

Man-woman equity to be established

Women uplift action plan included in FFYP: PM

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina on Wednesday said, an Action programme for national women development has been included in the Fifth Five-Year Plan to establish man-woman equity, ensure empowerment and security of women and guarantee their human rights, reports BSS.

Referring to the national women development policy announced by her government she said that it laid emphasis for socio-economic emancipation of the women by establishing their rights in state, social, economic and political fields.

The Prime Minister was addressing as chief guest at the launching ceremony of "community ownership of reproductive health initiatives a "Vision-2000" funded project at Hotel Sheraton in Dhaka.

Being implemented by Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB), the project is designed to facilitate, foster and accelerate people's initiatives, plans and actions for improvement of quality of their life and development of their community with special emphasis on high quality sexual and reproductive health services.

Health and Family Welfare Minister Salah Uddin Yusuf, State Minister Dr. M. Amanullah, President International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) Dr. Attiya Inayetullah, Vision-2000 Fund Director Josephine Mayo, Director General of FPAB Dr. Ahmed Neaz, FPAB Honorary Secretary General Prof. Syeda Firoza Begum and FPAB Vice-President Advocate Mohammad Enayet Ali also spoke on the occasion. FPAB President Dr. Neelima Ibrahim presided.

The Prime Minister said, her government attaches topmost priority to eradication of hunger, poverty and illiteracy. The government has taken

up integrated programme for expansion of public health services including maternal and child health, she said.

The Prime Minister said a special programme is under implementation for improving the health services and extending pre-natal and post-natal services of the mothers. With a view to improving the quality of child and maternity services obstetric programme has been initiated last year in five thana health complexes in the first phase on an experimental basis, she said.

Referring to various measures already taken up by her government for enhancing the skill of healthcare management system, the Prime Minister said that one thousand 29 doctors have been appointed while

arrangements have been completed for appointment of more four thousand nurses in phases. Besides, various development projects are underway for creating self-employment opportunities for the women. As a step for empowering the women we have made the provision for direct election of women members to the union parishads. Such provisions would also be made in case of municipal and corporation elections, she added.

The Prime Minister said side by side with ensuring rights of the children her government has already issued orders for making tougher measures against child trafficking, child labour and physical and mental persecution of children. "We have

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also taken initiative to ensure equity and remove disparity between male child and female child". She said adding that because of her government's initiatives the country's garments industries have been made free from child labour.

The Prime Minister said, the Food for Education Programme has been attracting the children from the poorer families to the school.

Going back to the background of the introduction of family planning activities in the country, she said although it started almost 45 years ago we are yet to attain the desired goal. She pointed out that after the liberation of Bangladesh family planning activities were given renewed emphasis under the leadership of our great leader and the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The Prime Minister said, while rebuilding the war-torn country, Bangabandhu took appropriate measures to extend the family planning activities at grassroots level all over the country. "The nation today derives benefit of the long term programmes adopted by the great leader", she added.

Turning back to her government's steps in this sector, the Prime Minister said that the government has formulated the draft of the fifth health and population project (HAPP) five based on the agenda, strategy and philosophy of the recently held Cairo International Population and Development Conference and the fourth women summit in Beijing.

The Prime Minister said that at present the NGOs and GOB are working together and in achieving success in the fields of population and poverty alleviation in the country. At present nearly eight million poor and destitute women are organised in Bangladesh mostly by the NGOs. They have distributed nearly 185 billion Taka in the form of micro-credit of which 85 per cent of the recipients are women.

The Prime Minister sought cooperation of all in her government's

thrust to break the chains of poverty, deprivation and malnutrition to build "Golden Bangladesh" as dreamt by the Father of the Nation.

Mr. Salahuddin Yusuf said that because of the quick cooperation between the government and the NGOs, the country has achieved 50 per cent Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (CPR). Referring to the Vision-2000 projects, the Minister hoped that this project would show a new dimension of integration and we are looking forward for its success.

Dr. Prof. Amanullah said that the government under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is fully committed to achieve the target of health for all by 2000 AD and we would certainly welcome potential contributions from the NGOs.