

Accidents & Fires

Mother dies saving twins from landslides

Her sister also killed; two others die in separate mudslide in Ctg



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After four people died in two landslides yesterday, volunteers of Chattogram district administration ask people to evacuate houses that are built near the hill slopes in the port city. Photo: Collected

A mother sacrificed her life to save her six-month-old twin daughters from a landslide in Barishal Ghona area of Chattogram city on Friday night.

Shahinur Akter shielded her daughters with her body as the landslide fell. Both the babies remained unhurt, but she died as the landslide crushed her, said witnesses.

Her husband Jainal Abedin was out when the land slid over their house on the slope of Jhiler Pahar in the area.

Shahinur's sister Mahinur Akter, 24, was also killed in the accident while their parents Fazlul Haque, 70, and Ranu Begum, 60, were injured critically.

Jainul's six-month-old twin daughters Tanna and Tinni were saved in the accident.

The family have been living in the house for the last 10 years. No accident ever happened there before, said Jainul.

"We thought nothing will happen. I never thought I would have such a consequence for ignoring their call," he said.

U Ching, team leader of Fire Service and Civil Defence, Chattogram, said they rescued six people, including the twins, from there.

Of them, doctors of Chattogram Medical College Hospital declared Shahinur and Mahinur dead, he added.

Meanwhile, two siblings -- Mohammad Liton, 23, and Mohammad Emon, 14 -- were killed in another landslide in the city's Bijohnagar area, said Farooq Hossain Sikder, assistant director of Fire Service and Civil Defense in Chattogram.

Nur Jahan Begum, mother of the Liton and Emon, said, "Why would we live here at risk if we had enough money?"

Of the siblings, Liton was a readymade garment worker who got married one and a half years ago.

His wife Sharmin Akhtar is seven months pregnant.

"My baby will never see his father," wailing Sharmin said.

In Chattogram, the district administration identified 30 landslide-prone hills, in which around 10,000 people live.

Every monsoon, the authority makes efforts to relocate the people to safer places, but the initiative goes in vain largely due to the poor and unhygienic conditions of the shelters.

Around 170 people died in massive landslides in June 2017 in Chattogram, Rangamati and Bandarban districts, disconnecting regional communication for days.

A high-powered committee, formed after 127 people died in a landslide in the port city's Motijarna in 2007, put forward 30 recommendations, including permanent rehabilitation of the people exposed to landslides, afforestation on hills so they can ward off landslides, stopping hill cutting, and building fences around the hills to protect them from grabbers.

It has been 15 years since the recommendations were forwarded, and none of those has been executed yet.
