

PM with underprivileged children Provide a better life to the deprived

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia on Tuesday passed her evening among underprivileged children reared by a voluntary organisation working to provide a better life to the poor and deprived, reports UNB.

Begum Zia attended the 'Surovi' function at Shilpakala Academy which featured prize distribution, painting exhibition and a colourful cultural programme staged by the less-fortunate children.

Cheering and singing children greeted the prime minister on arrival at the venue where she inaugurated the programme by releasing balloons. She went round the gallery admiring the paintings by the young artists of 'Surovi' which at present is providing schooling as well as vocational training which includes book binding, candle making, tailoring, pottery and electronics to some 20,000 children through 17 branches

of the charity across the country.

More than one and a half lakh distressed children have seen the light of knowledge and a better life through this voluntary organisation since it was established in 1979.

Finding the motherly chief executive of the country amongst them, the beaming children and juveniles sang, danced and recited poems with enthusiasm at the cultural show which preceded prize distribution.

Five boys and girls received gold and nine of them silver medals for excellence in different extracurricular activities. Some 22 teachers also were given certificates of acknowledgement to their sincerity and dedication in making the life of the destitute children happy.

Addressing the function, the prime minister said only education could accelerate creativity and increase skill. "Thus there is no alternative to education for ensuring development and progress", she added. The prime minister talked upon other organisations to come forward with the missionary zeal of 'Surovi' to spread the light of education in the country.

Begum Zia reaffirmed her government's commitment to expansion of education and reminded of the highest allocation in the national budget to

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education sector.

She listed different educational programmes of the present government including 'Food for Education' for the children of distressed families, compulsory primary education, female education, mass education and free schooling for girls in the rural areas.

"The government has taken all-out initiative for expansion of education", she said but admitted that doing this Herculean task is not possible for the government alone and invited private initiatives in this regard.

The prime minister praised the 'Surovi' effort in assuaging the sufferings of society's down-trodden.

Founder of the organisation Syeda Iqbal Mand Banu, Director Abu Taher and Headmistress Begum Nur Jahan Huj also spoke on the occasion.

Two tiny tots of the Surovi family presented their colourful paintings to the prime minister while the founder presented her with a crest.