

22pc addict children live in slums: Report

BSS, Dhaka

What are you doing? Asha asks her playmate as he takes smell keeping his mouth in a polybag. "Come and see what I am doing," says the boy and helps her learn the funny game. This is how 10-year-old Asha becomes a drug addict.

Asha, who hails from Barisal sadar, dropped out of primary school a year ago. Her mother runs their family with the money she earns supplying water to shops in the fish market in Barisal city, as her father does not do any work.

She came to know the boy on her way to school. At the beginning, she took smell considering it a mere 'fun'. Afterwards, she got habituated with taking the smell, as she could not pass her days without it.

Later, she was sent to Barisal Medical College Hospital for cure and from there to National Drug Addiction Cure Centre in Dhaka. She has been undergoing treatment for the last one year. But, she cannot take medicine regularly due to want of money.

Like Asha, two children including 10-year-old Khodeza were found taking smell from polythene bag on a footpath at Phathapath in the capital. Khodeza leads her life by selling the abandoned things including papers that she collects from dustbins and footpaths.

When asked why she takes smell by putting shoe making gum inside polybag, Khodeza said, "I do this because I want to forget agony in my life... after taking smell, I feel sleepy. It helps me forget the complex world; it isolates me from the mundane life."

According to a Unicef survey on "How street children are being drug addicts?" conducted in six divisions and 12 districts of Bangladesh, children are getting addicted to drugs due to environment and family related problems.

Of the addict street children, the report said, 55 percent children live in residential areas, 22 percent in slums, 12 percent in bus, launch and rail stations, three percent on footpaths, and eight percent in other places.

Some 16 percent children become drug addicts by self-efforts, 20 percent get familiar with drugs for instigation from friends, 63 percent get drug addiction following combined efforts or due to waste of money or to remove loneliness, said the report.



PHOTO: MUTUAL TRUST BANK

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over a cheque of yearly contribution for the third year provided by Mutual Trust Bank Ltd (MTB) to two families affected by BDR carnage of 2009 at a simple ceremony held at Gono Bhaban in the city recently while MTB Founding Chairman Syed Manzur Elahi looks on.



PHOTO: BRAC BANK

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over a cheque for Tk 4.8 lakh provided by Brac Bank Limited to Tanni Yasta Chowdhury, wife of Lt Col Elahi Manzur Chowdhury, at a function at Gono Bhaban recently while Brac Bank Director Shib Narayan Kairy looks on. Lt Col Elahi was killed in Pilkhana carnage in 2009.



PHOTO: MERCANTILE BANK

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands over a cheque for Tk 9.60 lakh as yearly contribution of the third year, out of 10 years financial support provided by BDR carnage in 2009, at a function at Gono Bhaban recently while vice chairman of the bank, M Amanullah, looks on.

3.5m farmers to reap 25pc higher rice yield

BSS, Dhaka

An estimated 3.5 million farmers of 11 districts are expected to reap high benefit from a donor-funded new project that assures increase in rice production by 25 percent.

Agriculture Minister Begum Motia Chowdhury along with the US Ambassador James F Moriarty will launch the project in Nalitabari of Sherpur today, official sources said yesterday.

According to project managers, farmers will see an income rise of Tk 15,000 from one hectare of land that would yield an additional 800kg of paddy with one third less uses of fertilisers.

The project promotes diffusion of fertiliser deep placement (FDP) technology, an

innovation that claims to be highly suitable for rice production by efficient uses of chemical fertilisers -- placing fertiliser granules near root zones of the plant. It will also focus on efficient uses of other agricultural inputs, including quality seeds and judicious use of water for higher land productivity.

The land productivity, according to the project profile, has fallen drastically in the past decades by the existing cropping pattern and intensity, losing an average two million metric tonnes of soil nutrients every year. It says deficiency of phosphorus and potassium in soil is on the rise.

"Farmers try to cover the soil nutrient losses through application of nitrogenous fertiliser which fails to attain objective and results in declining soil nutrient status of

arable lands," a senior official said.

Not only that, he said, the conventional use of urea fertiliser on land surface causes a 65 percent loss of nitrogen which in compound form is added to plants or lawns to stimulate growth.

Plants that do not have enough nitrogen turn yellow and eventually perish from a lack of food. The FDP technology prevents nitrogen losses by 50 percent.

The staple rice production in Bangladesh, the 6th largest rice producer in Asia, is a crucial part of the national economy, accounting for about 75 percent of agricultural land use and 28 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

In 2010 paddy production hit a record level of 50.3 million tonnes, about 4 percent higher than the previous year's record

crop. But the 1.5 increase of population every year and soaring price of rice in the world market have compelled Bangladesh to go for production of more rice for ensuring food security-if not food sovereignty at this stage.

High yielding varieties from abroad have been tried in research sites to adapt those with local environment. The new project-co-financed by the US- is expected to add more value to government endeavours, project managers said.

The project-Accelerating Agriculture Productivity Improvement (AAPI)- will initially be tried in the districts of Barisal, Pirojpur, Jhalokathi, Patuakhali, Borguna, Bagerhat, Madaripur, Shariatpur, Gopalganj, Mymensingh and Sherpur.



More Bangladeshi migrant workers return home to the arms of their loved ones yesterday at Shahjalal International Airport escaping the horror and uncertainty of turbulent Libya. (Story on Page 1)

PHOTO: STAR

University student crushed under train's wheel

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A private university student was crushed under the wheels of a train Wednesday night at the city's Khilkhet rail crossing.

The dead identified as Tanjid Hossain Mohan, 23, son of Mohammad Mojibur Rahman and a student of American International University, used to reside with his family at Nikunja-2.

The body sliced into four pieces was recovered at about 10:00am Thursday morning, railway police said. The police sent it to Dhaka Medical College morgue.

Selim Sardar, a cousin of the victim, identified the body and told this correspondent

that Mohan went missing Wednesday night. He suspected that some unidentified people killed his cousin and dumped the body onto the rail tracks.

Quoting witnesses, Sub-Inspector (SI) Nazrul Islam of Kamalapur Railway Police Station, however, said Mohan was talking over the cell phone while crossing the rail tracks and a Dhaka-bound train ran him over.

Morgue sources said they did not find any injury marks on the body.

An unnatural death case was filed with the police station in this connection, and a murder case will be filed depending on what the autopsy report says, the SI said.

The Daily Star

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Back Page			Back Inner (4 Colour only)	BDT 3000/- (Per Col. Inch)
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Home Page	Top banner Banner News ticker Spot banner 1 Spot banner 2 Spot banner 3 Spot banner 4 Spot banner 5 Panel ad	Size (480 x 60) Pixels BDT 2,50,000/- Size (400 x 50) Pixels BDT 2,00,000/- Size (170 x 25) Pixels BDT 1,50,000/- Size (340 x 50) Pixels BDT 1,50,000/- Size (610 x 50) Pixels BDT 1,25,000/- Size (610 x 50) Pixels BDT 1,00,000/- Size (610 x 50) Pixels BDT 85,000/- Size (170 x 40) Pixels BDT 20,000/- (all applicable taxes extra)	1) Back Cover (Ptg area. 6"x9")	BDT 25,000/- per issue
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