

Children want to have a say in budget

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Children yesterday urged the government to allocate more funds for primary education in the budget for 2003-04.

They also demanded that they should have a say in the budget.

At the 'Children's Budget Discussion 2003' organised by 'Child Parliament Preparation Committee', 64 participants from 17 districts discussed education, health and entertainment facilities for them.

The discussion was held at the CIRDAP auditorium under the auspices of Save the Children, Australia.

Inaugurating the discussion, Food Minister Abdullah Al Noman assured the children of considering their needs and suggestions.

He also appreciated the initiative to make the children aware of their rights.

The children called on the government to provide educational materials such as books, chalks and blackboards for the primary schools.

They also demanded night schools and micro-credit for the working children.

The government should allocate funds for rehabilitation of repressed and disabled children and those involved in drug selling, they said.

Dilruba, a representative of the children, said the standard of education has fallen due to shortage of teachers and lack of proper training.

Speaking on healthcare, the children mentioned the poor condition of hospitals, inadequate number of doctors and shortage of medicines and medical equipment.

They also highlighted the discrimination among rural and urban children, rich and poor, and boys and girls.

The children demanded more hospital beds and more educational facilities for them.

They urged the government to distribute Hepatitis B injections for them free of cost.

The children also complained about lack of playgrounds and parks and demanded more entertainment facilities.

The indigenous children urged the government to provide more funds for education, health and entertainment facilities for them.

The children will submit their suggestions to the parliament secretariat and other ministries concerned.



PHOTO:STAR

Children take part in a budget discussion held at the CIRDAP auditorium yesterday.

Withdraw CU fee hike: PSA

CU CORRESPONDENT

Progressive Students Alliance (PSA) of Chittagong University (CU) yesterday reiterated its demand for withdrawal of enhanced admission fee.

Addressing a rally at the social science faculty premises, PSA leaders said the fee hike would discourage the students belonging to middle and lower class family to seek admission in the university.

They said it is unjust to increase admission and other fees in the name of mobilising internal resources of the university.

Presided over by Ripayan Barua, president of Bangladesh Chhatra Union, the rally was addressed by Samajtantrik Chhatra Front President Monzurul Huq Monzu and General Secretary Mehedi Hasan Tamal.

Earlier, PSA leaders demonstrated in front of all departments under BBA and social science faculties demanding withdrawal of

fee hike.

They also submitted memorandum to departmental heads urging them to seek more funds from the CU budget.

The PSA, comprising three left-leaning student wings, will also stage demonstrations in science and arts faculties on June 22 and 29 to intensify its demand.

Meanwhile, the CU Syndicate slashed 15 per cent of the

increased-fee following a series of agitation by the students.

The CU authorities enhanced the admission fee by about 70 per cent from the current academic session.

Different organisations including PSA and Bangladesh Chhatra League are, however, insisting on slashing the entire enhanced fee.

Hasina, also Awami League president, in a statement said police arrested four activists of Jubo Mohila League from the procession and resorted to baton charge injuring at least 24 female activists while taking part in a peaceful procession.

Blaming ruling party for the murder of Polash, Hasina said the Khaleda-Nizami alliance government was out to kill AL leaders and its front organisations to destroy the party.

She demanded immediate release of four Jubo Mohila League leaders and exemplary punishment to the killers of AL leaders.

City AL council today

Changes in leadership unlikely

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The triennial council of Dhaka City Awami League (AL) will be held today after a lapse of six years, but there is a little hope of bringing changes in its top leadership.

AL President and Leader of the Opposition in Parliament Sheikh Hasina will inaugurate the council at the auditorium of Institute of Engineers, Bangladesh at 2:30 pm as chief guest while party General Secretary Abdul Jalil will be present as special guest.

Hasina will select the new faces from a shortlist of young, energetic and tested leaders, prepared by the senior central leaders, sources said.

"However, the chance of changes in the posts of president and general secretary is very slim," said an AL leader on condition of anonymity. "If there is any change, it may be the post of general secretary," he added.

Advocate Quamrul Islam, joint

secretary of City AL, and former lawmaker Haji Mohammad Selim are lobbying for the post of general secretary, sources said.

At an extended meeting on June 13, the city unit councillors adopted an unanimous resolution requesting Sheikh Hasina to select the new leadership.

Committees of 22 thana units will be formed later, sources said.

Earlier, party high-ups hinted at major changes in the city unit leadership through the council to rejuvenate the party that had been in a bad shape since its debacle in the last general election.

Mohammad Hanif and Mofazzal Hossain Chowdhury Maya has been serving the City AL as its president and general secretary since 1997.

Batamul named after poet Nazrul

UNB, Dhaka

Barisal City Council has decided to name a new area 'Batamul' after the famous Bengali poet Nazrul. The council also decided to name a new area 'Batamul' after the famous Bengali poet Nazrul.

1,517 more held

UNB, Dhaka

Police arrested 1,517 people including 10 listed criminals in its country-wide drive in 24 hours ending at 6am yesterday.

They also recovered 23 firearms, 21 other weapons and 27 bullets and filed 10 cases against 15 people under the Arms Act, said an official handout.