



# Helping out a child in trouble

SIED Trust promises a better world for the intellectually disabled

SABRINA KARIM MURSHED

Five-year-old Hossain managed a smile and greeted his teacher. Yet only a few months ago he was completely unresponsive to basic commands. Life is certainly changing to those like Hossain at the school run by Special Education for Intellectually Disabled (SEID) Trust in Lalmatia.

The SEID Trust was established in November 2003 as a non-profit, voluntary organisation for assessment, diagnosis, education and rehabilitation of children with intellectual disability.

"We try to console parents of these children. Parents worry about their children, and we give our best in grooming these children to cope with their disabilities," said Dilara Sattar Mitu, director of SEID Trust.

"We are not in a position to completely reassure parents of the positive outcome, but we work hard to ensure that the child moves towards improvement," she said.

The Trust caters to children with various intellectual disabilities such as cerebral palsy, Down's syndrome, autism, attention disorder, hearing problems, speech and communication disorders, mentally retardation and multiple disabilities.

Children can be enrolled at a monthly charge of Tk. 2,000. It also has community-based rehabilitation programmes aimed at under-privileged kids



from Dhanmondi, Rayerbazar and Mohammadpur. These less fortunate youngsters are provided free food and conveyance.

"Parents are counselled before we enrol any child. This is a prerequisite as we reassure parents that their children are not alone -- we are here to help them," said Mitu. "This counselling also helps parents to cope with the death of a child just in case," she added.

"Kids are either overprotected or neglected at home -- both detrimental to their development," she explained.

The school was often con-

fronted by a lack of interest from parents of different strata.

"Parents gradually show reluctance to send their children to the school because according to them 'there's no point in trying to correct a wrong'. But we ask them not to give up easily. The children might be intellectually disabled but they are human beings and they have basic rights too."

But for some parents like Soheli Karim's, who came all the way from Mymensingh, the school represents the last ray of hope.

"I just pray my seven-year-old son Bidhu can make a slight improvement at the school," sighed his mother.

There also stories of parents of lower-income groups who take advantage of their child's predicament. It is better to employ them as street beggars rather than taking them to school.

The SEID Trust director observed that her school was not the only such school a steady rise in the number of specialised institutions is seen.

Unlike other schools, which make promises of curing such children, SEID gives no guarantees.

"We only try to help kids to adapt to their surroundings," she said.

The trust school teaches basic and language skills and provides vocational training to children with lesser disability. Kids learn to walk, eat and are even given toilet training.

"Working with these kids needs willingness, dedication and lots of patience," said teacher Faizunnahar Polly.

The school authority regretted their inability to help more children due to lack of funds. At present there are 16 children from the affluent class and 21 from the slums though it can accommodate 30 per-shift.

"We cannot afford to hire more specialised teachers," the director said adding that recently HSBC offered to appoint a physiotherapist for the school.

# Task force to arrest spiralling prices

12-member inter-ministerial body formed

AVIK SANWAR RAHMAN

The Commerce Ministry has formed an inter-ministerial task force to control the price hike of essentials and also liaison between other government departments.

"It was felt that price hikes could only be managed through a coordinated approach instead of letting a single ministry be responsible. For many years it was the task of the commerce ministry," said a high official of the commerce ministry.

Commerce Minister Altaf Hossain Chowdhury is the convenor of the 12-member task force. The joint secretaries of finance, home, food, agriculture, fisheries and industries make up the task force. Chairman of Trading Corporation of Bangladesh (TCB) Motiur Rahman Khan will act as member-secretary of the team.

"We have received official notice of the task force on May 23," said the TCB chairman.

The TCB will help assist the task force and provide necessary suggestions to deal with price increases.

"TCB monitors prices of 22 essentials like rice, wheat, onion, ginger, sugar, edible oil in the main city markets and reports to the Commerce Ministry everyday," said Khan.

However, the TCB chairman was sceptical of his organisation's role in the task force as they lack adequate manpower. Moreover, it

no longer is involved in international trading.

The imports of essentials were one of the basic mechanisms for controlling prices during emergencies. The TCB also helped the government to market goods at reasonable prices. Such measures would deter hoarding and over-pricing by importers.

But the TCB has now stopped importing goods for the last three years.

Meanwhile, the consumer association of Bangladesh (CAB) has welcomed setting up of the

task force and involvement of the TCB in checking the price hike.

The CAB blamed the ministries for not having an effective strategy to deal with spiralling prices of essential commodities. It cited the Agriculture Ministry, which didn't do enough to encourage ginger production. The poor local supply affected market prices, which shot up Tk80-90 a kilogram.

The poor production meant ginger had to be imported from China at much higher prices -- 1,000 dollars-per-ton compared to 200-per-ton last year, said a

TCB source.

The government felt it was compelled to act especially as prices usually went through the roof during the holy month of Ramadan.

To solve the problem task force will be able to set profit margins of essentials for the businessmen and fix the rate of essentials after verifying supply, demand and international market prices. It will have the power to take action against profit-hungry traders who raise their prices.



## GALLERY KAYA STARTS JOURNEY



US Ambassador Harry K Thomas inaugurated Gallery Kaya in Uttara on Friday. A month-long exhibition of works by 53 noted artists marked the occasion.

## healthouting, taxicab & train timing

### HEALTH

- Hospitals**  
**Heart**  
 National Institute of Cardio Vascular Diseases (NICVD), - 9130800, 9122560-59
- Burn**  
 Dhaka Medical College Hospital  
 Burn Unit-8626812-6
- Cancer**  
 National Cancer Institute-8014914, 8826561-65  
 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University-8612550-4, 861455-9
- Diabetes**  
 Diabetic Research Hospital (BIRDEM)- 9661551-5, 8616641-50
- Mother & Child Care**  
 Shishu Hospital- 9119119, 8116061-62  
 Azimpur Mother & Child Health Training Institute- 8624827, 8624980
- Eye**  
 Istamia Eye Hospital-9110794, 9119315  
 National Eye Hospital- 8117202, 8114807
- Dental**  
 Dental College -9002035
- Orthopaedics**  
 National Orthopaedics (Pangu) Hospital- 9114075, 9112150
- General**  
 Dhaka Medical College Hospital- 8626812-6  
 Rushmono General Hospital- 8317819  
 Holy Family Hospital- 8311731-25  
 Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University Hospital- 8612550-4, 8614545-9  
 Bangladesh Medical College & Hospital- 8115443, 9118202, Shamaria Hospital- 9131901  
 Suhrawardy Hospital -- 9130800,

### MARKET CLOSED

- 9122560-69  
 Salimullah Medical Collage Hospital -- 7310061-4, 7319002-6  
 Cholera Research Hospital (ICDDR)- 8811751-60  
 Monowra Hospital 8319802, 8318135
- Blood Bank**  
 Red Crescent Centre- 9116563  
 Sandhani (DMCH)- 8624040  
 Sandhani (SMCH)- 7310061, 7310061.7319022  
 Dhaka Medical Collage Hospital- 8626812-9
- Eye Bank**  
 Sandhani International Eye Bank- 8614040
- Ambulances For Dead Body**  
 Anzuman Mafidul Islam (Kakrail) 9336611, Gandaria 7319808, 7318166,  
 Al-Markajul Islam 9127867,
- Gulshan 1, 2 markets-Friday  
 Elephant Road-Friday  
 Bishal Center-Friday  
 Baiatal Mukarram Market-Friday  
 Polwell Market-Friday  
 BCS Computer City-Friday  
 Isha Khan Shopping Complex-Friday.  
 Rajlaxmi Complex-Friday  
 Stadium Market-Friday  
 Bangabazar Market-Friday  
 National Museum-Thursday  
 Ahsan Manzil--Thursday.  
 New Market-Tuesday  
 Gausia Market-Tuesday  
 Mouchak Market-Sunday  
 Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday  
 Dhanmondi Hawkers Market-Tuesday  
 Eastern Plaza-Sunday  
 Farmview Super Market-Sunday  
 Muktiyuddha Jadughar-Sunday  
 Dhaka Zoo-Sunday  
 Shishu Jadughar-Sunday

### TAXI CAB

- Yellow Cab**  
 Navana 9558065  
 Salida 9344477, 0171620881  
 Cosmo 9112959 and 8127191  
 Cab One 7113282-3  
 Nihon 9347277  
 Orion 8624741-2  
 Anudip -- 8125285 and 8127611  
 Capital 9352847
- Union** 8130485  
 Kool 0171826731
- Black Cab**  
 Cab Ex 9358401  
 Cabline 8321162  
 JBS Cab 019364575  
 Sajon 018126036  
 Anudip -- 8125285 and 8127611  
 Cab One 7113282-3
- Palki** 0171052500  
 Cab I 7113282  
 Jatri 0171540074  
 Nipun 9572277  
 R-Cab 8914782  
 Star Cab 9571919  
 Shihab 018202477 & 018228675  
 KGN 8620011
- Subarna Express**  
 Mahanagar Prabhati  
 Mahanagar Godhuli  
 Turna  
**Parabat Express**  
 Joyantika Express  
 Upaban Express  
**Tista Express**  
**Ekata Express**  
**Upakul Express**  
**Padma Express**
- Leaves Dhaka at 4:00 pm  
 Leaves Dhaka at 7-30 am  
 Leaves Dhaka at 3-05 pm  
 Leaves Dhaka at 11-00 pm  
 Leaves Dhaka at 6-30 am  
 Leaves Dhaka at 12-30 pm  
 Leaves Dhaka at 9-30 pm  
 Leaves Dhaka at 7-00 am  
 Leaves Dhaka at 5-00 pm  
 Leaves Dhaka at 6-00 am  
 Leaves Dhaka at 9-20 pm
- Reaches Chittagong at 10:15 pm  
 Reaches Chittagong at 2-55 pm  
 Reaches Chittagong at 9-11 pm  
 Reaches Chittagong at 7-05 am  
 Reaches Sylhet at 2-30 pm  
 Reaches Sylhet at 9-20 pm  
 Reaches Sylhet at 6-40 am  
 Reaches Bahadurabad at 1-05 pm  
 Reaches Bahadurabad at 11-55  
 Reaches Noakhali at 1-35 pm  
 Reaches Jagannath at 2-30 pm

### TRAIN TIMING

### LIBRARY & INFO

- Libraries, Cultural and Information Centers**
- Central Public Library-** 8626001-4,  
**Shishu Academy-** 9564128  
**Shilpakala Academy-** 8614673  
**Bangla Academy-** 8619550  
**Islamic Foundation-** 9550280, 9556407  
**Nazrul Institute-** 9114602  
**Ford Foundation-** 8116133  
**Alliance Francaise-** 8611557  
**British Council-** 8618867-8, 8618905-7  
**Community Development Library-** 8113769, 8113604  
**Goethe Institute Int'l- Dhaka-** 9126525-6  
**Indian Information Centre & Cultural Library-** 8615096  
**The Russian Cultural Centre-** 9116314, 9118531, 9118314  
**Drik Photo Gallery-** 9120125, 8112954, 8123412