Shelter, education for all children

PM asks social welfare ministry to take steps

UNB, *Dhaka*

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has directed the social welfare ministry to take steps to ensure shelter and education for all the children, including orphans and street urchins.

"I don't want to see any child passing days in a miserable condition living alongside streets without going to school...we'll have to ensure a better life for them all," she said.

The PM was speaking at the National Social Services Day 2015 and inaugural of the Social Services Week 2015 at Osmani Memorial Auditorium in the capital yesterday.

Hasina said her government is implementing many programmes for the welfare of the ultra poor, physically-challenged people, widows, abandoned women and shelter-less people as it believes in the welfare of the commoners.

The premier also mentioned the government has taken programmes for the wellbeing of marginalised people, hijra (transgender), dalit (untouchable) and bede (nomadic) communities as they are usually neglected socially and economically.

Hasina said it would not take too long to fulfill people's basic rights -- food, clothes, shelter, medicare and education -- as the government has taken numerous programmes. to this end.

Observing that the country's poverty rate now stands at 24 percent, the PM reiterated that this has to be brought down by 10 percent further before her government's current term ends.

"We're planning our programmes, keeping this target in mind....I believe this can be done," Hasina said, directing the officials and employees of the social welfare ministry to play a greater role in achieving the target.

The ministry organised the programme with its minister Syed Mohsin Ali in the chair. Speaking on the occasion, Mohsin came down heavily on the businesspeople, saying they are always driven by profit motive, not humanity.

Talking about the farmers' woes, he said potato prices had marked a sharp fall last year, depriving the farmers even of their recovering production cost.