

Street children's own savings bank offers hope

RAHAN SABUKTAGIN

Nurul Huda is one of the few fortunate street children in Dhaka who has been able to manage his own money, depositing it in a daily savings scheme that has brought him a small measure of financial security.

"This saving helped me ensure my dignity and I became self-reliant within a year," said Nur, a 16-year-old street child-turned-skilled tailoring assistant.

The savings also enabled him to arrange employment for his physically challenged brother Nesar and support his whole family, Nur said.

There are about 2 lakh street children in Dhaka, according to Appropriate Resources for Improving Street Children's Environment -- a joint project of the ministry of social welfare and UNDP (United Nations Development Programme).

Nur, who spent eight years on the streets, said street children often spend their earnings as soon as possible as they are afraid of being mugged or of having their money stolen while they sleep. There is no secure way for these children to save their money for the future. Even the ones living in slums have no reliable means to save.

"If there were a specialised bank for vulnerable workers and street children, they could get a chance to save their earnings for their future," Nur said.

Nur ran away from a Madrasa in Narayanganj eight years ago and embraced a rough life on the streets of Dhaka. He struggled to make a living here. "I sometimes worked as a painter, sometimes whatever else I could find," he said.

He was arrested once by police during his days on the streets and was confined to a vagrant shelter home at Mirpur.

A non-government organi-

sation (NGO) named Aparajeyo Bangladesh provided legal and other aid to Nur during his confinement at the vagrant shelter and took him into their custody later.

Nur was later introduced to a money deposit facility for street children called the "Child Development Bank" organised by Aparajeyo Bangladesh.

Nur said, "Ten months ago, I withdrew a total of Tk 17 thousand from the bank that I had deposited daily since the bank was launched in September, 2004. This savings helped me open a tailoring shop in Narayanganj where my physically challenged brother is the master tailor and I am his assistant."

He picked up several technical skills including tailoring during his days on the streets and only needed funds and a place to start his own venture.

Nur finally found a way to make his dream come true by saving up his earnings when the NGO launched the

savings scheme for street children on September 1, 2004.

Basudev Moitra, country director of the bank, told Star City that the bank offered only savings facilities and did not offer loans.

When asked about the legal grounds for operating the bank, he said, "Our goal is to establish a specialised bank for empowering the working street children financially and socially. We received approval from the NGO Bureau to receive deposits from street children."

Basudev said, "The members (street children) operate the bank on their own and keep track of transactions. We only helped them by launching the special bank two and half years ago and now the children are reaping the benefits."

The funds saved by the children would help them lay the groundwork for their establishment in the society, he added.



Nurul Huda and his physically challenged brother at work at his shop in Narayanganj.

Holiday markets yet to shape up



Not really gearing up; holiday market gradually shaping up.

SHAHNAZ PARVEEN

....New holiday markets set up on five city streets to rehabilitate evicted street vendors so far received poor response from both street vendors and buyers.

Street vendors are allowed to sell their goods between 8:00am to 5:00pm every Friday on specific streets of the capital. The designated places for these five holiday markets are on north side of Manik Mia Avenue, road from Matsya Bhaban to Segun Bagicha, a portion of road in front of Motijheel Ideal High School, road from Palash intersection to Nilkhel and Shialbari slope on road to Mirpur Zoo.

A small number of street vendors showed up at the designated places to sell their products on the second day after the holiday markets were introduced. Very few transactions took place there and sellers are still confused about this new idea. Most of them turned up at the markets just to

check out the situation. "Our customers used to shop from us on our way [home or work]. On holidays, there are less pedestrians of that sort and I am not sure if this will work out," said a gaamchha seller on Manik Mia Avenue. "I don't think I will be able to cover my transportation cost today. I will not be able to recover my investment this month."

"New ideas always take time to become popular. We are advertising about the locations of the holiday markets in newspapers. I think once people start visiting these markets, these will gradually shape up," said Kamrul, a t-shirt seller, said. "Holiday markets need to be set up beside New Market or any other market on holidays. Otherwise it will not draw that many customers."

"People from far away used to make special plans to shop from us on our way [home or work]. On holidays, there are less pedestrians of that sort and I am not sure if this will work out," said a gaamchha seller on Manik Mia Avenue. "I don't think I will be able to cover my transportation cost today. I will not be able to recover my investment this month."

Kamrul however was hopeful about future of the market on Manik Mia Avenue. "Manik Mia Avenue draws a lot of visitors in the afternoon. I think it will soon gain popularity among them."

Two of the holiday markets -- on Palash and the other at Shialbari -- failed to attract the street vendors.

"I live in Mirpur and which is why I wanted to check out the Shialbari holiday market. I don't know why they picked this place for a holiday market as this place is far away from the main road", said a vendor who was selling his product from a rickshaw van and was on the move.

When pointed out about selecting inconvenient places for holiday markets, Chowdhury, the chief estate officer at DCC, said, "It is difficult to find an open space or a free street in the city. We can't select a busy thoroughfare as it will again create traffic congestion. If people want to enjoy a free road, they will have to change the way they do shopping."

TV GUIDE

All programmes are in local time. The Daily Star will not be responsible for any change in the programme.

News Bulletin

BTW
News Headlines (Bangla) at 8:55 am; 12:10 pm; 2:00 pm; 3:00 pm; 4:00 pm; 7:00 pm.
News (Bangla) at 8:00 am 1:00 pm; 5:00 pm; 8:00 pm.
News (English) at 3:00 pm; 10:00 pm. Late Night News (Bangla and English) 11:30 pm. (To be telecast on all Bangla channels).

CHANNEL-i

News (Bangla) at 7:15 am; 9:00 am; 2:00 pm; 7:00 pm; 9:00 pm; 10:30 pm; 12:15 am.

ATN BANGLA

News (Bangla) at 7:00 am; 10:00 am; 2:00 pm; 7:00 pm; 10:00 pm; 11pm. News (English) 8:20am; 7:00pm.

Lates News (Bangla) at 9:00 a.m; 10:00 am; 11:00 am; 1:00 pm; 3:00 pm; 4:00pm; 6:00pm and 8:00 pm.

ntv

News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:00 am; 12:00 am; 6:15 pm; 9:30 pm. News (Bangla) 7:30 am; 2:00 pm; 5:00 pm; 7:30 pm; 10:30 pm.

CHANNEL 1

News (Bangla) at 8:00am; 12:00pm; 2:30pm; 6:30pm; 7:30pm; 10:00pm; 12:30am.

BANGLAVISION

News (Bangla) at 8:00am; 2:00pm; 6:00pm; 7:15pm; 10:30pm. News Headlines (Bangla) at 9:00pm News Headlines (English) at 9:05pm

RTV

News (Bangla) at 7:00am; 3:00pm; 7:15pm; 10:00pm. News Headlines (Bangla) at 10:30am

BTW

12:05 Maa O Shishur Kotha
12:30 Drama Serial: Swapno
Shonar Gaon
01:00 Shukhi Porbar
01:30 Selected Programme
02:15 Sisimpur
03:05 Cartoon
04:00 Cricket Shekha
04:30 Hijoj Tomal
05:00 Oi Notuner Keton
05:30 Dance Programme
05:30 Selected Programme
06:40 Shondha Maloti
07:00 Mati O Manush
07:30 Modhuchondha
08:35 Ekush Amar Ohonkar
09:40 Drama

ATN BANGLA

10:30 Anyodishiti
11:05 Talk Show: Meet the Press
12:15 Telefilm: Akash
12:45 Valobashar Gaan
01:30 Bhalobashar Bhalo
Bashi
02:30 Bishoyi Colchitrey
Bhalobasha
03:15 Shubho Shondhya
04:25 Bihbrat
05:40 Bishashish Bhalo
Basho Hy Na
06:20 Bhalobashar Diney
Bhalobashar Rangey
08:45 Special Drama: Rodela Bikel
10:00 Achhey Shudhu
Bhalobasha

CHANNEL-i

10:40 Swapno Diner Gaan
12:00 Amar Desh
01:00 Aj Potrikay
01:35 Shotro Proshno
11:05 Tritiyomatra
Sports Time (Live)

BTW

12:30 Citycell Tarokakothon
01:05 Ebong Cinemar Gaan
Shanghabad Potrey
Bangladesh
01:45 Public Reaction
Film: Hothat Brishiti
Amader Gaan
Sa Re Ga Ma
Boi Mela Protidin
02:40 Film: Hothat Brishiti
Amader Gaan
Sa Re Ga Ma
Boi Mela Protidin
04:05 Boi Mela Protidin
05:30 Lukochuri
Game Show: Bhabha
Dewood Game
House
12:00 Grameenphone Ajker
Shangbadpotro

ntv

10:30 Gallery
11:00 American Cinema
Ei Shomoy
11:00 Japan Video Topic
12:05 Drama Serial: More
More

ATN BANGLA

03:15 Mega Serial: Shaola
Drama Serial: Neer
04:25 Bhalobashar
Boshontey
Bhalobashar Pothey
Pothey

ntv

06:20 Shubho Shondhya
06:50 Bihbrat
08:25 Siddiqi Kabirs Recipe
09:10 Special Programme:
Shopner Neelpori
11:25 Din Dorpon

Rtv

10:00 Phalguner Nobin
Anorhey
10:45 Rtv Exclusive

CHANNEL 1

10:30 Amader Valentine
Joto Durey Jao Pher
Dekha Hobey
03:45 Drama Serial: Nironkor

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PICK OF THE DAY



Lukochuri
On Channel i at 7:50pm
Special Drama on Valentine's Day
Cast: Sajal, Nafiza



Rodela Bikel
On ATN Bangla at 8:45pm
Special Drama on Valentine's Day
Cast: Humayun Faridee, Subarna Mustafa

BANGLAVISION

04:20 Teen Love Teen
Lokshan
05:10 Borney Borney
Rochito
06:00 Ajker Bangladesh
06:35 Bhalobashar
Boshontey
07:00 Phalguner Nobin
Anorhey
07:45 Rtv Exclusive

CHANNEL 1

10:30 Tumi Megh Ami
Shoshi
08:15 Telefilm: Bimorgh
Boshonto

STAR PLUS

09:20 Kumkum - Pyra Sa

STAR GUIDE

09:30 Kumkum - Pyra Sa

DISCOVERY CHANNEL

09:30 Honey We're Killing The Kids

STAR MOVIES

10:30 Guess Who?
12:00 Life Aquatic With Steve Zissou
02:00 The Triangle - Ep. 03
03:30 The Librarian
05:10 Never Been Kissed
07:00 Shall We Dance
08:50 White Noise
10:30 Sleeping With The Enemy

STAR WORLD

09:00 The Simpsons
09:30 The Oprah Winfrey Show
10:00 Commander In Chief
11:30 Falcon Beach
12:30 The O.C.
01:30 Koffee With Karan
02:30 Oprah Winfrey Show
03:30 The Bold And The Beautiful
04:00 General Hospital
05:00 Fashion House
06:00 Arrested Development
07:30 The Simpsons
08:00 Friends
09:00 Seinfeld
10:30 American Idol

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

09:30 Flight Science
10:30 Telemall

ESPN

09:00 Sports Yatra
10:30 Nba Action
11:00 Commonwealth Bank Series 2006-07
12:30 English Premier Football League
13:00 African Adventures<br