



ADN JUNIOR CHAMPION MAGAZINE

VOLUME 2

**OCTOBER
2024**

Children and Youths' Experiences of Disasters in Bangladesh

ADN Junior Champion Magazine, Volume 2
Children and Youths' Experiences of Disasters in Bangladesh

Copyright © Avoidable Deaths Network
Contact: contact@avoidable-deaths.net
Website: avoidable-deaths.net

Image Copyrights © Cover Image: Fatima Jannat Safa; Picture on page 13: Tawaf Al Sunny; Photos (except for page 20): Dhaka University Rover Scouts and Department of Meteorology, University of Dhaka; Photo on page 20: Shanjana Hoque Shashee

Volume Editors: Master Arkoneil Ghosh and Miss Anushka Konar

Editorial Board: Dr. Aditya Ghosh, Mr. Snehendru Koner, Mr. Arindam Ghosh, Ms. Rini Ghosh, Ms. Sadia Afrin Sayfa Nebagan, Mr. Mohammad Fahimul Islam, Dr. Srashta Chowdhury, Dr. Biswajit Paul, Dr Aditya Ghosh

Special Guest Editor: Dr. Ranjan Datta

Date Published: 10 October 2024

About Avoidable Deaths Network (ADN): ADN is a diverse, dynamic, inclusive, and innovative global-local membership network of experts, practitioners and researchers interested in avoiding human deaths from natural hazards, naturally triggered technological hazards and human-made hazards in low- and middle-income countries. ADN exists to help policymakers, researchers, practitioners, and citizens make better decisions to save lives and reduce injuries to achieve sustainable development. ADN's purpose is aligned with the United Nations Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction's first two global targets and is a member of the Sendai Framework's Voluntary Commitment Platform. On 12 March 2023, ADN launched a global campaign: International Awareness Day for Avoidable Deaths (IAD4AD). More details of the global campaign can be found through this link: <https://iad4ad.avoidable-deaths.net/>

ISSN 2759-0380

Issued by ADN Publication, Avoidable Deaths Network (ADN)

Head Offices

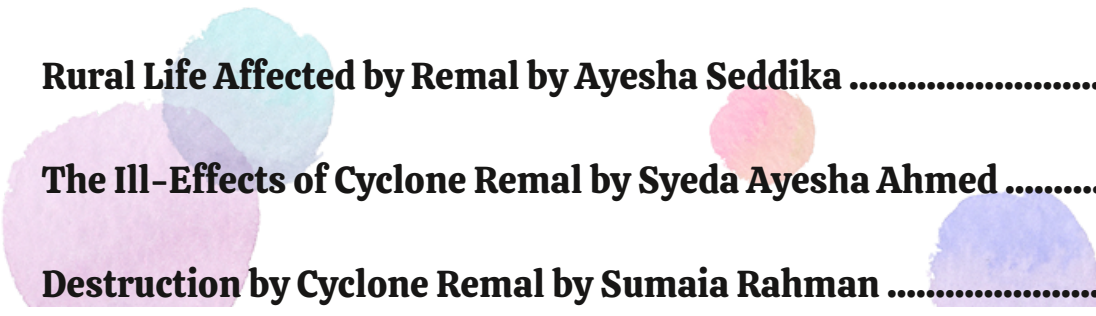
Japan: Kansai University, Takatsuki

UK: University of Leicester, Leicester



Table of Contents

Message from the Presidents	3
Foreword from the Guest Editor	4
Message from the Editors	6
Combatting Floods in Bangladesh: Strategies for a Resilient Future by Saching Pru Khyeng	7
Addressing Climate Change: Challenges and Solutions for Bangladesh by Priotosh Kumar Munda	9
Climate Change by Nibitha Kairi Proma-Sreemangal	11
My Experience with Cyclone Remal by Tawaf Al Sunny	13
Rural Life Affected by Remal by Ayesha Seddika	15
The Ill-Effects of Cyclone Remal by Syeda Ayesha Ahmed	17
Destruction by Cyclone Remal by Sumaia Rahman	19
Chakaria Floods: Bitter Experiences and Looking for Future Resilience by Shanjana Hoque Shashee	21



Message from the Presidents

Dear Readers,

The *Junior Champion Magazine* is a landmark initiative for ADN. This has been possible because of the relentless pursuit of Master Arkoneil Ghosh, Miss Prarthona Datta and Miss Anushka Koner.

Arkoneil, the founding editor of the Magazine joined ADN four years ago. Since then, he has become an agent of change.

We are excited to launch the second issue on 10 October 2024 to mark the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction's 'International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction' (IDRR).

This year, the IDRR theme is “empowering the next generation for a resilient future”. This issue is fitting in this regard. It features eight stories of children and youths from small and marginalised communities who are severely affected by the impact of climate-related disasters, deforestation, and social discrimination in Bangladesh. These are their stories written from their point of view. By doing so, these young authors redefine the future of disaster risk reduction and mitigation in their local context. We are glad the Magazine can act as a conduit to convey their stories to the global community.

We worked with our local collaborators to support these young authors so that they could tell their stories of hardships, coping, and adaptation—sometimes to enlighten readers and other times to demand change for a better society. Of the eight stories, four are collected by our guest editor, Dr. Ranjan Datta, Canada Research Chair of Mount Royal University (Alberta, Canada) from the Sundarbans and another four are collected by two students at the University of Dhaka and ADN Future Leaders, Ms. Sadia Afrin Sayfa Nebagan and Mr. Mohammad Fahimul Islam. All authors were supported throughout the writing process.

ADN productions are collective efforts, and the Junior Champion Magazine is no exception. We would like to thank the Editorial Board for this issue, which comprised Dr Rini Sinha-Ghosh, Dr Aditya Ghosh, Mr. Snehendu Koner, Mr. Arindam Ghosh, Dr. Srashta Chowdhury, Dr. Biswajit Paul, Ms. Kelly Litsoung, and Mr. Alex Skinner, for bringing this Magazine to fruition.

We hope you enjoy reading the articles as much as we did.

Professor Nibedita Ray-Bennett & Dr. Hideyuki Shiroshta

Foreword from the Guest Editor

This second issue of *Junior Champion Magazine* centres on the perspectives of non-Indigenous, Indigenous and local land-based youths regarding community disasters, emphasizing relationality, responsibility, and Indigenous land rights in South Asia, particularly in Bangladesh and India. These youth contributions are anchored in relational and decolonial theoretical frameworks established during my 2023 field research in these regions. Drawing from my 17 years of ongoing relationships, this issue underscores Indigenous youths' insights into disasters and their land-based adaptations.

Many Indigenous communities in South Asia, particularly in Bangladesh and India, have sustained their land-based knowledge and practices for centuries. However, Elders and Knowledge Keepers from these communities have pointed out that both historical and ongoing mainstream, emphasizing by illegal settlements, land grabbing, deforestation, and colonial agricultural practices, have severely undermined their sustainability. They also noted that Indigenous youth lack opportunities to learn their traditional land-based sustainable knowledge and practices within the current educational curriculum. Moreover, these youths are not taught about the serious challenges posed by human-induced climate crises, such as sudden floods and food insecurity, nor about disaster adaptation education and policies. Many Indigenous youths have been denied the chance to understand the significance of their land-based knowledge, culture, and practices. This issue, therefore, brings to light how the recent human-induced flood disaster of 2023 has impacted their daily lives and their expectations for creating youth-led adaptations.

The contributing Indigenous youths come from small, often marginalized communities that are severely affected by disasters due to ongoing and everyday environmental and social discrimination. Many of these youths do not have internet access or the opportunity to write because they must work to collect food. To contribute to this issue, they often had to walk two to three hours or use local transport to access the internet. Despite these challenges, they wrote their stories in mainstream languages. The meanings of their writings were altered during the translation process—first from Indigenous languages to Bangla, and then from Bangla to English. As Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers have suggested, while these youths lack the opportunity to express their learning in their languages, this issue provides a valuable platform to highlight their community's needs through the voices of their youth. This, in turn, creates numerous opportunities to convey community needs and aspirations. Elders assert that non-Indigenous researchers have a responsibility to center Indigenous youths' voices as part of fostering Indigenous youth self-determination.

As a decolonial and Indigenist relational researcher with 17 years of experience in these communities, I am continuously learning the importance of emphasizing both research and the researcher. We must challenge mainstream ongoing emphasizing, colonial education, and research paradigms to reshape, relearn, and reaffirm the significance of Indigenous land-based environmental sustainability. Decolonization is a lifelong process of learning, unlearning, and relearning. We see this issue as an opportunity to build a decolonial community to reclaim Indigenous land rights as a pathway for meaningful implications of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As we build our solidarity, we ask readers to take this issue as an opportunity to support and advocate for the Indigenous youths of these communities as part of a decolonial responsibility. From my decolonial learning journey, I firmly believe that collective action is possible. This issue represents an urgent call to action from Indigenous youths and communities, emphasizing our shared responsibility. We stand together and are committed to achieving these goals.

Dr. Ranjan Datta

Canada Research Chair in Community Disaster Research
Indigenous Studies, Department of Humanities
Mount Royal University, Canada
E-mail: rdatta@mtroyal.ca

Message from the Editors

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the second issue of the *Junior Champion Magazine*. In this edition, we delve into a critical issue that demands our attention—the devastating impact of flooding in the Sundarbans and Cyclone Remal in other regions of Bangladesh.

As the editors of this magazine, we feel a deep responsibility to shed light on environmental challenges that affect communities around the world. The Sundarbans, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the largest mangrove forest on the planet is facing a crisis due to frequent and severe flooding.

The essays within these pages aim to raise awareness of the Sundarbans' unique ecological importance and the growing threats they face. Our dedicated team of writers has worked tirelessly to capture the stories of the children and youths living in this region, their struggles, and the urgent need for sustainable solutions.

In this edition, we invite you to immerse yourself in the rich tapestry of the Sundarbans, exploring the challenges, resilience, and strength of the communities that call this remarkable region home. We hope that these narratives will strike a chord with you and inspire a sense of shared responsibility for the well-being of our planet.

As we navigate the complexities of the environmental issues presented in these pages, we encourage you to reflect on your role in contributing to positive change. Each of us, irrespective of age, possesses the power to make a difference in preserving our natural world. We can bridge the gap between our lives and the experiences of those who have weathered the storms, both metaphorical and literal.

These essays reflect journeys of hardship and resilience in Sundarbans and beyond, and we hope they inspire readers to learn more about the current events happening in our world. Hearing these stories is essential, and building awareness around the precarious situations many people and children face is necessary. We can start making a difference by learning what is happening and what needs to be done. We hope that through different children's stories, more people are informed about what is happening in an in-depth and close-up view.

We are pleased to share more important stories from children and youths in the second issue of the Junior Champion Magazine.

Sincerely,

Arkoneil Ghosh, Anushka Konar, and Prarthona Datta

Combatting Floods in Bangladesh: Strategies for a Resilient Future

Saching Pru Khyeng

Introduction to Bangladesh Floods: Bangladesh, situated in the heart of the monsoon region, faces the annual challenge of flooding. The country's major rivers are consistently replenished by the melting ice from the Himalayas. As the monsoon season sets in, the southwest monsoon brings heavy rainfall, causing the rivers to swell. In certain years, the rainfall surpasses normal levels, resulting in widespread flooding as the water breaches the riverbanks. When this inundation reaches a critical point, submerging villages, towns, and cities, it is classified as a flood.

Suffering from Floods: Floods are a recurring and severe natural disaster in Bangladesh, especially for the farming communities. The impact is profound, leading to dire consequences for both humans and animals. Individuals endure extreme conditions during these events, and communities come together to weather the crisis. Tragically, many succumb to snake bites, and residents of low-lying areas seek refuge on elevated structures such as roads, railway lines, and the upper floors of schools and colleges in nearby urban centers.

Relief efforts are initiated through the distribution of essential materials in makeshift shelter camps. Government, private organisations, and various voluntary groups contribute to these relief endeavors, yet the provisions often fall short of meeting the overwhelming needs of the affected population. The scarcity of food, including staples like rice, crackers, and *khichuri*, exacerbates the challenges. Lack of access to clean water further compounds the crisis, leading to the outbreak of diseases like diarrhea and dysentery, transforming into epidemics. The memory of the 1988 flood, with an official death toll of 603 and additional unreported casualties due to starvation and disease, serves as a haunting reminder of the catastrophic impact of floods on the nation.

Drainage of flood water in constructed reservoirs: There is a critical need for proactive measures to address the perennial issue of floods. Constructing reservoirs to manage floodwater can serve a dual purpose. Firstly, it prevents widespread flooding, offering a safeguard against the destruction of homes, crops, and infrastructure. Secondly, the stored water can be used for irrigation during the dry season, ensuring a stable water supply for arable land. Moreover, this stored water

holds the potential to generate significant electricity, contributing to the country's energy needs.

Conclusion: In the contemporary era, relying solely on divine intervention in the face of natural disasters is impractical. Developed nations have successfully implemented scientific and technological solutions to manage and mitigate the impact of floods. Bangladesh, too, can adopt a similar approach by undertaking comprehensive engineering projects. These projects, encompassing the construction of dams, flood walls, dredging riverbeds, and creating reservoirs, can substantially reduce the recurrence and severity of floods. Collaboration with experts from developed countries is imperative, leveraging their knowledge and support to develop effective flood prevention strategies. Only through such concerted efforts can Bangladesh hope to liberate itself from the perennial threat of floods and safeguard the well-being of its citizens.

Class: 10th

School: Chemi Dolu Para High School,

Department: Business Education

Place: Bandarban

Translator: Arkoneil Ghosh

Addressing Climate Change: Challenges and Solutions for Bangladesh

Priotosh Kumar Munda

The implications of climate change on livelihoods are far-reaching and demand urgent attention. Climate change, driven by environmental degradation, poses a significant threat to our planet's climate system. This threat is particularly pronounced in Bangladesh, where the consequences of climate change are already causing widespread damage and jeopardising the nation's future.

Climate change primarily stems from the increase in the Earth's average temperature, known as global warming. Human activities, such as the excessive use of fossil fuels, deforestation, and industrial emissions, contribute to the release of greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide, chlorofluorocarbons, methane, ozone, and water vapor, intensifying the greenhouse effect. Bangladesh, as a developing country heavily reliant on agriculture, faces severe consequences as climate change disrupts the natural balance.

The dangers confronting Bangladesh are multifaceted, encompassing rising sea levels, floods, and increased salinity in water bodies. Experts predict that by 2050, approximately 20 percent of Bangladesh could be submerged, displacing millions of people and creating environmental refugees. The changing climate has already altered the seasonal patterns in Bangladesh, impacting agricultural practices and leading to disruptions in food production.

The negative effects of climate change extend beyond the environmental realm, adversely affecting public health. Changes in climate patterns contribute to the spread of diseases, including fever, cold, diarrhea, pneumonia, and more. Vulnerable populations, such as mothers and children, bear the brunt of these health challenges. Additionally, the biodiversity of Bangladesh is at risk, with species disappearing due to the changing environment.

Social awareness emerges as a potential solution to mitigate the impacts of climate change. National poet Kazi Nazrul Islam's words underscore the urgency of collective action. Tree planting initiatives, waste management, and pollution control measures can contribute to reducing the carbon footprint. Protecting natural aquifers,

moderating fuel use, and curbing toxic emissions from vehicles and industries are crucial steps in addressing climate risks.

It is imperative to create a paradigm shift in societal attitudes. Community-based forestry activities, supported by both the public and private sectors, can serve as effective climate change mitigation strategies. Financial incentives may be necessary to encourage widespread participation in such initiatives.

In conclusion, prioritising public health and addressing climate change are intertwined imperatives. Community-driven efforts rooted in environmental stewardship offer a promising path forward. As Bangladesh navigates the challenges posed by climate change, a concerted and collective approach is essential to ensure a sustainable and resilient future. Global concern about climate change has gained momentum, signaling a shared responsibility to safeguard our planet and its inhabitants.

Age: 21

School: Shyamnagar Mohsin Govt. Collage

Place: Shyamnagar, Satkhira, Bangladesh

Translator: Arkoneil Ghosh

Climate Change

Nibitha Kairi Proma

Today my mind is very troubled. In the morning, when I was going to school, I saw that people were cutting down two big old trees and filling up the biggest pond in our area. I asked them why they were doing that. They said that they have a plan to make a big building in that place. I felt very sad hearing that because the pond was very beautiful, and a lot of fish lived there. There were many water lilies too. It looked very beautiful. Now, nothing is there. The trees were also very beautiful. There were a lot of nests on those trees. I felt sad thinking about where the birds will live now. One old woman, who I called Granny, sold pickles under those trees and earned money for her family. What will she do now?

I read in my science book that all humans and animals need oxygen to live, and we get oxygen from trees. If people cut many trees and make buildings and factories where we will get oxygen from. I don't know why all people don't understand the necessity of trees. I wish I could live in a green environment! I can see all the elements of the environment are being polluted by people day by day. There are dustbins in every house but everyone throws dirt on the roadside and it smells very bad when I walk beside it. The air is polluted because of this. People are very greedy. They are making too many buildings, roads and factories. So, we are losing forests and paddy fields day by day. People are using too much fertiliser and other medicine to grow more crops.

So, the soil is also becoming polluted. The smoke of vehicles and factories pollutes the air. People throw dirt and chemicals in the water which pollutes the water. We can't get fresh air, good soil, and clean water at present. Cutting down trees increases the carbon dioxide and decreases the oxygen. As a result, the temperature becomes warm, and the climate changes badly. I want to explain to people the bad results of polluting the environment. Everybody should plant more and more trees. I have planted guava trees, lemon trees, and mango trees in my yard. I also do gardening regularly. I think all people should also plant trees. People living in the town can't do this, because they don't have a place. Besides, a lot of people live in small places. They throw all their waste and garbage on the road and drains. So, the living place becomes unhealthy and people become sick, I don't like city life. I like to live in the village. Because the village is green and fresh, we can get fresh air in the village too. In the town, there is a lot of noise too. But the village is quiet. The world is a big home where we live. So, we should all keep our homes clean and pollution-free. In this way, we can get a healthy life and a better world. I will teach

my younger sister the necessity of planting trees and advise her not to pollute the environment. I wish to live in a fresh, pollution-free world.

Age: 13

School: Dildarpur High School

Place: Kulaura, Moulvibazar, Bangladesh



Picture of distributing relief in flood affected areas (Noakhali, Bangladesh) by Dhaka University Rover Scouts and Department of Meteorology, University of Dhaka.

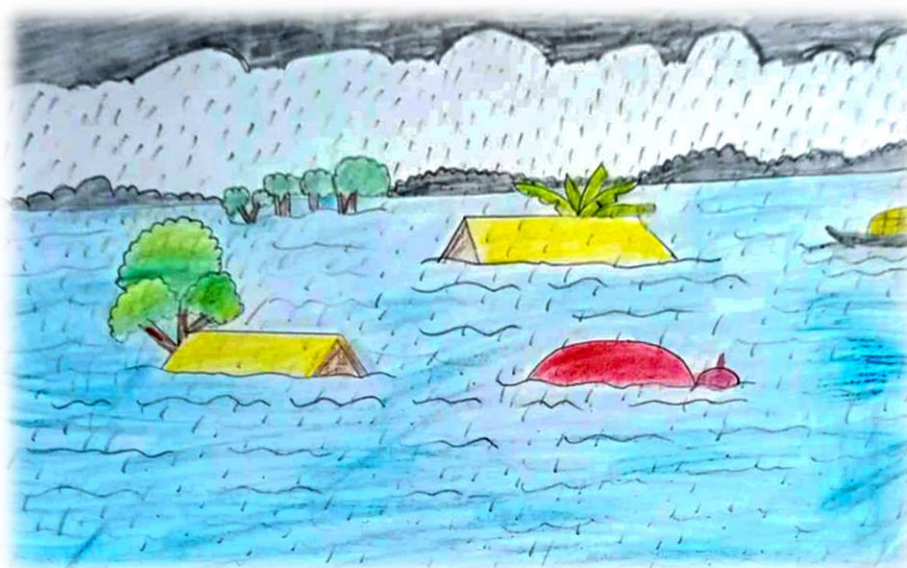
My Experience with Cyclone Remal

Tawaf Al Sunny

On the 25th, 26th, and 27th of May 2024, our family and neighbors suffered greatly from Cyclone Remal. Just a few hours before the cyclone started, we went to the nearest shelter with our family. When we got there, we saw that many of our neighbours had also come to take shelter. My father brought some dry food, such as flattened rice, puffed rice, molasses, biscuits, and clean drinking water. We ate that to satisfy our hunger.

The next day, we managed with the relief supplies given by some kind people. It was too little compared to the number of people. We shared the government's relief supplies, which arrived late. Because of this, no one's stomach was full.

After that, it became very hard to get food and clean water. The deep tube well at the shelter got submerged in flood water, making it challenging to source clean water. Because of this, many people started to suffer from diarrhea and other diseases. We had a small amount of oral saline. We gave it to the patients.



After three days, we came back home from the shelter. We saw that many of our neighbors' cattle had died. Fish from ponds and water bodies were washed away. Many houses were broken. Roads were destroyed, cutting off communication. It was like a monstrous rampage.

In the future, whenever we get a warning about a flood or any disaster, I must collect enough dry food and clean water. I should gather the supplies for first aid and keep them with me. The teaching time at school should be increased, and more homework should be given to make up for missed school days. Before a cyclone strikes, people from risky areas should be moved to safe shelters. There should be a primary medical centre in the shelters. The medical centres should have oral saline and necessary

medicines for first aid. We should take steps to stop coastal areas from flooding. Roads, bridges, and culverts destroyed by floods should be repaired quickly. Schools, colleges, and medical centres should be repaired quickly. Warning signals about floods should be given to every house so people can be alert.

Age: 11

School: Engineering university school and college

Place: Lohalia, Patuakhali, Barishal

Translators: Ms. Sadia Afrin Sayfa Nebagan, Mr. Mohammad Fahimul Islam

Rural Life Affected by Remal

Ayesha Seddika

Life took a devastating turn in the tranquil village of Salonga, Gazipur when Cyclone Remal struck. As a young voice of this resilient community, I share our story of struggle, survival, and unwavering spirit.

The day Cyclone Remal hit, nature was in turmoil. The winds howled with unprecedented intensity, and relentless rain fell. Our home, like many others, could not withstand the storm. Roofs were torn off, walls crumbled, and within hours, devastation was everywhere.

In the immediate aftermath, our home was severely damaged, forcing us to seek refuge in a nearby school converted into a temporary shelter. The sense of loss and uncertainty was palpable. My younger siblings clung to my mother as we tried to make sense of the chaos.

Cyclone Remal disrupted our village's electricity supply, causing significant disturbances. Most residents rely on electric motors for water, so we could not access drinking water. The village plunged into darkness, depriving us of crucial updates about the cyclone. Communication networks were severed, leaving us unable to contact our relatives.

Food scarcity became a daily struggle. The storm destroyed crops and disrupted supply chains, leading to a severe shortage. We relied on aid from relief organizations, but distribution was often erratic and insufficient.

Education was also a casualty. Damaged school buildings and blocked roads made it impossible to continue our studies, and this disruption affected the mental well-being of many children in our village.

Reflecting on our experience, I realized the importance of better disaster preparedness. If faced with a similar situation, I would ensure my family has an emergency kit with essentials like water, non-perishable food, first aid supplies, and important documents.

Community preparedness is crucial. I would advocate for regular training sessions to educate villagers on disaster response, including identifying safe evacuation routes and protecting oneself and one's family.

If consulted by the local government, I would suggest several measures to mitigate our challenges. Firstly, we need robust infrastructure to withstand severe weather, including cyclone-resistant shelters and improved drainage systems to prevent flooding.

Access to clean drinking water is essential. I would recommend installing more community water purification systems and ensuring their maintenance. Additionally, a more efficient and reliable distribution system for emergency food supplies would alleviate post-disaster hunger.

Education should not be overlooked. Temporary learning centres should be established in safe areas to ensure children's education is not interrupted, helping maintain normalcy and aiding psychological recovery.

Cyclone Remal tested Salonga's resilience, revealing our community's strength and unity. We can build a more resilient future by learning from our experiences and advocating for better preparedness. Our story is one of endurance, and I hope it inspires others to take proactive steps in safeguarding their communities against nature's relentless forces.

Age: 17

School: Engineering University School and College

Place: Salanga, Fulbaria, Kaliakaur, Gazipur

The Ill-Effects of Cyclone Remal

Syeda Ayesha Ahmed

About 20 days ago, my family and I faced a big disaster. It was May 26, 2024. In the morning, the sky was clear, but by noon, it turned cloudy. After 6 PM, the situation got worse. It started to rain heavily and the wind was strong. We were very worried all night because the cyclone was getting stronger. We were watching TV to learn about Cyclone Remal. My mom was very worried. The following day, May 27, I couldn't attend school because of the rain. Our TV broke because of the cyclone.

The house next to us was destroyed. They lost everything in the storm. There was water everywhere. In our village, the water was knee-deep. It was hard to move around. There was a traffic jam on the road.

We only had dry food at home. Dad went to the market to buy vegetables but could not find any. There was no market because of the rain and water. Two days after the rain stopped, I went to school and saw many absent students. Many people took shelter in the cyclone centres. The water was very salty. It was not safe to drink. Many people in our village got sick from drinking this water. They had diarrhea, cholera, and other waterborne diseases.

If we face another disaster, I want to take some steps. First, we must plan ahead to understand the situation in coastal areas. Second, we need to be aware of the support process and, if needed, increase contact with local government and volunteer organizations. Third, we need to be aware of predicted diseases so that necessary medical services are available in different areas.

I will request the local government to protect the animals in our village. If the local government contacts us, I will suggest various steps to protect us from floods and cyclones. I will ask for high embankments in coastal areas. I will ask for more cyclone centres. I will suggest improving the weather department and providing information on what to do before and after disasters on the radio and TV. I will ask for tanks to provide safe drinking water. I will ask for arrangements to remove water from villages that were flooded. I will ask for food for those who do not have any.

Along with the local government, people should also be careful. This will help reduce the damage.

Age: 17

School: Monipur High School & College

Place: Middle Pirerbagh 60, Dhaka

Translator: Ms. Sadia Afrin Sayfa Nebagan, Mr. Mohammad Fahimul Islam



Picture of distributing relief in flood affected areas (Noakhali, Bangladesh) by Dhaka University Rover Scouts and Department of Meteorology, University of Dhaka.

Destruction by Cyclone Remal

Sumaia Rahman

Since childhood, I have heard about many storms, but I have never seen a storm's destruction with my own eyes. I had only heard about the destruction of storms like Sidr and Aila. But on May 27th, I experienced such a storm myself. A week before, we heard on the news and the internet about a new cyclone coming, Cyclone 'Remal'. Before this, I had seen Fani, Mohsin, Bulbul, and Amphan, so I thought Remal would be similar. I was not very cautious. Even though the news kept talking about its severity. The news said the water level could rise up to 10 feet. But no one could imagine how severe it would be.

Our house is right by the river. It is a two-story wooden house. The storm was supposed to come today or tomorrow, and then it finally came on Sunday, May 26, 2024. The sky was cloudy since morning. It was not raining, but there was a bit of wind. The electricity went out at 9 am. Mom was cooking. The weather was good, so she was cooking well. This weather continued until night. Still, the same condition. I was not too worried, but my dad's face showed worry. Maybe he could sense what was coming. We ate dinner and went to sleep. As the night went on, I could hear the storm getting stronger. The wind was strong, and it was around 1 or 2am. My dad kept checking the situation outside. I could not sleep either. Suddenly, Dad said the water was rising. We could not see the river at night, but we could tell the water level by looking at the pond behind our house. Now I started to worry. As the night went on, the water kept rising.

By 4am, the water was almost touching our house. Now everyone started to worry. There was a chance that water would enter the house. We wondered what would happen to all the furniture. While we were thinking, water started entering the house. Everyone woke up. We started moving everything. First, we moved the fridge to a safe height. Slowly, we moved everything to a safe height. Morning came, but the house was not in good condition. The water was above our ankles. But there was no storm or rain then. We went outside. The situation around us was not good. People with mud houses could not enter their homes. The floors were muddy. Many people's rice got wet. About 10-20 maunds of rice were soaked. Cows and goats were standing in the water.

We went back home. It was drizzling, and we thought the storm had stopped. The water in the house seemed to have gone down a bit. Everyone was very tired, so we did not cook that day. We ate cake and biscuits and fell asleep. When we woke up at 1pm, we saw a terrible situation. The water had risen more. The height where we kept everything was also getting submerged. We started moving everything again. Looking towards the river, I saw the river, road, and house all had the same level of

water. The water was rising. By 4 or 5pm, the bed was almost submerged, and the water was up to our waist. We could not go outside. There was a strong wind and heavy rain like the previous night. We moved to the second floor. We could not stay downstairs anymore. The rain and wind were getting stronger. The trees around the house were breaking, and the water was rising. The bed was almost submerged, with only 3-4 inches left.

It was evening. There was no electricity. We could not see outside. All our phones were dead. The water situation was bad. The storm and rain were not stopping. There was no light or food in the house. We were sitting in a dark room, and sometimes we checked the downstairs with a torch. There was no improvement. We saw a few snakes in the water downstairs, so no one dared to go down. Everyone fell asleep suddenly. At 10:30 pm, we woke up. The storm had stopped. We checked with a torch and saw there was no more water. We felt a bit relieved. Everyone rested.

In the morning, we saw the destruction caused by Remal more clearly. Mud houses were completely destroyed. Trees were fallen on the roads. Many animals and birds had died. Several maunds of rice were spoiled. After causing a lot of damage, Remal finally calmed down.

After four days, we got electricity back in our area. Seeing the damage to the houses around, everyone felt sad. Gradually, everything is getting back to normal. But everyone will remember Remal. In these two days, we saw how dangerous global warming can be. Such continuous storms for two days are the first in Bangladesh's history. Now, we need to be more aware, or such destruction will lead to more disaster.

Age: 12 (Class: 6th)

School: Ekpai Jujkhola Girls' High School

Place: Kodomtola, Pirojour, Barishal

Translator: Ms. Sadia Afrin Sayfa Nebagan, Mr. Mohammad Fahimul Islam

Chakaria Floods: Bitter Experiences and Looking for Future Resilience

Shanjana Hoque Shashee

Living in Chakaria during the devastating flash flood in August last year (2023) was an experience that left a permanent mark on my life. Chakaria is a subdistrict of Cox's Bazar in southeast Bangladesh. As an eighth-grade student at the time, the flood disrupted not only my education but also our entire way of life. For three long days, we were confined to our homes, cut off from the outside world, and forced to confront the harsh realities of nature's fury.

The floodwaters surged relentlessly, reaching our doorstep and causing extensive



damage to our neighbor's belongings. The once familiar routine of school, play, and socializing came to an abrupt halt. With no electricity, access to clean water, or communication channels, our lives took a turn for the worse. The absence of necessities like food and clean water made the situation even more challenging, and the isolation from friends and the outside world heightened our sense of despair.

In those hard times, resilience became our only option. We had to adapt to the circumstances, surviving on whatever resources we could find and clinging to hope for a better future. The trauma experienced, I had seen among our near and dear ones during those three days was profound, leaving lasting emotional scars.

Looking forward, it is crucial to focus on mitigating the impact of such natural hazard disasters in the future. Community preparedness and early warning systems are essential components in ensuring the safety of residents in flood-prone areas like Chakaria. Investing in robust infrastructure, such as flood barriers and drainage systems, can help mitigate the destructive consequences of floods.

Education plays a pivotal role in fostering awareness about disaster preparedness and response. Incorporating this knowledge into school curricula and conducting regular drills can empower individuals and communities to respond effectively during crises.

Additionally, establishing community-based initiatives for disaster management can create a network of support and resources.

In conclusion, while the memories of the devastating flood in Chakaria are haunting, they serve as a catalyst for collective action and preparedness. By learning from our past experiences, implementing effective mitigation strategies, and fostering a resilient community spirit, we can strive to minimise the impact of future floods and build a safer, more secure environment for all residents.

Class: IX

School: Chakaria Grammar School, Chakaria

Place: Cox Bazar



Picture of distributing relief in flood affected areas (Noakhali, Bangladesh) by Dhaka University Rover Scouts and Department of Meteorology, University of Dhaka.



ADN JUNIOR CHAMPION MAGAZINE

VOLUME 2