasing the number of reserved seats in Parliament are important steps to raise the profile of women in Bangladesh. Delivering on the National Policy on Women's Empowerment, approving the new Domestic Violence Bill and ensuring that victims of violence achieve fair justice and equal treatment will help women to realise their rights as human beings and citizens of this country.

But there's more for us all. The British Government will make better lives for women and girls a priority in our partnership with Bangladesh. Can Bangladesh's women expect that there are more changes for the better on their way?

Mark Lowcock is Director General, Country Programmes in the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and is responsible for DFID's programmes in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Middle East and Latin America. He visited Bangladesh for the fourth time, January 19-23, 2009.

Courtesy: Daily Star, 25-01-09

Felicitations

Dr. Ronald William Hiles OBE, FRCS

Dr. Hiles is a retired Consultant Plastic and Reconstructive Surgeon. He has been a part-time volunteer in South Asia over the past 23 years, working and training local surgeons. He was closely involved with ASF Bangladesh from its inception. He is a former President of the British Association of Plastic Surgeons (BAPS) and the British Society for Surgery of the Hand (BSSH). Dr. Hiles was appointed an Officer of the Order of The British Empire (OBE) in the Queen's Birthday Honours in June 2004 for his services to Bangladesh. On the eve of ASF’s 10th Anniversary, we express our deepest respect & gratitude to Dr. Hiles on behalf of country's acid survivors and activists.

Dr. Hiles with Dujjoy & Shima

Bubly - Enjoying her second lease of life for Dr. Hiles

Pg-11
Monira Rahman

After a long journey of ten years, they got their bravery back. The agony: stored inside their heart which was seemed as a never ending path of pain, has been wiped down, and the inner roar got defused. They have grasped their own sky again that was captured by severe emotional sufferings and massive physical struggle. Finally they won against the acid violence.

Acid violence is a particularly vicious and damaging form of violence in Bangladesh, wherein acid is thrown especially on the face to destroy the life of a person. As a consequence survivors have to face social isolation and ostracism, which damages their self-esteem and seriously undermines their professional and personal future. Nitric or sulphuric acid has a catastrophic effect. It causes skin tissue to melt, often exposing bones and sometimes even dissolving bones. When acid attacks eyes, it damages them permanently. Sometimes only leaves vacant holes. No one can ever get back the former look. The overwhelming majority of victims are women and nearly half are below 18 Years of age.

The root cause for acid violence is patriarchy. The immediate reasons are many:

- Refusal of marriage or sexual advances
- Dowry demands and other kind of domestic issues
- Land and properly related disputes
- Desire for revenge

With growing concern of acid violence the Acid Survivors Foundation was formed on 12 May 1999 with an aim to help the survivors of acid attack to rebuild their lives and stop acid violence by the year 2015.

Notification and referral services:

When ASF started there was no official data available on acid attack. ASF in partnership with BRAC developed a nation wide notification system to identify every acid attack within 24 hours, investigate their situation and bring them to ASF Hospital within 48 hours to provide comprehensive services including medical care, legal assistance and social reintegration services.

Medical Treatment:

People attacked with acid need complicated, lengthy and expensive treatment. There is only one hospital in the public sector which has 50-bed capacity to treat all types of Burns. In a country with population of 150 million it is a drop in the ocean. More over the treatment in public hospital is not fully free. To supplement government facility, ASF runs a 20-bed hospital where victim of acid violence receives first class medical burn management including plastic and reconstructive surgery completely free. Every year nearly 600 acid victims receive burn management, plastic and reconstructive surgery in ASF Hospital.

ASF also brings volunteer plastic surgeons from around the world to work with their Bangladeshi colleagues to develop indigenous capacity to ensure that the survivors have access to best available medical care in country. Acid attacks not only affect physical health but also severely damage their psychological wellbeing. Before they could grasp what’s happening they find their life to be total wreck. In our appearance obsessed society it is no wonder that acid survivors suffer a loss of identity. ASF provides basic counselling, psychotherapy and psychiatric treatment and peer counselling too, so that the survivors can cope with their changed situation. ASF also arranges music and art therapy especially for child victim to ventilate their emotions. This also very effective for children whose mother is victim of acid attack ASF also provides safe and secured environment for the survivors to share their experiences and to get strength from each other. Once the survivors accept their physical condition, they are able to start rebuilding their life.

Social reintegration and economic rehabilitation Services:

Economic independence is vitally important to enable survivors to confidently manage their lives and gain respect from their family, their peers and community. During treatment ASF provides financial assistance to the family to overcome the immediate crisis of the acid attack. When the first phase of treatment is over the survivors are fetched for sustainable economic rehabilitation, ASF arranges skill development training and finds suitable employment for them, provides financial aid to establish income generation schemes and stipend to continue their education.

ASF provides social skills development training, life skills training and leadership training to the survivors to facilitate transformation of ‘victim’ to ‘survivor’ and some as ‘activists’. ASF also works on socio cultural aspect on what survivors are discriminated due to facial disfigurement. Peer educators visit door to door to identify psychosocial needs of the acid survivors and their family and educate community to develop psychosocial support group at community level to support victim of gender based violence.
Legal Services:
ASF is committed to ensure survivors have better access to the legal justice system. It is often found that survivors and their families face serious difficulties in attaining legal recourse. Their poverty and ignorance about the complex legal procedure, inefficient legal system combined with unsympathetic or corrupt officials have led to poor result from the legal system. ASF’s legal intervention includes coordinating among the NGOs that provides legal aid, police, public prosecutors and complainants. ASF also organizes legal training and education programme for lawyers, judges, Police and local journalists. ASF worked closely with the government of Bangladesh to review and revise laws. As a result Government passed two laws named Acid Control Act 2002 and Acid Crime Control Act 2002. Moreover ASF plays an active role, as a member of the national Acid Control Council to ensure that acid laws are effectively implemented.

As a result of ASF’s active participation in NACC, a central monitoring cell has been established under the Police Headquarters to monitor progress of acid laws. Government of Bangladesh also developed a Uniformed Medical Certificate format for acid victims which plays crucial role in the court to prove the case. Due to ASF’s effective advocacy and lobby, for the first time the acid laws have considered holistic approach to address violence against women issue.

Prevention:
ASF works with socio-political forces to create a successful prevention campaign which lead to significant reduction of acid attacks. The number of acid attack was increasing at the rate of 40% each year up until 2002. ASF could stop the rising trend of acid violence in Bangladesh within three years from the inception of ASF. Since then the trend is continuing and the annual total number of acid violence in Bangladesh is much less than what it would have been without any intervention. This achievement also goes to ASF’s local, national and international partners, friends and supporters equally. ASF has made the issue as a matter of urgent public concern pulled the attention of government and potential sectors of civil society.

ASF continues motivating all possible sectors across the country expecting conscious citizens as fellow-soldiers. In this movement, for the first time in Bangladesh ASF mobilizes thousands of men and boys marching on the street on International Women Day taking oath to stop violence against women. A cross section of men including eminent citizens, artists, intellectuals, right activists, business leaders, media personnel, and celebrities have engaged themselves in this endeavor.

ASF organizes local and national campaigns and develops materials to support the campaigns. As a part of media advocacy ASF has introduced media award to honor the journalists for their contribution to the cause as without media support it would not have been possible for ASF to mount a social movement against acid violence. Similarly ASF facilitated formation of a celebrities’ forum named Star Against Acid Thrower. The celebrities’ commitment is reflected in their efforts to leave a positive impact on beliefs, attitude, and behavior pattern towards women and girls of the young populace. The theme slogan of celebrities’ forum is ‘Real man doesn’t forest acid’. SAW, a students’ network at schools across the country, was set up by ASF. It keeps up its work by peer education and to marshal those willing to contribute to putting an end to acid crimes. To prevent effects of acid attack, ASF runs a campaign called use water save life to make people aware of what to do immediately after an acid attack. This campaign has resulted early recovery and less disfigurement.

In partnership with Ministry of Health, ASF implements Essential Burn Care Course for medical professionals to decentralize burn treatment facility around the country. Building capacity of partners, youth groups, and community people to deal with acid violence is one of the major challenges confronting ASF. The major themes to educate peoples are basic education about the root causes of acid violence, its combating strategy, peaceful conflict resolution, responsibility as a citizen and dealing with psychological panorama of an acid survivor.

To control illegal use of acid, ASF works with District Acid Control Committees, member of the Union Parishad acid users association and community. Acid Survivors are actively engaged in raising social awareness, sensitizing professionals and making government and civil society responsive to help the survivors of acid violence to rebuild their lives and stop acid violence by 2015. Seeing the success of the ASF, many other countries like India, Pakistan, Cambodia and Uganda has formed similar organization.

ASF has gain reputation in country and abroad for its tremendous success in reducing the number of acid violence and building institutional capacity to provide services to survivors. When we started the number of acid attack was increasing every year. The average increase per year was 33 percent. If this increasing trend would continue the number of attack may cause 462 people attacked with acid in the year 2008. The actual number of acid attacked person in 2008 was 176. This statistics inspire us to work harder to make it possible that acid violence is eliminated from Bangladesh by the year 2016.

Monira Rahman
Executive Director, Acid Survivors Foundation
ASF IN SNAPSHOTS

International Women's Day 2009: TV Talk Shows

ASF Media Award

ASF Ball & Fund Raising
ASF IN SNAPSHOT

International Women's Day 2009: Partners Men Rally & Gathering

JJS, Khulna
SUMS, Sirajgonj
RDRS, Dinajpur
JCF, Jessore
Light House, Bogra
SUS, Netrokona
Agrogoi, Sakhira
Charontbil Network, Pabna
PAPRI, Noshingdi
COAST, Bhola
AID Comilla, Comilla
Men Gathering, Khulna

Workshop & Training

Attorney Officials Meeting
Training Workshop with Police Officials & Journalists
Participating Journalists
Participating Police Officials
National Conference of the Acid Survivors 2006 & 2008
ASF IN SNAPSHOTS

During Cyclone SIDR & Flooding
- Survivor Afia and her family in front of damaged house
- Survivor Rosha and her husband in front of damaged house
- Damaged Kitchen
- Relief Initiative

Star Against Acid Thrower (SAAT)

In performance, going beyond the plight
End of a family  

**Death toll from acid-laden truck accident now 18**

**TRAGEDY**

**Mahbuba Zannai**

The parents of two-month-old Ahnaf Imliaz, who died in November 18 from his acid burns, succumbed to their burns on Saturday night and yesterday afternoon at Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH). Ahnaf along with his father Ahnaf Ali and mother Shoiri Akhter sustained serious burn injuries when an acid-laden truck collided with a bus on Dhaka-Chittagong Highway in Comilla on November 6.

The father was not told that his son had passed away and Shoiri did not know that her son and husband had died. The death toll in the accident now stands at 18 and five victims are still struggling for their lives at the burn unit. "How can we claim that we live in a civilised society when we have to see such tragic deaths of an entire family," said project director of the Burn and Plastic Surgery Unit of DMCH Dr. Samantalal Sen, who treated the family along with seven others.

"Shoiri and Arif got married on November 18 last year... Perhaps they had dreamt of having a happy family woven with love and care," he added. "Will you just keep on writing, sister? Would you not do anything for us? What was our fault? Why have we to suffer in such a way?" These were her last words to this correspondent. The couple was moving to Chittagong to start a fresh life but the bus carrying them was rammed by an acid-laden truck in Comilla. Ten passengers died on the spot while others were brought to DMCH burn unit with severe injuries. Even though 17 days have passed, the government is yet to arrest the culprits who were transporting acid in such an unsafe way. Deputy Commissioner of Comilla Manjurul Rahman told The Daily Star that the report of the investigation committee, formed after the accident, was sent to the Ministry of

Home Affairs on Friday. The committee in the report concluded that the truck was carrying the acid without taking proper safety measures. "Nasir Chemical Industry of Sholidinganj in Narayanganj was transporting the barrels of acid and we are trying to arrest the criminals," said Officer-in-charge of Burichanga Police Station Anwar Hossain. He said a case was filed with Comilla Police Station on November 12 and they have added an account of Acid Control Act violation in the case. Due to lack of implementation of law and absence of monitoring mechanism, every year a significant number of people including women and children suffer acid burns and die tragic deaths. Even though two laws have been enacted in 2002 to control acid and acid crime, acid violence and acid-related accidents are taking place, rights activists say.

The government has little or no monitoring mechanism for this. There are district committees in every district under the National Acid Control Council which are not that active. In some cases, the deputy commissioner does not even know how many people of his district are involved in using, selling and transporting acid, said Executive Director of Acid Survivors Foundation Monirah Rahman. "Before getting licences for acid using, selling and transporting, people pledge to maintain utmost security. They, however, do not follow up receiving the licences and as we do not have strong monitoring system, we do not know who are violating the law," Mohammad Zafar Rahman, deputy commissioner of Dhaka, told The Daily Star.

Courtesy: Daily Star, 24-11-08
Psychological Consequence of Victims of Acid Violence

Dr. M. Mahmudur Rahman

Acid violence causes not only physical injury to a victim, but also produces severe form of psychological damage to the person. Whenever there is an acid attack on an individual, we all get angry on the attacker and feel sorry for the victim. We then try for legal action against the attacker and medical treatment, followed by economic help to the victim, as a form of rehabilitation programme.

The question is, are these the only needs of the acid survivors? Whenever one’s body is attacked by acid or any other means, it also does create mark on the mind. As mind gets damaged due to such attack, we need to take care of such wounded mind, along with medical treatment of the body, plus legal action and economic rehabilitation.

Mind is an invisible entity as well as a phenomenon. We can see one’s body and try to provide physical treatment. But very few of us can see an injured mind. Some of us can feel the injury of a victim’s mind, but we usually can’t think how to help or treat such an injured or affected mind. Because of invisible nature of our mind, which plays very vital role behind the scene, we get used to miss the mind issues, and only put priority on the visible matters like medical treatment of the injured body, restoration of the order in society by punishing the criminal, and rehabilitation of the victim by economic emasculation.

What are the mind issues in case of acid attack? Mind issues works in two phases: before the acid attack and after the acid attack. Before the acid attack, we will find two minds or two groups of minds: in conflict: one side is potential victim(s) and the other side is potential perpetrator(s). If we can understand the psychological process of the victim(s) and the perpetrator(s) before the acid attack, probably we can reduce a large number of acid attacks by adopting some decisive psychological preventive strategies, to stop occurrences of worst forms of human violence, like acid attack. We are not yet concerned about such psychological preventive strategies against acid attack.

Now let’s try to understand the psychological consequences of an acid attack on the mind of the victim. Mind is a fragile entity, and unlikely to remain intact after an acid attack. Common forms of psychological damage after the acid attack to a victim are: acute stress, extreme anxiety expressed in the form of fear, severe depression expressed in the form of hopelessness, physical pain due to psychological stress, fatigue and lack of initiative due to extreme helplessness, inner conflict and guilty feeling resulting in extreme sense of discomfort, sleep disturbance, adjustment problem due to post traumatic stress disorder, low self-esteem, difficulty to accept self, suicidal ideation and suicidal attempt out of anger or extreme sadness. The victim’s personality might get totally damaged due to dissociative disorder (fragmented self) or schizophrenia (a thought disorder with complete breakdown of one’s personality). Life becomes unbearable with such kind of psychological problems, which are pathologies of a victim mind. Any amount of socio-economic, legal or even medical support can’t compensate for the need for psychological support required for an acid victim.
When we agree that an acid victim have psychological problems, question is how to assess the nature and extent of damage done to the person. This requires mental state examination and psychological assessment by appropriate professionals, capable of handling mental illness and mental health problems. After assessment of the mental state and degree of psychological damage done to the acid victim, the task is then to start appropriate intervention strategies on the victim, for the correction, repairing, and healing the wound, within the mind of the victim. Depending on the case, such task is quite difficult one, where a psychiatrist would require for severe cases with psychotic symptoms, and a clinical psychologist would be an appropriate professional for a case suffering from severe psychological problems as mentioned earlier. In Bangladesh we do have psychiatrists, but clinical psychologists are still a "new species", not yet available in Government Hospitals at district level, which is highly essential. Without the professional support of clinical psychologists and in some cases, the psychiatrists, the mental recovery of an acid victim would be significantly delayed, and the person will have to bear the burden, and face extra sufferings in his/her life. Just simple common sense counseling can't compensate the need for proper mental health care for the acid victims.

Finally, I would, therefore, recommend that the psychological service system for the acid victims, or any other forms of violence victim, be renamed as "mental health care", rather than "counseling service", as "counseling" is just one aspect of total mental health care, for the acid victims or any other forms of violence.

Dr. M. Mahmudur Rahman
Professor and Former Chairman, Department of Clinical Psychology, Dhaka University
Irene Khan

As a citizen of Bangladesh, I feel proud that Monira Rahman comes from my country. As a woman, I feel privileged to pay tribute to a woman activist who has shown extraordinary courage, vision and leadership in defending the rights of women survivors of violence. And I am humbled by the extraordinary courage of Asma Akter and other women survivors of acid attacks. Think of the courage of this young girl from a remote town in Bangladesh; think of the strength of spirit that she has, to rebuild her life with hope and optimism.

Monira and the Acid Survivors Foundation have exposed one of the most cowardly and cruel forms of violence against women in the world. Acid attacks disable, disable and blind women for life, destroying their chances of studying, working, marrying and leading a normal life. A moment's act by a man becomes a lifetime's suffering for a woman, for no reason except that she has angered him or dared to stand up to him. Unfortunately, what is happening in Bangladesh is just one part of a much bigger picture of violence against women which touches almost every corner of the world. According to one survey, one in three women in the world - an estimated one billion women - are a victim of serious violence or coerced sex. Violence against women takes many different forms, from the bedroom to the battlefield. It begins even before birth with sex-selective abortion, continues with female infanticide, abuse of young girls, female genital mutilation, rape and beatings by partners, sexual harassment at work, and trafficking of women and girls for sexual exploitation. In some parts of the world, women are killed by their own family in the name of honour. In some countries, brides are burnt to death because they have failed to bring a good dowry. In countries suffering from armed conflict, women and girls are raped as a part of a military strategy to terrorize, subordinate and uproot people. I have seen the women in Darfur, Sudan, in Gambia and India, etc.

All these examples seem very remote to us, as we sit here in Berlin, in the heart of Western Europe. But violence against women is not just a problem that happens over there. It also happens here in Germany, as in other western countries. Every day, women are battered and beaten in their own homes. According to the Council of Europe, domestic violence is the major cause of death and disability for women in Europe between the ages of 16 and 44 years. It accounts for more deaths and injury than cancer or traffic accidents.

Why does violence against women happen?

Three major causes are inequality, impunity, and apathy. First, inequality. In too many countries of the world, laws, policies and practices discriminate against women, denying them equality with men politically, economically and socially. That creates an environment in which women are treated with contempt, their voices are suppressed, and their rights are trampled.
Such an environment breeds violence against women. Even in countries where the laws grant equality, social roles reinforce the power of men over women's lives and bodies. In many societies, religious practices, tradition and custom tolerate and sometimes even encourage violence against women. Secondly, impunity. Violence against women happens because those who commit these crimes know that they can get away with it. Very often governments turn a blind eye to gender violence. 79 countries in the world have no laws on domestic violence, 127 countries have no laws against sexual harassment, only 16 countries have laws that specifically criminalise domestic violence. Few perpetrators are brought to justice and even fewer convicted. Rape has the lowest conviction rate among serious crimes: worldwide it is only 10%. In Bangladesh, those who commit acid attacks are rarely prosecuted and punished. Only one in ten perpetrators is brought to justice.

Thirdly, and most damningly, apathy. As a society we are too ready to find excuses for violence against women. We remain silent when we should be outraged. We talk a lot about the War on Terror but not enough about the War on Women. Hundreds of women have been attacked with acid in Bangladesh. Nothing can be more visible than their injury. Nothing can be more shameful than the fact that it still continues to happen. There was universal outrage against racial apartheid in South Africa - yet we remain silent in the face of gender apartheid in Saudi Arabia which permits high levels of violence against women. We turn a blind eye to the dangerous backlash of conservative and fundamentalist forces which are seeking to roll back women's human rights in many parts of the world. And when we see our family member, neighbor or our friend with bruises on her arms, our first thought is, why does she stay with him, when really we should be asking, why is he getting away with it?

But society's complicity is being challenged more and more. And now, more and more. By women activists and survivors. They are confronting governments; they are questioning social norms and the unequal status of women; they are demanding justice and an end to impunity. These women are working in difficult and often personal risk. Monira Rahman is one of these brave women. She has challenged society’s complicity. She has exposed injustice, and, even more importantly, she has given hope to the survivors. As Monira, too, we in Amnesty International are determined to eradicate violence against women. That is why two years ago, Amnesty International launched a worldwide campaign to Stop Violence Against Women. The key message of our campaign is that violence against women is a human rights abuse. Human rights are universal, and women and girls have the right, like everyone else, to be free from violence. Violence against women, whether it happens in prisons or private homes, is an issue of public concern and governments cannot turn a blind eye to it. They have the duty to take all reasonable measures to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish violence against women, even when the perpetrator is a private individual. Together with women's groups around the world, Amnesty International’s campaign challenges discriminatory laws, promotes women’s human rights, fights impunity and seeks to change social attitudes.

As we pay tribute to Monira Rahman and Aasma Akhter, let us reaffirm our commitment to Stop Violence Against Women. Let us challenge social & cultural attitudes that belittle women. Let us fight for women's human rights. Let us confront those in authority and demand change. Amnesty International’s core value is international solidarity; human rights abuses anywhere must be the concern of people everywhere. We call on men as well as women around us to join the campaign to denounce and eradicate violence against women. Violence against women is widespread but it is not inevitable - it can and must be stopped. Yesterday’s impossibility is today’s reality. The logo of Amnesty International’s campaign to Stop Violence Against Women is the Hand - it is in our hands to make a difference. Let’s make that pledge. Let’s raise our hands to stop violence against women.

Irene Khan
Secretary General, Amnesty International

Courtsey: Prothom Alo, 28-08-09
ঔষধ যখন সাদাকালো

আমি এমনির সময় উপলব্ধি করিয়েছি। দেখেছি ভাবাতের আর দেখেছি এমনির আরুজাত মান্যের কলো মুখে। কী বিশ্বাসের আর নিমিত্তে সে মুখে তা পেল অনুভূতি করিয়েছি। একমাত্র ভ্রুক্ষাগীর ছাদা ধানে কেউ বুঝতে বলে আমার নিশ্চিত হয় না।

নন্দন দাশগুপ্ত

নন্দন দাশগুপ্ত (নন্দন নাম ছিলো ১৮ এপ্রিল ২০০৪)। তাঁর মৃত্যু পর্যন্ত তাঁর অমর উদ্দেশ্য উপলব্ধি করেন এক মহান মানুষ। কিছু মৃত্যুর পূর্ব পর্যন্ত তাঁর মানুষের সঙ্গে জীবনের যোগ্য উপলব্ধি করতে। তাঁর মানুষের সঙ্গে জীবনের যোগ্য উপলব্ধি করতে। তাঁর মানুষের সঙ্গে জীবনের যোগ্য উপলব্ধি করতে। তাঁর মানুষের সঙ্গে জীবনের যোগ্য উপলব্ধি করতে। তাঁর মানুষের সঙ্গে জীবনের যোগ্য উপলব্ধি করতে।

Nayan Kalayan

The day was 16th April 2008. It was night, about 11 o’clock. Suddenly I was attacked by acid. It is the most painful and terrible day I have ever had in my life. My body had been burning and melting. It was an unbearable pain. I ran to the roadway. Some people were gossiping over there whom I was familiar with. I called them to save me, I told them, my body had been burning. They brought me in Dhaka Medical College Hospital (DMCH).

I was laying on a trolley in emergency department and fidgeting due to unbearable pain. People gathered around me. Everybody was watching my deadly struggle and felt the same except the hospital authority. They were seemed human being with no feeling. My mother came to me at that moment. I was screaming, ‘kill me or do something so that I can die right there’. My mother was crying and appealing to the doctors to save her son’s life. I don’t know what happened after that. So far I can remember, when I got my sense back and opened my eyes, I saw my mother besides me. Everybody was advising her to file a case. My mother went to the Police Station.

Case was filed. Investigator Officer (I.O.) was appointed. Investigation took place. I.O. tried to investigate as much as he could make it proper. He collected all evidences and arranged all witnesses and presented it before the Court. The accused persons were arrested. Attendance in the court and my treatment were continuing simultaneously. I got operated in DMCH; one after another. Wound became infectious and again operation. 2/3 operations were done over me. These were with so much pain and so many expenses. Everything had to be bought from outside hospital. One day, an ASF staff named Bachihu met me and told me about ASF. He handed some documents on ASF to me to know about the organization. He informed me that ASF provided treatment free of cost. After treatment they also provided support for rehabilitation. I could not trust him at the first place. I was curious that what their interest was. My suspicion over Bachihu was defused later. I realized that their interest to serve humanity, to stay beside the victimized and destitute people. After one and half months treatment, DMCH discharged me. And Bachihu brought me in ASF. I stayed there 3 months more. During the period I got number of operations. I was impressed getting their quality care. It seemed that human is for human really. During my days in ASF, I came to know that my opposition filed a case against me and police was looking for me for arresting.
I was not in that health condition to move, though I had to go to the court by ambulance. The Judge gave me bail seeing my condition. After getting bit well! I was back to home. I felt my home, my bed, my corridor; everything appeared as stranger to me; a cry wanted to come out from deep my heart; but I could not cry due to my mother. My mother used to love me. I said 'used to' as because she could not bear the pain for her son. After few days of my attack she passed away caused by heart attack. My sufferings were extended more. I became telling 'Two cases are running simultaneously. I became boreed going through the hospital, court and operation repeatedly and felt irritation in leading life; but I had to alive to continue the case. At least, I wanted justice.

Both cases were in the hand of same Public Prosecutor and both to be judged by the same Judge. I was worried that how do I expect justice in this situation. Moreover the PP was unwilling to attend the court without bringing. The judgment of both cases was declared at the same time. Both of us were discharged by the judgment. What a farcical judgment? I then appealed in the High Court. I am now waiting for justice. I don't know whether I would get justice; don't know whether the criminals would be punished. There is a saying in Bangla, to show High Court a blind person. The justice system of Bangladesh is showing me the High Court in the same way. This is the scenario of treatment and judiciary system of my country.

"Let drama be a tool for life-struggle, let drama be the truth of life;" I joined the group theatre as a stage-soldier keeping this in my heart. But now I feel bad, because neither I could take the drama as a tool for life-struggle nor I could tell the life-truth on the stage. In spite of those I am still a soldier. Now I am fighting with my life, do fight against violence and acid attack and do fight in favor of humanity.

Now I am a member of ASF family. Being a member of this family my responsibility includes arranging stage and auditorium. I pass again through the same stage, same light and auditorium. I want to leave stage but stage does not leave me as because I am a stage-soldier. When a drama or cinema director organized her/his thoughts in the camera frame, she/shows the past in black and white and future with color. My thoughts are just reverse. My present and future are black & white and my past is colorful in my thinking. Now-a-days my dreams come with black and white tone. My dreams are not colorful anymore.

I have felt the pain caused by acid. I have seen the miserable deaths of acid-victims. What a frightful and cruel those deaths were, no one can ever feel it until observed.

It was told that the God does every thing for the goodness. What sorts of good-ness he provided? In one meaning it might be good. If I did not get attacked I may not have the opportunity to work with ASF. I may not be able to serve myself for the sake of humanity. In that meaning I am lucky. We have been working to stop acid violence in Bangladesh. But would it be stopped ever? In true sense, acid violence will be stopped in that day when the Government will be the Government for victimized and destitute people. In the eye of completion of 10 years of ASF and first international conference, I like to extend my greetings and congratulations to all the survivors of acid violence in the world and all workers of ASF.

- Survivor Representative
নিকায়ীতর রিপোর্টের সমাবেশ ২০০৮

ন্যাযান্ত্রিত যোগাযোগ

নাম্বারের সুপারিশগুলো ছিল:

১. অর্থনৈতিক সাহায্য
   - এদের সহায্যের জন্য সম্প্রতি অগ্নিপ্রাপ্ত কর্মক্ষেত্রের স্বরূপ অর্থহার ও কাজের উপযুক্ত প্রতিষ্ঠা করা দরকার।
   - ভূমিসহ, স্বাস্থ্য, বাড়ি ও তথ্য সংগ্রহের সম্প্রদায় ও এর প্রশিক্ষণের ক্ষেত্রের লক্ষ্যে নিয়োগ দেওয়া হয়।
   - সক্রিয়ভাবে সম্প্রদায়ের অবকাঠামো বিকাশ করা এবং সাধারণভাবে শিক্ষা দেওয়া প্রতিষ্ঠানের জন্য কোনো সমালোচনা নেই।
   - সাহায্য, সমাজসেবিত এবং প্রশিক্ষিত সম্প্রদায়ের কর্মক্ষেত্র সম্পূর্ণতা সম্পর্কে।
   - সাহায্যের জন্য পরামর্শ এবং তথ্য সংগ্রহের জন্য সমাজ, পশ্চিম এবং প্রশিক্ষিত প্রশিক্ষণ কর্মক্ষেত্র, অফিস, এবং সমাজসেবিত ও প্রশিক্ষিত প্রশিক্ষণ ব্যবহার করা ও সাহায্যের উপযুক্ত সমর্থনের জন্য।
   - সমাজ শাসনের ব্যবস্থার জন্য সমর্থনের জন্য সমাজ, পশ্চিম এবং প্রশিক্ষণ প্রশিক্ষণ কর্মক্ষেত্র।

২. সুষ্ঠুতার গুরুত্ব
   - সাইটের দৃষ্টিকোণ এবং এদের বিভিন্ন প্রশিক্ষণ ব্যবস্থা বজায় রাখার জন্য।
   - শিক্ষায় বিভিন্ন সম্প্রদায়ের সম্প্রদায়ের সমন্বয় এবং পাঠানোর দৃষ্টিকোণ এবং পাঠানোর সমন্বয় এবং পাঠানোর সমন্বয়।
   - পরিকল্পনায় একবন্ধের প্রতিষ্ঠা করা এবং ভাল কর্মক্ষেত্রের সাহায্য ও সমাজ এবং কেন্দ্রীয় ব্যবহার করা।
   - সদর বিভাগের সাহিত্য সমষ্টি এবং একত্রিত অভিজ্ঞতায় তৈরি করা হয়।
   - একবন্ধের ও অন্যতম সমাজসেবিত সাহায্যের সূচর জন্য সমর্থন ও কর্মক্ষেত্র সমন্বয়।

In the workshop, acid survivors shared their problems and sufferings and also suggested ways to make life a bit easier for them. One notable feature of these recommendations was identifying an effective strategy to implement these recommendations through participation of government, NGOs and civil society. The recommendations were as follows:

1. Economic self-reliance
   - Create skill-based employment opportunities for the acid burnt with good working environment.
   - Ensure skill development training opportunities of Youth Development, Social Welfare, Directorate of Women, Livestock Ministries and NGOs at a lower or free of cost.
   - Ensure easy accessibility in government services and introduce quota system for the acid burnt.
   - Ensure interest-free loans on easy terms and conditions from government, NGOs and other commercial institutions.
   - Ensure loans, grants, training as well as supply of necessary materials from government, NGOs, and other social and commercial organizations for projects run by acid survivors.
   - Provide Khas land on easy conditions.

2. Combat acid violence
   - Ensure strict monitoring of selling of acid including lower fees for license.
   - Find other alternatives to the use of acid.
   - Ensure sale of acid through the dealers and effective implementation of the law.
   - Include acid violence issue in the text books and ensure voice recording of the survivors during investigation.
   - Ensure neutral and practical conflict resolution roles by the local government and administration.
   - Develop materials and organize workshops by government and NGOs for building awareness of the acid sellers and users.

3. Justice
   - Document correct and proper information during case filing and ensure timely completion of trial and enquiry.
   - Ensure corruption-free roles of government officials and persons engaged in the enquiry and legal processes.
   - Take appropriate steps for rapid trial of the cases at High Court as well as in implementing the verdict.

Recommendations from the Acid Survivors' National Conference
3. Witness Protection
- The presence of the witnesses at the court should be made mandatory and security of the survivors, their family and the witness should be ensured too.
- If anyone files a case against the plaintiff of a civil case, that should be received based on proper enquiry.
- Ensure prompt action to arrest the perpetrators along with security of the defendant following the bail of the perpetrators. Take initiative so that the perpetrators cannot flee abroad and in case he does, force him to come back.
- Introduce and properly implement strong monitoring system to conduct acid cases.
- Support for filing cases through civil society and organizations.
- Encourage the witness to give testimony at the court, convince and pursue them not for not to come to terms or any settlement with the perpetrators.

4. Medical Care
- Government needs to ensure medical care for acid victims at Upazilla level.
- Civil society representatives should continue to influence the government.
- Organizations can request free treatment by the government and offer medical care for free or at a low-cost on their own.
- Provide psycho-treatment during the district level hospital and deploy survivors as counselors.
- Allocate two beds at the upazilla level hospital and provide training to the doctors and nurses.
- Cooperate to follow-up at local level through partnership and support for bearing treatment expenses.
- Bring positive change in behavior of the doctors and nurses through media and group counseling.

5. Family and Social Relationship
- Raise awareness at all levels and ensure participation of acid survivors in social activities. e.g. marriage, birthday; religious occasions.
- Discuss at different forums and meeting on women and social issues.

6. Acid Transportation
- Acid & acidic content must have to be transported by select covered van.
- Those select covered vans must display a cautionary notice about its content. So that, other vehicles on the road can know beforehand & stay with due safety.
Acid Victim Shamima's self-confidence has shown the path of life to many disabled women

When I want to stand straight holding all power of the earth
Suddenly my rebellious mind becomes quiet.
Half of my soul seeks for peace
My burnt soul taught me to taste the new life

Khaleda Yasin Eti

These lines are written by a self-motivated woman who did not stop even after being acid-burnt. Her struggle started to save her soul after being burnt with acid.

In early 1996, at the age of only 14, Shamima, a student of class eight, had to marry a 35-year-old man due to family pressure. According to her family, the bridegroom’s age was not a problem as he was a serviceholder. However, Shamima got frightened with her husband’s extreme sexual desire right from the wedding night and after terrible three days, she came back to her father’s house. She was again sent to In-law’s houses, but yet again her husband’s company made her scared. Shamima’s in-laws did not consider her mental condition; rather they teased her and said she might have an affair. Shamima returned her home again. Rumors spread in her own village too. In the midst of this tug of war between the two sides, Shamima’s husband threatened her to add attack for revenge.

It was about 2 o’clock at night on 14 September 1996. Shamima was sleeping beside a window at her father’s house. Suddenly her whole face burnt like fire. After hearing her shouting, neighbors rushed towards her and caught her acid thrower husband red-handed from a nearby symmetry. Then Shamima was brought to Ketchachpur Hospital for immediate treatment, and was transferred to Khuura Hospital after 1 hour treatment in Jhenidah hospital. Her face, eyes, ears, nose, shoulder and hands were burnt with acid. It became more severe for not using water. She was brought home after 7 days treatment at Khuura. As her condition was getting worse day by day, her father somehow collected 80 thousand taka to send her to India for better treatment in 1997. After her return from 1 month’s treatment, she had serious infection in her body. It took much time to get well by local treatment.

Afterwards, Shamima started a new life. She got admitted in class nine and started receiving sewing training. She launched an organization named ‘Dykkho Nari Kaliyo Sangstha’ with 43 deprived women of her village, of whom 25 were physically disabled. They are given training for block, boutique and sewing. These activities are carried out through their own society (Sami). Shamima, President of this Youth Development Department affiliated organization, is continuing her studies at Open University side-by-side her official duties. A feature on Shamima’s success was published in Prothom Alo on 17 June 2005. Till then she did not know about ASF. Photographer Shafiquil Alan Kiron, who has been with the Acid Survivors from the beginning, read the feature and went to Shamima’s house at Jhenidah for publishing her photograph in British American Tobacco’s Calender.
He advised her to go to ASF for treatment. After a long time, Shamima took treatment at ASF. Meanwhile she had two surgeries. More operation is needed.

Shamima’s family filed a case after the acid attack. The perpetrator has been sentenced to 14 years imprisonment with Tk. five thousand five. Shamima wants to develop her organization as a voluntary organization. She wants to show how to be a protestor and self-reliant to the acid burnts as well as physically disabled women who are left behind helplessly in the society. Shamima’s self-motivated life struggle is an enlightened example to hundreds of acid victim women.
The Medical Wonder: Restoration of acid burn
Visit of Dignitaries

Eva Luis Kohler, German First Lady and Patron of the German UNICEF National Committee at Acid Survivors Foundation

Mike Foster, UK International Development Minister at Acid Survivors Foundation

His Excellency Dr. Justin Lee, High Commissioner of Australia to Bangladesh visited Acid Survivors Foundation

Trainings

Interburns, UK organizes ‘Essential Burn Care’ training

Interburns, UK organizes ‘Essential Burn Care’ orientation

TOT on Enhancing Local Conflict Management
Contributions to the ASF : 1999 to April 2009

Donor Agencies
Action Aid, AUSAID, Canadian International Development Agency, Danish International Development Agency (Danida), Department of International Development (DFID) Bangladesh, European Commission, Embassy of Kingdom of Netherlands, German Technical Cooperation (GTZ), Manusher Janno Foundation, Unicef, Unitarian Service Committee of Canada in Bangladesh (USCCB)

Organizations
**Program Schedule**

**First International Conference of the Acid Survivors**

8:30 AM - 9:00 AM - Rally  
From Art Institute, Dhaka University to Engineers Institution

9:30 AM - 11:30 AM - Inauguration Session  
Mr. Enamul Haq Mostafa Shahid - Honorable Minister - Ministry of Social Welfare  
will honor us with his presence as the Chief Guest.

His Excellency Mr. Stephen Evans - High Commissioner, British High Commission  
Dr. John Robert Morrison - Chairperson ASTI and Founder ED, ASF Bangladesh  
Ms. Shaheen Anam - Executive Director, MJF and  
Ms. Rose Anne Papavero - Chief, Child Protection Section UNICEF, Bangladesh  
will grace us with their presence as Special Guests.

11:30 AM - 4:00 PM - First International Conference of the Acid Survivors

4:00 PM - 6:00 PM - Closing Session  
Adv. Sahara Khatun - Honorable Minister - Ministry of Home Affairs  
will honor us with her presence as the Chief Guest.

His Excellency Mr. Robert McDougall - High Commissioner, Canadian High Commission  
Dr. Ronald William Hiles - Plastic Surgeon, United Kingdom  
will grace us with their presence as Special Guests.

6:00 PM - 7:30 PM - Recognition of Contribution to ASF & Cultural Program

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Adv. Sahara Khatun, Hon. Minister for Ministry of Home Affairs on a recent visit to ASF Hospital 'Jibantara'.