DAM observes Int’l Women Day

As in the past, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) has observed International Women Day this year also on 8 March. Marking the day, an exceptional program containing expressing opinion, delivering speech, rendering song, vision based open discussion was held at the DAM head office. DAM President Kazi Rafiqul Alam, Executive Director D. M. Ehsanur Rahman, PRD Director Kazi Ali Reza, Program Director Khawja Shamsul Huda, Training and Material Development (TMD) Director Rabeya Sultana and officials of different divisions, units and programs were present and took part in it.

DAM President Kazi Rafiqul Alam said, Dhaka Ahsania Mission has been working relentlessly to empower and develop women. The organization has already ensured the participation of women in its various programs and institutes.

DAM Executive Director Dr. M. Ehsanur Rahman said, we have already prepared a strategy paper for 2015-2025 where the equal participation of women has been focused highly. Alongside the half-day program at DAM head office, various projects at field level also observed the day.
Prize Distribution ceremony of Annual Sports & Cultural competition of Ahsania Mission College was held at the College ground on 21 March 2015. Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) President Kazi Rafiqul Alam was present as chief guest. Director of Public Relations Division Kazi Ali Reza, USA Secretary of the organization Anisul Kabir Jasir, College Principal Professor Sheikh Syed Ali, Vice-Principal Md. Mafizur Rahman and the members of governing body were present in the program.

The main program was divided into two parts. At the first part, chief guest Kazi Rafiqul Alam and Prof. Sheikh Shahid Ali handed over the prizes to the winners after their welcome address. A festive environment was witnessed with the presence of almost 13 hundreds students and their guardians.

Noted educationist Khan Bahadur Ahsanullah (R.) established Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM). As part of various educational and social development based activities, Ahsania Mission College was founded in 2002. Principal of the college Sheikh Syed Ali hoped that with the assistance of guardians and teachers, the school will reach its idealistic destination.

Health camp in Narshingdi

With the financial support of Palli Karma Sayahok Foundation (PKSF), “Samriddhi” project of Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) organized free health camp for pregnant mothers and children at Sukundi Nazimuddin High School Premises under Monohordi Upazila of Narshingdi District. A team of gynecologists and child specialists tested pregnant mother and children ranging 0-5 age. Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) of Monohordi Mahmud Hasan inaugurated the camp. Sukundi UP Chairman Abdul Gani Farazi, Microfinance Head of DAM Md. Asaduzzaman spoke on the occasion. Free Iodine Tablets were distributed among the pregnant mothers. A large number of people of Monohordi participated.
Working Capital distributed in Sharishabari

Dwail UP Chairman distributed working capital among the vegetable cultivators at Dwail Union of Sharishabari Upazila under Jamalpur District in March 2015. With the technical support of Helvetus Swiss Inter-Cooperation and financial assistance of Concern Universal-Bangladesh, Dhaka Ahsania Mission has been implementing CATT Project in Jamalpur District. As part of this activities, working capital was distributed among the 2318 families of 5 Unions under the upazila. Among these beneficiaries 30 vegetable cultivators received this resource to build exhibition plots. Field facilitator of Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) Md. Mahmudul Hasan and Community Mobilization Officer Md. Jahidul Islam were present at the distribution program.

Reception for A+ achievers

Like children of many other schools, learners from UNIQUE II Project of Dhaka Ahsania Mission also achieved ‘A+’ and ‘A’ grade in the last PSC examination held on 2014. To encourage these successful children, a reception was given them recently by the community. In the reception, a gift box with a commendation letter from UNIQUE II project has been provided to 46 learners of Dhaka and Mymensingh region. Each gift box contained (i) School bag (ii) Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (iii) Geometry box (iv) Scale (v) Color box (vi) Water pot (vii) 6 Pens (viii) 6 Pencils and (ix) Clip board. This recognition supplemented by small gifts and commendation letter have pleased the children and their parents to a great extent.

Seminar on Multigrade Teaching learning held at IER, University of Dhaka

A seminar titled Multigrade Teaching in the Asia pacific region (Bangladesh scenario) was held on 25 February 2015 at the Institute of Education and Research (IER), University of Dhaka. The key note paper was presented by Prof. Nazmul Huq, IER and Dr Zia-us Sabur of BRAC University. Among others, Dr M Ehsanur Rahman, Executive Director, Dhaka Ahsania Mission, Dr Jalal Uddin, Director, IER, Dr. Janyandra Biswas, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Education and Md. Alamgir, DG DPE were present on the occasion. UNIQUE II project is being implemented through multigrade approach supported by European Union.
Mock-drill on Earthquake held

A Mock-drill to enhance awareness on Earthquake and Fire was held at the Baghchar Government Primary School and Baghchar Ideal High School ground under Kadamtali Thana of Dhaka City on 21 March 2015. With the financial assistance of Cofra Foundation, Dhaka Ahsania Mission (DAM) and Plan International Bangladesh jointly organized the program under “Disaster Preparedness and Mitigation: Build Safe And Resilient Communities” project. The project is playing vital role to form volunteer team, plan implementation for ward based a disaster risk reduction at 5 wards of Dhaka South City Corporation (DSCC). Sixty Government and Non-government Schools of those 5 wards are implementing various activities regarding disaster risk reduction.

Students of Baghchar School, School disaster management committee, Student Council, Local and National Volunteers participated in the mock-drill. Bangladesh Fire Service and Civil Defense supervised the overall program. District relief and rehabilitation officer of Dhaka Anowarul Islam was present in the program as chief guest while President of Baghchar Government Primary School and Baghchar Ideal High School Tazul Islam chaired. Assistant Social Service Officer of Dhaka Zone-05 Afzalur Rahman, Officer in Charge (OC) of Shyampur Thana Nur-e Azam Mia, OC of Kadamtali Thana Abdus Salam Mia and Unit Manager of Plan International Bangladesh Abdul Mannan were present as special guests.

Assistant Director of Dhaka Ahsania Mission Jahangir Alam delivered the welcome address.

Match Making Workshop held in Jamalpur

A Match Making workshop between ‘medium and small entrepreneurs’ and ‘input and output market actor, LSP and Money Lending organizations’ was held at Sharishabari Upazila on 19 February 2015. The workshop aimed at easing the relationship with the financial institution to get loan and creating market connection for selling their goods at fair price. Managers of Grameen Bank, ASA and Sakti Foundation promised to help the entrepreneur from their respective position.

Training on Finance, Accounts and Administration held

Capacity Building Training on Finance, Accounts and Administration of DAM-CLC project under education programs of Dhaka Ahshania Mission was held on 21-22 March 2015. The 2 day training was organized in DAM Regional Training Center in Chittagong where 34 staffs including project’s Regional Managers, Accounts & Finance Officers, Regional Managers, 12-Upazila Area Managers, Admin & Finance assistances as well as project’s Accounts Officer, Coordinator Basic Education and related staffs from 4 districts of Jamalpur, Noakhali, Laximpur and Chittagong participated. The training discussed the basis of Accounts, Finance & Accounts Management, DAM Financial Policies, VAT-TAX, Financial Reporting, Audit, Administration. As a resource person, Finance & Accounts Manager of DAM-CLC project Khandoker Shahiduzzaman facilitated the training. Khaduzunahar Shapna coordinated the training. Facilitator discussed the easy solution on Finance, Accounts and administration related issue and presented guidelines of these issues. On the other hand, he also built field staffs capacity through question-answer session. That the training was organized with the financial support of EO SC, EACI, Marico Bangladesh, Cordaid- the Netherlands. It is believed that through the training, DAM-CLC staffs will be more experienced on Finance, Accounts and Administration that will contribute to project’s transparency, accountability as well increase project workforce.

AMCC observes Independence Day

Ahsania Mission Children City (AMCC), Panchagarh observes all the National Days like Bengali New Year, International Mother Language Day, Independence Day, Victory Day every year. In this regard, AMCC observed the Independence Day 2015 on March 26. AMCC’s scout team participated in a parade and conferred salute to District Commissioner. The program was arranged by Panchagarh district administration at Panchagarh district auditorium. Completing the parade, children came back and arranged a rally from AMCC to Amkathal Bazar. Returing to campus, children participated in various sports, essay writing, art competition and education coordinator briefed them on the importance of the Day. Then a cultural program was organized among AMCC’s children. At noon all the children were served rich food.
Kajol Mia, 42, a resident of Kachhukhet in the capital, has been smoking cigarette for the last 10 years now. At first, he used to smoke one pack of less costly cigarette daily. Now, he reduced the number and takes only 5/6 cigarettes daily due to sickness. He has been suffering from cough, breathing problem, fever, loss of appetite and pain in his whole body for the last two months. A labour by profession, he visited the outdoor patient unit of Unani and Ayurvedic Medical College at Mirpur in the capital.

On checking his condition, Medical Officer Dr. Shazzadul Alam told him that he faced the problems due to smoking.

Prescribing some medicines, Dr. Shazzad advised him to give up the habit immediately.

The man said that he would try his best to turn away. “But it would take time as I am a chronic smoker”, he said.

He said that he learnt the habit from friends, who inspired him to start smoking, while he had been staying at his village home at Tarail upazila of Kishoreganj district.

Smoking-free life can ensure happiness

“IT is difficult to avoid peer pressure at young age. The smoking gave no other benefit than giving the good feeling. Hence, I was compelled to continue the habit”, he said.

It is clear that the man started smoking inspired by friends and it was then difficult for him to avoid the peer pressure. He got good feeling from smoking, for which he had been continuing the habit though it posed a great health risk. As he was the son of a poor family, his parents showed negligence regarding his smoking.

Doctors said cigarette contain nicotine, a substance which is responsible for addiction of the users. Anti-tobacco campaigner Advocate Syed Mahbubul Alam called upon all concerned to keep their vigil so that children do not fall victim to peer pressure for smoking.

Smoking is injurious to health and even it may end the life of smokers. Such a situation is never expected. So, vigil is necessary.

Tobacco products such as cigarette, gul, sada pata, pan masala (betel quid), khoini, jarda and nassi are mainly used in our country. All those contained harmful elements, which can pose serious health hazard including death.

Take the case of another man, Nazrul Islam, an Advocacy Officer of a big national NGO. He, aged 43 now, has been smoking cigarette for the last 24 years. Though he regretted the habit, he cannot discard it as smoking gives him refreshment.

“As a conscious citizen, I know smoking is very bad, I smoke to get refreshment. Hence, I find it tough to quit. I acquired the habit after seeing my friends smoking during my college life”.

Nazrul thought that effective steps need to be taken to tackle the problem. Some problems, prevailing in our society, make it easier to smoke. Tough measures are needed for its solution, he said.

He cited the examples of Singapore and Thailand where smoking is not allowed at home and many other places and huge amount of fine is realized if anyone violate the rules. The rules are strictly enforced there.
“Certain places have been kept for smoking in those countries. Smoking is not allowed at any other places and huge amount of fine is realized in case of violation of the rules. Inmates also do not allow smoking at home. Such rules brought positive result in those countries and I hope it would also bring the same if it is strictly enforced in our country”, said Nazrul.

The certain places, designated for smoking, may not easily be available to the smokers due to distance and any other causes when they desire to smoke. They would also refrain from smoking at other places fearing huge amount of fine. If the amount of fine is raised and tobacco rules are strictly enforced in our country, it would undoubtedly bring a good result for tobacco control, he said.

A smoker may not easily go to the designated smoking places for smoking purpose, which may discourage them to go for smoking. On the other hand, if inmates take tough stance against smoking, smokers would be discouraged.

Giving his opinion, Advocate Aminul Islam (not his real name) said that he failed to smoke at his home due to objection by his minor son. He felt ashamed when his son derided him for the habit, which forced him to stop smoking at home.

Aminul also told that his father, who was a smoker, also stopped smoking at home due to opposition by his under-aged son.

On curbing smoking, Nazrul proposed the introduction of strict monitoring system by school teachers and guardians over students so that the students cannot resort to smoking. Strong role by all concerned can contain smoking.

In our country, the amount of fine for smoking in the prohibited places is less, people see smoking anywhere they like and anti-tobacco laws are not enforced, said anti-tobacco activists.

While sharing their views, many smokers told that they smoke cigarettes mainly to get good feeling and refreshment though they know that the habit is not good.

Anti-tobacco campaigners said tobacco use never brings any good. Smoking may give temporary refreshment, but ultimately it causes long-lasting problems. Then, why should we choose temporary relief? If we want refreshment and good feeling, we can get it in many positive ways. We should not use the harmful things for getting refreshment. We should not seek pleasure, which ultimately proves destructive.

We all have to be serious and sincere to find out ways of putting an end to smoking.

Addiction Management and Integrated Care (AMIC), tobacco prevention institution of Dhaka Ahsania Mission, suggested following steps in this regard. The smoker himself has to take decision of discontinuing the habit. Discussion on means of avoiding smoking can be held with those who have already deserted the habit. Frank discussion on quitting smoking can be held with family members or close ones. It is needed to take cooperation of all for discarding the bad habit.

Try to avoid those places which remind you of the matter of smoking. You have to fix a certain date for forsaking smoking. One day before forsaking, all cigarette packets, astray and lighter have to be thrown away. Keep busy yourself in various works on the day of quitting smoking. Thought of smoking can never be brought back into mind. Keep yourself busy in another work if the thought of smoking comes into mind. Amloki, betel nut, chewing gum or lozenge can be kept into mouth.

Boycotting smoking and other tobacco products can help us lead a healthy life. Tobacco use not only hampers our health but also causes great damage to our economy and environment. So, we should boycott all the tobacco products by removing all the barriers, which would help us build a happy life.
Activities of DAM CLC