

SDG success lies in lifting up the underprivileged

Says NGO network

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The government has to bring marginalised and underprivileged communities to the mainstream by taking effective action plans if it wants to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, development organisation Sushasoneer Jonny Procharavizan (Supro), said yesterday.

Supro, a network of grass-roots NGOs in Bangladesh, also said more budgetary allocations are necessary for education, health and agriculture sectors to accelerate attaining the SDGs.

Supro gave its observations through a press conference at Dhaka Reporters Unity. It was organised marking the 3rd anniversary of the adoption of SDGs by the United Nations.

Presenting a keynote paper, Supro General Secretary MA Quader said budget allocation for the education sector is only 2.09 percent of the country's GDP, but it is supposed to be 6 percent as per the recommendations of Unesco.

Besides, budget for the health sector is below one percent of GDP, which the World Health Organization (WHO) says should be at least 5 percent, he said.

"We don't know how it is possible for the government to achieve SDGs in time with such budgetary allocations for these crucial sectors," he said.

He called upon the government to build partnership with the private sector to get financial and technical support for SDG efforts.

Supro Vice-chairperson Manju Rani Pramanik and its National Council Member Ahmed Swapan Mahmud also spoke at the programme.



Rights advocate Sultana Kamal speaks at a citizens' dialogue on "State-Citizen Relationship: Liability and Responsibility" at Cirdap yesterday. Present at the programme, among others, were Prof Ajoy Roy and Khushi Kubir. The discussion was organised under the banner of Bangladesh Nagorik Samaj.

PHOTO: STAR

A godsend for working

FROM PAGE 3 completed the phase of early learning and later got admitted to schools.

These children are more proactive than others in schools as they have already been in an institution, said Sandoz.

When a mother leaves her child with a neighbour or their grandparents, the babies usually spend the day barefoot in an unhygienic environment, said Salma, a caregiver of the crèche in Mirpur-11, who has been working for 12 years with Phulki.

Living in impoverished areas and amid adverse circumstances, access to an early learning environment -- which is crucial for optimal brain development -- is hard to get for these children, she said.

The daycare is not only a place where a child spends time playing, they also learn discipline, manners, and get

their first lessons of numbers and alphabets, she added.

"In the past, I also kept my child with a neighbour who charged me Tk 1,000 a month. Our children were confined to a room back then or were left on their own but now at the crèche, caregivers bathe them, feed them, and put them to sleep," she added.

Bangladesh Labour Law 2006 (amended in 2013) makes it mandatory for every organisation with 40 or more female workers to have one or more rooms to keep children below six years. It also specifies details of all amenities the crèches must have, including trained and experienced female caregivers.

However, the implementation of the law is rare, forcing many working mothers to make the difficult choice -- between quitting their jobs and compromising with their toddlers'

childhood.

In such situation, standard childcare facilities can yield positive results to the labour market and to the economic growth of families as well as the country.

Sandoz Haider said the foundation was planning to extend the service hours to 8:00pm every day, except for the weekend.

At present, the crèches remain open from 7:00am to 5:00pm, but many female workers work till 7:00pm, he said.

Keeping sustainability in mind, Phulki and the Aga Khan Foundation are piloting a process for raising community funds through individual sponsorship of children, and funds from garment factories through their corporate social responsibility initiatives, so that the centres can become financially sustainable over time.

Another arrested over 'gang rape' of girl in M'singh

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Detectives arrested a man in Gazipur yesterday over the "gang rape" of a 12-year-old girl in Mymensingh 11 days ago.

Sohagh Mia, 24, was held in Joydevpur area, said Shah Kamal Akanda, officer-in-charge of the Detective Branch of police in Mymensingh.

After Shohagh confessed to raping her, he was produced before a Mymensingh court, said the OC.

On September 14, the girl was going to Bhaluka from Trishal by a CNG-run auto-rickshaw, said police.

Five youths impersonating passengers gagged her with a towel and took her to a nearby bush, said Trishal Police Station Officer-in-Charge Azizur Rahman.

They raped her there and left her on Dhaka-Mymensingh highway near Nishinda Bazar the next day, he said.

The girl's family filed a case with Trishal Police Station the same day, accusing five youths.

Police arrested the auto-rickshaw driver, Selim Mia, 30, the same day.



Demanding the scrapping of Digital Security Act, members of Dhaka Union of Journalists hold a rally in front of Jatiya Press Club yesterday. The act enables the police to exercise unfettered power that may obstruct independent journalism in the country.

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Rivers can't

FROM PAGE 3 Bapa Abdul Matin said 60 percent pollution of the rivers is done by industrial organisations, 30 percent by Dhaka Water Supply and Sewerage Authority, and rest 10 percent is done by general people.

Urging everyone to be united against land grabbers, he said though there was a directive from the High Court to set up demarcation pillars, it was not done properly and many of them were erected into the river due to political pressure.

Among others, Md Alaaddin and Sharmeen Murshid, members of NRCC; Md Zahidul Islam Bhuiya, chairman of Dhalla Union Parishad, Shingair; and Shamsul Haque, general secretary of Nadi o Paribesh Unnayan Shagnstha, Trimohoni also addressed the programme.

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Accept demands

FROM PAGE 3 of the election schedule, resignation of the government, formation of non-party election-time impartial administration, reconstitution of the Election Commission, not using EVMs in the polls and deployment of army.

Nasir Uddin Ahmed Pintu Smriti Sangsad organised the programme at Jatiya Press Club demanding the release of BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia and its Dhaka south city unit president Habib-un-Nabi Khan Soheli from jail.

Mosharraf, a BNP standing committee member, however, expressed doubt whether the ruling party will accept the demands. "They (AL) won't accept the demands as they don't have such morale. They don't have the courage to face people."

He alleged that the ruling party is hatching plots against the national unity to cling to power by force and establish one-party rule.

The BNP leader also criticised the government for passing the Digital Security Bill, 2018 in parliament. He alleged that the government has made the law to perpetuate its power by gagging the media.

He also alleged that the government is implicating their party leaders and activists with several thousand "fictitious" cases to hold another lopsided election by force.

Two accused express

FROM PAGE 5 Meanwhile, the bail of Khaleda was extended for a day in the case as a Dhaka court is scheduled to hear arguments from the defence today.

Judge Md Akhteruzzaman of the Special Judge's Court-5 of Dhaka passed the order after Khaleda's lawyer Sanaullah Mia submitted a petition seeking an extension of her bail.

The lawyer also submitted another petition seeking adjournment of the argument hearing until her health improves, and until they challenge the September 20 order for running the trial in absence of Khaleda.

Advocate Aminul Islam, a lawyer for Munna, appealed to the court, saying that they would go to the higher court challenging the legality of the order. Hence, the arguments hearing should be adjourned for 20 days.

In another petition, lawyer Md Akhteruzzaman said his client Monirul Islam would also submit a writ petition with the High Court for transfer of the case.

On February 8, the same special court jailed Khaleda for five years in the Zia Orphanage Trust graft case and sentenced her elder son Tarique Rahman, now the acting chairman of BNP, and four others to 10 years' imprisonment each.

The Anti-Corruption Commission lodged the Zia Charitable Trust graft case with Tejgaon Police Station in August 2011, accusing Khaleda and three others of abusing power to raise funds for the trust from unknown sources.

Six held over

FROM PAGE 5 place, OC Mohsin said, adding that the other arrestees are hawkers.

The girls were raped for nearly two hours before being rescued, when family members of the girls went to the market looking for them, he said.

Additional Deputy Commissioner (South) Abdur Rauf said, "After their arrests, the girls identified all six, while Enam and Rubel managed to escape during the drive."

The girls were sent to One Stop Crisis Centre at Chittagong Medical College Hospital (CMCH).

The six arrestees were sent to jail after they gave confessional statements before metropolitan magistrates, OC Mohsin said.

INVITATION FOR TENDER

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