

## Engage men to combat gender-based violence

Speakers tell dialogue

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Without the help of men and boys, it is not possible to reach the goal of eliminating gender-based violence from society, speakers at a dialogue said yesterday.

Instead of perceiving men and boys as perpetrators of violence against women, it is important to engage them as active agents of change and partners of solution, they added.

The speakers pointed out that misinterpretation of religion most of the times leads to gender-based violence in society, which needs to be addressed through raising awareness.

Jatiya Mahila Sangstha organised the dialogue titled 'Policy dialogue on engaging men and boys to end gender-based violence' under the project 'Promotion of gender equity and women's empowerment' at its conference room in the capital.

State Minister for Women and Children Affairs Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury said steps should be taken in the family for orientation of boys with special intervention during the socialisation period. Then comes the role of school and workplace, she said.

Arthur Erken, UNFPA representative to Bangladesh, said women face violence just for being women. Inequality is

deeply embedded in unequal power relations between men and women in society. It is important to deconstruct the existing notion of masculinity.

The speaker also said gender issues are absent in the school curriculum. They demanded a change in the draft education policy to incorporate gender issues in order to sensitize boys from their early age.

They also demanded immediate modification of inheritance law. Equal rights to inheritance is directly linked to the empowerment of women, they said.

Shaheen Anam, executive director of Manusher Jonno Foundation, said the government should take immediate steps to enact a separate law to address domestic violence, which will reduce the misuse of Women and Children Repression Prevention Act.

Prof Sadeka Halim of Dhaka University stressed the need to make the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs into two different ministries.

Rokeya Kabir, executive director of Nari Pragati Shiksha, Mahmudur Rahman, programme coordinator of Save the Children Sweden-Denmark, Rokeya Sultana, secretary to the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs, and Rowshan Ara Begum, director general of the Department of Women Affairs, also spoke.



Students of Mohammadpur Residential Model School take part in a programme on the occasion of Global Handwashing Day. Lifebuoy organised the event.

## GLOBAL HANDWASHING DAY OBSERVED

### Diarrhoea claims 50,800 children under 5 a year

#### Says Unicef and WHO report

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Global Handwashing Day 2009 was observed across the country yesterday as elsewhere in the world with the slogan 'Clean hands, save lives'.

Over 50,000 schoolchildren across the country washed their hands with soaps at the same time to create awareness of proper handwashing before eating and after defecation.

According to a recent global report on diarrhoea released by Unicef and WHO, around 50,800 children under five die of diarrhoea every year in the country.

Some 20,000 students from different parts of the city thronged the Residential Model School campus in the city to take part in the handwashing campaign, while around 30,000 students took part in another 50 different schools in other divisions.

The government and non-government organisations, including the Department of Public Health and Engineering (DPHE), Lifebuoy, Unicef, Save the Children, Brac, Sale, Plan, CARE and NGO Forum, organised the campaign with a view to promoting handwashing practice to prevent different types of diseases, including diarrhoea and respiratory infections.

As over 3.5 million under five children die of diarrhoeal disease and acute respiratory infections across the globe each

year, handwashing can reduce over 40 percent of diarrhoeal disease, while 25 percent of respiratory infections.

Inaugurating the campaign, LGD Secretary Monzur Hossain said the government is committed to reducing child mortality rate by 2015, adding that such campaign would help the government fulfil its commitment.

"Proper handwashing can help reduce the child mortality rate as well as to increase life expectancy significantly," he said, calling on the guardians to encourage their children to adopt the practice properly.

Dr Iyrolumun Uhaa, deputy representative of Unicef, said thousands of children across the globe die of diarrhoeal diseases, but simple practice like handwashing before eating and after defecation can save lives.

Through this campaign, people, especially children, would be encouraged to do this practice, the Unicef officials said.

Hosne Ara Loma, product group manager of Unilever Bangladesh, said, "In the handwashing campaign, Bangladesh had a record in the Guinness Book of World Record last year and I hope we would also be able to sustain the record this year."

A total of 75,000 primary and secondary schools along with 8,000 madrasas participated in the programme, she said, adding

that the day was first observed in 2008. Since then, the day has been echoing and reinforcing the call for improved hygiene practices worldwide.

Meanwhile, Smiling Sun Franchise and Dettol observed the day through distributing free soaps and other campaign materials, including posters and leaflets.

## HSBC's support for visually impaired

METRO DESK

Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) Limited in Bangladesh has joined hands with Blind Education and Rehabilitation Organisation (BERDO) to provide scholarships to a number of visually impaired students, says a press release.

BERDO has been operating in the country since 1991 to raise awareness about the challenges faced by blind and disabled people. It provides them with access to education, medicine and training with a view to helping them attain greater social and economic freedom.

In support of BERDO's activities, HSBC has donated funds for scholarships for 21 visually impaired students.

## GP launches Studyline

METRO DESK

Grameenphone, the largest mobile operator in the country, in partnership with Evista Technologies, launched a new service -- Grameenphone Studyline Service -- at a city hotel yesterday.

Studyline is a call centre-based service that provides callers education-related information over the phone.

Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid and Chairman of Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission Brig Gen (retd) Zia Ahmed were present at the launch as the chief guest and special guest respectively. Oddvar Hesjedal, chief executive officer of Grameenphone, and Syed Khairul Hassan, chief executive officer of Evista Technologies, were also present.

The service, first of its kind in the country, offers admission information on local schools, colleges and universities, admission procedures for renowned universities around the world, and information on standardised test like IELTS, SAT, GMAT, GRE, in addition to other relevant services.

"Studyline will be the most cost-efficient, time saving means to secure accurate information on queries related to education. What is more important is that information is available to anyone, anywhere in the country. No more will access to accurate information be centralised in Dhaka," said Hesjedal at the launching ceremony.

## Call for gender sensitivity in edn sector

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Speakers at a view exchange meeting yesterday stressed the need for maintaining gender sensitivity in all sectors of education, including education policy, curriculum, teachers, writers, teaching materials and strategies.

Focusing on building the new generation by providing non-communal education with the spirit of liberation war and democracy, they called on the government to finalise the national education policy immediately and take steps to implement it.

Steps Towards Development organised the meeting on 'National Education Policy: Gender Perspective' at WVA auditorium in the city.

Addressing the programme as the chief guest, Dhaka University Vice Chancellor Prof AAMS Arefin Siddique said primary education must be given the top-most priority as it helps establish the base of human life where students get chance to be good citizens.

He also emphasised arrangement of training for students alongside providing theoretical education in order to sensitise them with honesty, empathy and gender issue which would reflect on their life afterwards.

Ranjana Karmakar, executive director of Steps, presented a keynote paper.

The national education policy should contain some specific pledges or commitments on gender equity and non-communal issues to build a society based on equality and justice, he added.

The Steps official also focused on the women's

participation in primary to higher-level education along with creating a congenial atmosphere by increasing structural facilities.

Dr Nitai Das, director of Training and Communication Department at Population Science and Training Centre, presided over the meeting where Raushan Zahan, founding member and former president of Women for Women, Zobaia Nasreen of Anthropology Department at Dhaka University and Sima Moslem, training and research editor of Bangladesh Mahila Parishad also spoke.

## Architecture Week at NSU

METRO DESK

Architecture Week organised by Department of Architecture of North South University (NSU) will be observed from October 17 to 22 on the NSU campus at Bashundhara in the city, says a press release.

The opening ceremony of the week will be held at 10:00am tomorrow at the Architecture department.

MA Kashem, chairman of NSU Foundation, and Dr Hafiz SA Siddiqi, vice chancellor of NSU, will attend the programme.

Malaysian architect Dr Tan Loke Mun will deliver a lecture on green global cities at 5:00pm on Sunday. UGC Chairman Prof Nazrul Islam will attend the programme as the chief guest.

The closing ceremony of the week will be held on October 22.



PHOTO: COURTESY

Dr Philip Eng, senior consultant respiratory & ICU physician of Mount Elizabeth Medical Centre, Singapore, speaks at a seminar on 'Causes, prevention and management of lung diseases' at a city hotel on Wednesday. Parkway Health, which owns and operates Mount Elizabeth, Gleneagles and East Shore hospital in Singapore, organised the seminar.

## DU female students protest new seat arrangements

DU CORRESPONDENT

Resident students of Rokeya Hall at Dhaka University (DU) yesterday staged a demonstration in front of the vice chancellor's bungalow, protesting the authorities' decision to allocate seven students for each room of the hall instead of six.

Seeking the students' cooperation, the hall authorities on Wednesday issued a notice that allotment of one new student would be given to each room which has six boarders.

Protesting the decision, around 100 female students took to the street and put up a barricade on the road in front of the bungalow around 11:00am, halting traffic movement for an hour.

The students withdrew their demonstration around 12:00 noon after getting assurance from VC Prof AAMS Arefin

Siddique that the authorities would look into the matter.

Earlier, students brought out a procession and vandalised a notice board inside the hall on Thursday night. They also demonstrated in front of the provost's residence.

Hall Provost Prof Laila Nur Islam told The Daily Star that the authorities have postponed the decision of giving new allotment to the rooms of six boarders.

"Presently, there is an acute accommodation crisis at the hall and we sought boarders' cooperation to allow one new student to the room of six boarders for a temporary period," she added.

Last year, the hall authorities removed some 130 resident students from a building that was declared vulnerable to earthquake by expert committee and arranged their allotment to other buildings at the hall.

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**বিলাসবহুল ফ্ল্যাট**

✓ **মগবাজার** ০১১১৪৪৯৬৬৬৬  
সাইজ: ৭৪০-১১৪০ বর্গফুট

✓ **বনানী** ০১১১৪৪৯৬৬৬৬৬  
সাইজ: ২০০৬ বর্গফুট (দক্ষিণদুই)

✓ **কাকরাইল** ০১১১৪৪৯৬৬৬৬৬  
সাইজ: ১৮১০ বর্গফুট (কর্পার প্লট)

✓ **মতিঝিল** ০১১১২২৭৮৫০০০  
প্লট ও অফিস (সাইজ: ৬২৫-১১৭৫ বর্গফুট)

✓ **গ্রীণরোড** ০১১১৪৪৯৬৬৬৬৬  
সাইজ: ১২২৭ ও ১৪১০ বর্গফুট

✓ **পলওয়েল কার্পোরেশন** ০১১১৪৪৯৬৬৬৬৬  
রেডি সেকেন্ড হাউজ ও ওয়ার হাউজ বিক্রেতা

✓ **উত্তরা** ০১১১৪৪৯৬৬৬৬৬  
রেডি ও নির্মাণাধীন. সাইজ: ১৬৫৭, ১৮০৫, ১৮০৫, ২০৪০, ২০৪০, ১৯৯৫ বর্গফুট

**বিল্ডিং ফর ফিউচার লিঃ**

একম কর্তব্য। পল্লী শিল্প (পে ও এল) লিমিটেড, পল্লী, পল্লী-১১৫  
ফোন: ১৮০১৮৮, ১৮০১৮৮, ১৮০১৮৮, ১৮০১৮৮। ইমেইল: info@buildingforfutureltd.com  
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