

Govt to ensure education, health of children : Saifur

By A Staff Reporter

Finance Minister M Saifur Rahman on Tuesday reiterated the commitment of the present democratic government to provide health, education and nutrition requirements to the country's child population including the girl child.

Inaugurating the Bangladesh Decade Action Plan for the Girl Child (1991-2000) as chief guest at a function at the Osmati Memorial Hall in city on Tuesday morning held under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Welfare, he described the action plan as 'significant' in the context of attaining overall socio-economic development of the country.

Mr Saifur Rahman said for attaining a significant overall development, high literacy rate of the country's girl child to be achieved by 80 to 90 per cent.

In this context, he described a

deplorable condition of the prevailing primary education scenario and said over 60 per cent of the total education budget is being spent in the primary sector.

The Finance Minister further said that social awareness is urgently needed to remove this deplorable condition in the country's primary education.

Referring to the various programmes taken up by the government for upholding the fate of the child population including the girl child, Mr Rahman said top most priority had been attached to the education of child.

He mentioned the Compulsory Primary Education Pro-

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Health of children

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programme and free female education programme upto Class eight in high schools, and said that the government has undertaken a plan titled "Food for Education" on experimental basis at least in one union in every thana of the country to check ever-increasing 'drop-outs' in schools.

Mr Rahman said the government has sanctioned Taka 150 crore as scholarships this year to encourage female education. He underscored the need for raising the literacy rates among the women for attaining the success of various socio-economic programmes including the population control campaign which mainly depends on education of womenfolk of the country.

The Finance Minister further said with the implementation of the plan for the girl child, the constitutional rights of the girl child would be established and at the same time will enhance their status in the society.

The launching function of the Bangladesh Decade Action Plan for the Girl Child was also addressed, among others, by minister for Post and Tele-Communications Tariqul Islam, State Minister for Women Affairs Mrs Sarwari Rahman, State Minister for Social Welfare Fazlur Rahman, Secretary of the Ministry of Social Welfare Prof K M Fariduddin, Chairperson of Bangladesh Shishu Academy Dr Quazi Anwara Mansur and UNICEF Country Representative Mr Rolf C Cariera.

Post and Tele-Communication Minister Tariqul Islam in his address said employment generation for the country's

womenfolk would help them attain their due status in the society. In this context, he stressed the need for primary education for the girl child of the country.

Mrs Sarwari Rahman, State Minister for Women Affairs highlighted various prevailing disparities between genders in the society and asked for concerted efforts of all to remove these disparities.

Mr Fazlur Rahman, State Minister for Social Welfare in his address stressed the urgent need for action-oriented programme to remove various apartheid policies now existing in the society for a prosperous future generation.

The Bangladesh Decade Action Plan for the girl child (1991-2000) was formally launched on Tuesday.

The overall goal of the action plan is to coordinate and strengthen social, legal, educational, health and nutritional programmes and measures aimed at survival, development and protection of the girl child in Bangladesh.

The action plan has been adopted on the basis of the spirit of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as those of the SAARC Summit Declaration the formulation of the plan following the commitment of Bangladesh government to achieve the goals and objectives of the SAARC decade plan of action for the child 1991-2000.