

# PM urges rich to help build equal society for children

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PRIME minister Sheikh Hasina on Monday urged all, especially the rich, to supplement the government's efforts in building a society for children where there will be no discrimination.

'We want a society where there'll be equal rights for all, including the rich; poor, physically-challenged ones and autistic...we want to ensure a society where everyone, including children, will enjoy equal rights,' she said.

The prime minister was speaking at the inaugural programme of World Children Day and Children Rights Week 2016 at Bangladesh Shishu Academy auditorium.

She called up on the rich section of society to look after their surroundings to enquire about the problems of poor children.

'I would request them (rich) to enquire how poor children are passing their days, whether they can go to school, whether they have cloths to wear or whether they get adequate food. I will request the rich to take care of these things,' she said.

The prime minister went on saying, 'Being born into a poor family is the fate of a child, nobody is born poor. If you (rich people) look after the poor children, these children can grow up with your children.'

Hasina also called on the guardians, especially the rich, to stay aware so that the attitude of discrimination between the poor and the rich cannot grow among children.

'This should be taught from childhood as this is very important. Each and every child has the same right. I request all to ensure

the rights of all children,' she said.

Describing various development activities of her government, especially taken for children, the prime minister said there is no alternative to proper education to build a hunger- and poverty-free nation. 'All must have proper education...an educated nation can free a country from hunger.'

She mentioned the government has taken the responsibility to distribute free textbooks among all students of the county from the day one of the calendar year. 'We want not a single child to be left in the darkness of illiteracy, each and every child will get education--modern education.'

Hasina said the government believes that children are the future of the country as the future leadership will grow from them.

'You (children) will lead the country, you'll be there at the top of various sectors. We'll have to groom them properly. The government has been working tirelessly to create opportunities for children to flourish their talents,' she added.

Presided over state minister for woman and child affairs minister Meher Afroz Chumki, the programme was addressed, among others, by Bangladesh Shishu Academy chairman and eminent writer Selina Hossain, UNICEF representative in Bangladesh Edouard Beigbeder and women and child affairs secretary Nasima Begum.

On her arrival at the venue, the prime minister inaugurated the digital library of the Bangladesh Shishu Academy and then witnessed a colourful cultural programme performed by the children.