



SSS Bulletin

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**Uplifting
Quality of
Lives of
Elderly
People &
Socioeconomic
Outlook:
Effort of
SSS**



Scholarship Distribution Ceremony...



A student receives scholarship money

Under the scholarship program of SSS, 92 students were provided with SSS-Naga Scholarship in a ceremony held at the auditorium of the SSS Foundation Office in Tangail at 3:00 pm on 28 October 2023.

Mr. Satoru Naga, a renowned writer and journalist from Japan was present there as the chief guest, whereas Mr. Md. Abdur Rouf Khan, Honorable Vice-Chairman of SSS presided over the ceremony.

Besides, Mr. Abdul Hamid Bhuiyan, Executive Director of SSS, Mis. Tomoka Sugisawa, Language Teacher (Japan), Mis. Han Jin Hee, Director (Aquapot, Japan) and Mr. Santosh Chandra Paul, Director (Credit) of SSS spoke at the occasion as special guests.

In the event, each of the 92 students received Tk. 3,000 (total Tk. 2,76,000) as scholarship for the period of July-December 2023.

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Editorial

Progress through Collective Efforts of Younger and Elder

In the world, today's beauty and comfort are the fruits of the continuous hard works by human. Pointed out--new-born comes in the earth with too much helplessness, but the parents received the child with cordial love and cares and try to remove all kinds of vulnerabilities and obstacles on the way their kid. The parents, taking up unlimited pains, nonstop run their attempts and responsibilities all over the life, and continue efforts to make up their son and daughter a good man through education, culture and genuine love and show the way of prosperity.

The youngsters, following the elder, get inducement to go forward. Experience, leadership and benevolence of the elders produce positive changes and potentiality: innovation, which centrally leads the progress and development. Nevertheless, in the course of time, the controller of society and culture—the prolific person turns into unproductive and

In fact, the elders are not a bundle of the society and family—they are the helpful resources for opulence and success. Thus, to utilize this resource optimally, there needs continual maintenance--food and nutrition, healthcares, empowerment, proper social respect and so on for the elders.

lethargic: older. Though the direct contribution of the elder people to production and growth is zero, but their experience and approach set overall enrichment and welfare into action, and they are actual craftsman of progress and prosperity. In fact, the elders are not a bundle of the society and family—they are the helpful resources for opulence and success. Thus, to utilize this resource optimally, there needs continual maintenance--food and nutrition, healthcares, empowerment, proper social respect and so on for the elders.

We should keep the elders healthy and active with proper respect, which make the children and youngsters munificent and helpful to the parents and seniors and get live-oriented knowledge and learning. The families have their actual guardian, which drives away the injustice and crimes and fosters the peace and equity in the family and society as well.

Uplifting Quality of Lives of Elderly People & Socioeconomic Outlook: Effort of SSS



Uplifting Quality of Lives of Elderly People & Socioeconomic Outlook: Effort of SSS

On 1 October 2023, International Day of Older Person took place with the theme: ***Fulfilling the Promises of Universal Declaration of Human Rights for Older Persons: Across Generation.***

Conversely, the key objective to observe the day is: to protect the elder people and ensure their rights and grow awareness among the elder people of various aspects of old-age. At present, about 8 percent (13 million) of our total population is elder people in our country, which might be 19 percent (40 million) in 2050 [Source: United Nations].

Current Situation

The abovementioned statistics reveal two important facts—i) The average life expectancy of people is increasing due to the incredible development of medical science and ii) The socioeconomic anxiety with dependency of the elderly population is augmenting. More or less all of us know the culture of low income and developing countries: particularly, the existing culture of Bangladesh is unfavorable for the elderly people—we consider the retired and unemployed people as a burden on the society and family, and children and relatives do not want to take care of parents and seniors. Many of them neglect their responsibilities. The youngsters are reluctant to give proper respect and value to the elders in the society. Many elders confer their long-time savings to their children, or the dishonest children and successors lift up everything from the old parents and relatives. At-a-stage, they lost everything and lead a vulnerable life. Society and family neglect and disrespect them. Lack of proper food and treatment, malnutrition and uncertainty came in their life. Among them, some old people start up painstaking and hard works to survive only. Physically challenged individuals, having no alternative, resort to begging.

Prime Reasons behind the Destitute Life of the Elder People:

Key factors behind the vulnerable living conditions of the elders are: poverty and lack of social security [source: Human Rights Program Research, United Nations].

There are several reasons associated with the both of the aforesaid factors. Of them, important reasons are illustrated below:



1. Poverty and Unawareness

In human life, poverty is at the root of all problems. In contrast, ignorance, to a large extent, calls in poverty. Failure to achieve financial solvency in the career (productive time of life) must make destitute situation in old-age. This situation arises due to lack of realization and savings for future.

2. Capitalism and Socioeconomic Disparity

One of the pivotal causes of poverty is--the imbalanced distribution of wealth and income. Behind the fact, capitalistic mind-set: accumulating more wealth than others, which make able to consume more with luxury, and people and society give more importance etc is in vital role. As a result, few of people, without caring about justice, pile up wealth. And the majority of the population owns either little or no wealth. In old-age, the majority of our people become dependent on others with helplessness, sadness and negligence.

3. Limitation of our Education and Culture

Right now, there is a great lack of people with humanity in the society and family. Our existing educational system is incapable to engender the humanity in the nation. A large portion of the society—a mother-in-law could not look on her daughter-in-law as her daughter, simultaneously—a daughter-in-law does not take in mind her parents-in-law as her parents. Consequently, in most of the families in Bangladesh, come up a great problem of the issue of looking after the parents. Children pass up their responsibility to the parents. Parents try to carry on their last time of life with negligence, carelessness and without medication.

All together, the youngsters are reluctant to give due respect to the elders. They ignore the seniors while receiving services at various levels, especially--bank, insurance and electricity offices, public transports, hospitals, post offices and the like and do not give due importance or priority to the elder people. Old-age people and seniors do not get due respects and position in various ritual and social events, which is too much disgusting as well.

Prime Reasons behind the Destitute Life of the Elder People

4. Insufficiency in Food, Nutrition and Healthcare

Due to lack of food or negligence of the children, the old-age people do not get the necessary food and nutriments, which push in various diseases and sufferings in their last life. Lack of money or reluctance of their son or daughter, the old-age people do not have healthcare. On the other hand, there is no specialized department or cell for the proper treatment of the elders in the hospitals of our country. As a result, the elders are not provided with suitable and reliable healthcare.

5. Ineffectiveness of Laws and Govt. Safety-net

National Elderly Policy-2013 and Parent Maintenance Act-2013 have been enacted but there is no enforcement or obligation. Most of the people do not follow the mentioned policy and act. No legal action is taken against the people who do not take care of their parents. As a result, the helplessness of the elderly people is increasing day by day. On the other hand, pension, old-age allowance, freedom fighter allowance, allowance for widow and grass widow, VGF and other benefits are available to few people. The amount of the allowances is much less than required. However, a large section of the society: private sector employees, farmers, laborers and others do not get any pension or financial benefits. As a result helplessness and misery in old-age is increasing.

Initiatives to Remove the Vulnerability and Improve the Quality of Life of the Elders:

In the light of the above problems we have to adopt a solution. In this regard, following initiatives should be taken—

■ In our education and culture systems, a massive review and correction are urgently needed, especially—we should include the National Elderly Policy-2013 and Parental Maintenance Act-2013 in-detail in our national curriculum and take up proper measures to teach these policy and act in mandatory to all. Based on the realities of ideal society building, development and practice of ethics among all, food-nutrition and healthcares for different age-groups, employment generation and poverty reduction, we should set up our national curriculum. Successors and children would compulsorily provide their parents with required supports—should be a culture followed by all.

■ To take up effective steps and ensure allocation of wealth and income equitably at every stage, develop suitable system for engaging the elderly in economic activities after retirement, make government-private grants, loan receiving, income tax waiver and the like avail to the elders to run economic activities after retirement.

■ To introduce various allowances for the elders, in particular: pension system for all, although the government has already adopted universal pension scheme, but the elders of the present are excluded from the benefit of the mentioned scheme. Conversely, public-private initiatives to launch old-age insurance programs are absolutely needed. For the intention, necessary provision of money should keep in our national budget as well.

■ To include geriatrics in our medical curriculum and develop medical and other professionals of the subject, especially: geriatric medicine, gerontological nursing, therapy, nutrition, education and training etc; set up geriatric medicine department/unit in every medical college hospital, general hospital and clinic; ensure priority to access to healthcare easily for the elders in public and private hospitals and clinics; establish separate counters and corners for elderly patients in the hospital and clinics; make provision of separate ambulances and reserve at least five percent of beds for elderly patients in hospital; and provide the elder with free and special low-cost medical services.

■ To undertake essential steps to conduct research and training to improve the quality of life of the elders and highlight the importance of this in the society; create sensitivities about elders and awareness among all; and introduce elder development education, elder welfare, elder development activities etc. courses at the universities.

There should put the elder policy and parental maintenance act into application with strict hand. And we carry on practice with strong culture—the importance and respect for elders and seniors at all levels.

Activities of SSS on Uplifting the Quality of Life of Elderly People

SSS started implementing the program to improve the quality of life of the elders, jointly financed by PKSF and SSS in Dyenna and Huga Unions of Tangail Sadar Upazila in 2016. At present, there are a total of 4,600 elders under the program.

Activities of the Program:

The crucial activities of the program: arranging training on maintenance of quality of life of the elders, providing old-age-supporting materials (blankets, sheets, sticks, commode chairs, umbrellas, wheelchairs, etc.), old-age allowance and IGA training, observing of national and international elderly days, performing funeral ceremony of the dead elders, organizing elderly people fairs, monthly meetings, seminars, workshop, physiotherapy and primary healthcare camps, providing financial services, best elder and best child awards are noteworthy.

Some Notable Achievements of the Program:

Several achievements of the program to improve the quality of the life of the elderly population are noteworthy. Among them, the distribution of elderly-helping materials--525 blankets, 215 sheets, 160 walking sticks, 100 commode chairs, 100 umbrellas and 30 wheelchairs; old-age allowance to 200 elders (Tk. 500 per month per head); completion of burial of 77 deceased elders (Tk. 2,000 per person); providing medical care to 3,200 elders; 24 elders got cataract operations; providing housing allowance to one elder, setting up two tea-stalls to generate income to two elders; establishment of two social centers for elders; Training to 450 elders on income generating activities and so on are particularly noteworthy. In a short period, the program of SSS has drawn attention of the society. The program facilitates disadvantaged and poverty-stricken elders to lead the normal and happy lives.





International Day of Elderly Persons Observance

SSS observed the International Day of Elderly Persons under the Uplifting the Quality of the Lives of Elderly People Program supported by PKSF at Dyenna and Hugra Unions of Tangail Sadar.

Centering the day, on 1 October 2023, a colorful rally was brought out from the Social Centers for the Elderly People from Dyenna and organized discussion meetings led by SSS. Officials and workers and beneficiaries of the Uplifting the Quality of the Lives of Elderly People Program, SSS participated in the meetings wherein Mr. Md. Afzal Hussain, Chairman of Dyenna Union Council took the chair as the Chief Guest.

In the last of the event, 10 elderly people (5 in Dyenna and 5 in Hugra) were awarded as the best elderly person and 10 people (5 in Dyenna and 5 in Hugra) got the best child award. At the same time, four destitute elders (2 in Dyenna and 2 in Hugra) were provided with wheel-chair (one piece per head).

Concurrently, on 2 October 2023, a colorful rally was brought out from the Social Centers for the Elderly People from Hugra Union Council and organized discussion meetings led by SSS. Officials and workers and beneficiaries of the Uplifting the Quality of the Lives of Elderly People Program, SSS participated in the meetings wherein Al-haj Muhammad Nur-e-Alam Tuhin, Chairman of Hugra Union Council took the chair as the Chief Guest.

Conclusion

Today's young is the elder of the tomorrow—is a universal feature for all. Our overall cooperation can make elderly people-amiable society, in where the seniors would be free from negligence, torture, exploitation, harassment, disrespect, and so on. Every family would move forward, and set an ideal society, which would bring forward enrichment, welfare, humanity and recognition of greatness in the country.

Observance of Cleanliness Week 2023

SSS, with great importance, observed the "Cleanliness Week 2023" to prevent all mosquito-borne diseases, especially—Dengue across the country in coordination with district and upazila administrations following government program from October 29 to November 4, 2023.

SSS carried out the cleanliness expedition in all zone, area and branch offices, institutes, head



Students of SSS-Poura Ideal High School participate in cleanliness expedition

office and foundation office across the country under necessary initiatives. Among the activities--providing necessary guidelines to the heads of all offices and institutes, cleaning the various offices and institution yards, disinfecting by mosquito spray, uprooting the garbage and weeds from yards, making aware the staff members of the organization about mosquito-borne diseases and cleanliness, and so on according to the guidelines.



Participation of SSS in Human-Chain on International Anti-Corruption Day 2023

SSS observed the International Anti-Corruption Day on 09 December 2023 in Tangail. The Anti-corruption Commission (Tangail) organized daylong programs to celebrate the day.

On the occasion, a human-chain was formed near the Shamsul Haque Toron in Tangail Sadar at 9.00 am. Along with SSS, delegates from different government and non-government organizations

SSS Participates in Int. Anti-Corruption Day-2023

of Tangail participated in the human-chain. At 9.30 am, the Anti-corruption Commission (Tangail) led a rally and the rally ended up at the Deputy Commissioner (Tangail)'s office.

Mentioned, to mark the adoption of the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) in 2003, the International Anti-Corruption Day is observed every year on 09 December. According to the convention in 2007, the government of Bangladesh officially observe the day every year since 2017.



The Victory Day 2023 Observance

SSS, like every year and with due respect, celebrated the 53rd Victory Day on 16 December 2023. Through a set of programs, all branch, area and zone offices and institutions of the organization led by foundation office observed the day.

On this occasion, a rally was brought out at 8:00 am on 16 December from the SSS Foundation Office. Officers and staffs of SSS participated in the rally and it ended up placing wreaths at the martyrs' monument in the



Placing wreaths at the martyrs' monument of SSS

Municipal Park of Tangail. Along with SSS, participants from different socio-cultural and political organizations, educational institutions, NGOs and mass media also offered their flowery tribute at the monument.

On the day, a discussion meeting on the important of the victory day was held at SSS-Poura Ideal High School, Sonar Bangla Children Home and SSS-Non-govt. Polytechnic Institute. In the discussion meetings, the participants emphasized the independence and liberation war of Bangladesh and the contribution of the father of the nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman to our independence. Simultaneously, essay writing, drawing competition, and cultural ceremony were held following the day as well.

The organization also arranged a feast with high quality food at lunch for the underprivileged children—Students of Sonar Bangla Children Home.

SSS Pays Homage to Shaheed Sheikh Russel



Putting wreaths at the portrait of Sheikh Russel

Society for Social Service (SSS) observes the Sheikh Russel Day-2023 with the theme of the day—Sheikh Russel: a symbol of Brilliance, Fearlessness, Serenity, and Impregnability on October 18, 2023 centering the 60th birthday of Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's youngest son Shaheed Sheikh Russel.

To mark the day, SSS chalks out a program with due respect and formality comprised of placing of wreaths at the portrait of Sheikh Russel at SSS Foundation Office Reception (in Tangail), and participating in rally and discussion meeting organized by District Administration of Tangail. Besides, the other institutes and organizations of SSS also celebrate the day.