

SKS Won the Agri & Farming Awards



Md. Saiful Alam, Director, Development Programs is receiving the Award from the Agriculture Minister.

SKS Foundation was honored with the 'Best Supporter (NGO) Award' at the prestigious ATN News Agri & Farming Awards- 2023. This recognition crowned SKS' unwavering commitment to promoting, innovating and sharing knowledge in agro & farming, and empowering marginalized farmers across different zones.

Dr. Muhammad Abdur Razzaque, Agriculture Minister, graced the Award Giving Ceremony at Bangladesh *Shilpakala* Academy Auditorium, Dhaka on 4 December 2023. Alongside Dr. Mahfuzur Rahman, Chairman, ATN NEWS and other dignitaries were present at the ceremony. Md. Saiful Alam, Director- Development Programs, SKS Foundation, received the Award amidst a gathering of distinguished guests & audiences. (See Page 3)

Director General- NGOAB Visited SKS



DG- NGOAB is interacting with the mothers & women at Padumshahar UH&FWC.

Sheikh Md. Moniruzzaman, Director General of NGO Affairs Bureau (NGOAB) visited SKS Foundation & its program intervention.

As part of his official visit to NGOs at Sirajganj, Bogura, Rangpur, Thakurgaon and Gaibandha, he visited SKS Foundation on 18 December 2023.

While visiting different program operations of SKS Foundation, the DG observed the Union Health & Family Welfare Center (UH&FWC) at Ghagoa union providing 24/7 safe normal delivery, and promotion of maternal & newborn health at the hard-to-reach *char* areas. Alongside, he visited the plinth-raising activities at Uttar Ghagoa village in Ghagoa union of Gaibandha Sadar upazila, in which the marginalized people and communities are supported under the livelihood development programs. During the visit, he interacted with the duty bearers at union level and the community people about the service quality & quantity being promoted under the programs. (See Page 3)

SKS Signed A Grant Contract with Japan Embassy

A grant contract was signed on 15 November 2023 between SKS Foundation and the Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh centering the promotion of eye care services. The contract was made for the procurement of eye care equipment for SKS Eye Hospital in Gaibandha district. IWAMA Kiminori, Ambassador to Bangladesh, the Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh, and Rasel Ahmed Liton, Chief Executive, SKS Foundation signed the contract at the Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh representing both the respective parties.

As part of the continued support from the Govt. of Japan to provide eye care services, especially for the poor & vulnerable people by SKS Foundation, this grant entitled the "Project Grant Contracts for Grass-Root Human Security Projects (GGHSP) for Procurement of Eye Care Equipment for SKS Hospital in



Japan Ambassador & Chief Executive of SKS Foundation signed the grant contract.

in Gaibandha District" was signed. In line with the contract, the Embassy of Japan in Bangladesh is to provide Tk. 8,900,000 to SKS Foundation in favor of equipping the SKS Eye Hospital with some high-tech apparatus. With the grant, 2 specialized equipment (Optical Coherence Tomography, Visual Field Analyzer) will be purchased to support disadvantaged patients in getting services at an affordable price.

SKS School & College at the Victory Day Parade

In observance of the Victory Day 2023, SKS School & College participated in the Victory Day Parade. Organized by the district administration, the colorful parade & display was held on 16 December 2023 at the Shah Abdul Hamid Stadium, Gaibandha to observe the Day in the presence of a huge crowd. (See Page 3)



DC and SP are receiving the Salute of the Parade Team of SKS School & College.

Reading & Math Festival Held

SKS Foundation conducted the *Reading & Math Festival* at all govt. primary schools in Saghata upazila of Gaibandha district. From 8-14 November 2023, SKS conducted the Festival separately at 122 govt. primary schools with the participation of their 21,950 school children.

SKS conducted the Festival under the *Integrated Child Development Program- Shishuder Jonno Project* supported by Save the Children Bangladesh. The Festival featured poem recitation, storytelling, and math competition. Competing in the event, a total of 1,329 school children won 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prizes and others were also given a pen each as complimentary.

Abdullahis Safi, Upazila Education Officer, graced the Festival at Bonarpara Bangla Medium Govt. Primary School, Saghata, Gaibandha, organized on 14 November 2023. Emphasizing enjoyment in educational institutions, he said, "If teaching could be festive, and reading would be enjoyable, then no student of our country would have to drop out. Thus, we all have to create such a festive mode for children at home, at school and outside."



Upazila Education Officer is addressing the audience at the Fair.

Higher Education for *Char* Girls

(From Page 4) Led by Md. Ansar Ali, UP Chairman, Fuzlupur union of Fulchari upazila, the speakers at the human chain described that there was only one high school sat aside to cover the secondary level education of the *char* children of 18 river-raged scattered villages of the union. The school is situated at a far scattered land and this makes the parents unwilling to send their girl children to schools. This deprives them of secondary and higher secondary education resulting in early marriage and domestic violence. Therefore, they need higher education facilities to retain girl students in education.

Hundreds of civilians from the *char* areas took part in the human chain demanding facilities to retain female students in education. Later on, a delegation of the community submitted a memorandum to Md. Anisur Rahman, Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) demanding necessary measures in this regard. Receiving the memorandum, the UNO said, "I thank the locals for bringing this pressing issue to our attention. I will carry the demand forward to the respective authorities."

Fair on DRR Held

(From Page 4) Emphasizing the importance of preparedness in the face of any disaster, the Chief Guest said, "While information on disasters is readily available in the modern world, taking proactive measures based on forecasts can significantly reduce disaster losses. Therefore, raising awareness and equipping communities with the tools to face apprehended challenges is crucial. The fair like this plays a vital role in this regard for making the people from different sections aware."

The day-long Fair was gathered by hundreds of people who gained valuable information & knowledge on the nature of disasters & community preparedness visiting the stalls, watching the dramas and interactive quizzes, etc.

In the concluding part, Md. Juel Mia, the Chair of the Event, urged for coordinated efforts and adherence to warnings, emphasizing the role of smart technology and informed communities in building a disaster-ready Bangladesh. Md. Rezaul Islam, Assistant Commissioner (Land) of Gaibandha Sadar Upazila, closed the day-long Fair handing over the crests to the participating organizations.

Padumshahar UH&FWC Celebrated

(From Page 4) Addressing the audience, the Chief Guest said, "Child Marriage, the curse of safe delivery, must be stopped; otherwise, it would not be possible to celebrate every birth safely." The DG urged all to promise not to give out child marriage anymore. She said, "Ensuring the safe normal birth of a baby starts even before the delivery. Therefore, every family must have their family planning in which they should have a plan for their children when to marry them off."

Among others dignitaries Dewan Morshed Kamal, Divisional Director-FP of Rangpur Division; Proshenjit Pronoy Mishra, Deputy Director, (DD-FP), Gaibandha; Dr. Muniruzzaman Siddiqui, Director, MNCH services DGFP; Dr. Mostafa Kamal Majumdar, Assistant Director, MNCH services DGFP; Khaleda Habib, Senior Manager, MAMOTA Project; Khondaker Zahid Shorwar, Deputy Director, SKS Foundation, and Baharam Khan, Project Coordinator, MAMOTA Project, attended the celebration.

Marginalized Women Got Seed & Cash Support

(From Page 4) The distribution was undertaken on 13 December 2023 at the One Stop Service Center in Choygoria village of Kanchibari union, and the One Stop Service Center, in Ramdakua village of Belka union. Dr. Sumona Aktar, Upazila Livestock Officer, and Md. Monowar Hossain, UP Chairman, Kanchibari union, handed over the seeds and cash to the women and Md. Mizanur Rahaman, Upazila Agricultural Extension Officer, handed over the seeds and cash respectively.

On 20 December 2023, Md. Saiduzzaman Sarkar, UP Chairman handed over the seeds and cash among the women at the One-Stop Service Center in Hatimara Village, Mollarchar union, Gaibandha Sadar, and on 21 December 2023, A.M. Shahidulla Bhuiyan, Upazila Youth Development Officer handed over the seeds and cash at the One-Stop Service Center in Batikamari village, Kamarjani union of Gaibandha Sadar.

Global Handwashing Day & Sanitation Month Observed



Demonstration of handwashing at Gaibandha Municipality Premises.

Being the host of FANSA-Bangladesh, SKS Foundation and the FANSA-BD members working in Barishal and Moulvibazar district observed the Global Hand Washing Day & National Sanitation Month in their respective working areas.

Centering the theme “Clean Hands Are Within Reach”, SKS Foundation, Association of Voluntary Actions for Society (AVAS), and MAC Bangladesh supported the events organized by the Municipalities and City Corporation under the *Rising for the Rights: Strengthening Civil Society Network in South Asia to Achieve SDG 6* project.

Gaibandha Municipality, supported by SKS Foundation, in Gaibandha drove a cleanliness campaign and handwashing demonstration at the Gaibandha Municipality. In addition, Gaibandha Municipality distributed 105 vests to its enlisted sanitation workers.

Barishal City Corporation, supported by AVAS, and Sreemangal Municipality of Moulvibazar district, supported by MAC Bangladesh, also brought out colorful rallies and handwashing demonstrations respectively at different selective spots.

Director General- NGOAB Visited SKS

(From Page 1) Referring to his observation on the SKS’ field programs, the DG said, “The safe normal delivery is an excellent initiative which is benefitting the marginalized communities in the *char* and contributing to the promotion of maternal & newborn health. This initiative should be continued longer targeting the disadvantaged communities.” He also endorsed that cluster plinth-raising over individual plinth-raising can bring benefit to the living & livelihood development of the marginalized especially in the flood-prone *char* areas.

SKS School & College at the Victory Day Parade

(From Page 1) Kazi Nahid Rasul, Deputy Commissioner (DC), and Md. Kamal Hossain, Superintendent of Police (SP), received the salute of the parade. Participating in the parade, SKS School & College bagged 3rd place in the High School Division (B-Division) in which 17 high schools participated. Police Lines School, Gaibandha, and Gaibandha Government Girls High School stood 1st and 2nd respectively in the B Division. A total of 50 educational institutions in 3 categories (colleges, high schools, & primary schools) across Gaibandha participated in the Victory Day Parade.

SKS Inn Awarded as Highest VAT Payer

SKS Inn was awarded as the highest value-added tax (VAT) payer in the 'Services Sector' of Gaibandha district for the financial year 2021-'22. This recognition is for SKS Inn’s significant contribution to the government’s revenue through VAT payment.

On 10 December 2023, on the occasion of *Musok Day and Musok Week 2023*, Md. Shaheen Aktar Hossain, Commissioner of Tax, presented the crest & certificate as the Chief Guest. Samuel Hillary, General Manager (GM) of SKS Inn received the Award on behalf of SKS Inn.

The ceremony was organized in the conference hall of Rangpur Kar Bhaban. Chaired by Nahida Faridi, PhD, Commissioner, Rangpur Customs and Excise, among others Md. Akbar Ali, President, Rangpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Md. Razaul Islam Milon, President of the Rangpur Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and Ferdousi (Poly), President of the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry were present as Special Guests.



GM of SKS Inn is receiving the crest & certificate from the Commissioner of Tax.

SKS Won the Agri & Farming Awards

(From Page 1) Referring to SKS’ contribution to the field of agriculture, the organizers upheld that SKS Foundation has been focusing on socio-economic development for marginalized communities recognizing & promoting agriculture as the main means of their livelihood and in turn contributing to the food security in Bangladesh. SKS Foundation equips its program participants with the tools and knowledge they need to thrive. Monetary and advisory assistance, coupled with facilitating farmer groups, linkages, and climate-resilient crop adaptations, empower these communities to take control of their agricultural endeavors. This unwavering focus on agricultural growth has directly touched the lives of SKS’ program participants.

SKS Foundation’s selection for the Award was judged on its multifaceted development programs prioritizing agricultural activities. The majority of SKS’ people, especially the marginalized, rely on agriculture for their very survival. Alongside other development components, SKS prioritizes agricultural advancement, and this award is a testimony to the success and a badge of honor for SKS’ program participants. The Agri & Farming Award- 2023 has validated SKS Foundation’s unwavering dedication to empowering marginalized communities through agricultural development.

Padumshahar UH&FWC Celebrated 1000th Safe Delivery

The Padumshahar UH&FWC celebrated the 1000th Normal Safe Delivery under the *Promotion of Maternal and Newborn Health (MAMOTA) Project* supported by SKS Foundation and Save the Children in Bangladesh. Sahan Ara Banu, ndc, Director General (Grade-1), Department of Family Planning graced the event as Chief Guest with Freedom Fighter Md. Mofizul Islam, Chairman, UP, Padumshahar in the chair. The event took place on 2 December 2023 at Padumshahar UH&FWC premises of Saghata upazila of Gaibandha. (See Page 2)



DG- Department of Family Planning is cutting the Cake of the 1000th Safe Delivery Celebration.

Marginalized Women Got Seed & Cash Support

To combat climate change impacts, SKS Foundation supported 125 marginalized women in flood-prone areas with the distribution of vegetable seeds, assistive equipment, and cash respectively. With the support of Care Bangladesh, SKS distributed 7 varieties of vegetable seeds and 7 assistive equipment to 45 women of the Community Seed Bank and Tk. 14,000 to 80 members each of the Village Savings & Loan Association (VSLA).

SKS distributed the seeds and cash among the selected members of the Community Seed Bank and Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) in the flood-prone Belka and Kanchibari



Upazila Livestock Officer (in white coat) is handing over seed & vegetable growing assistive devices.

union of Sundarganj upazila and Kamarjani and Mollarchar union of Gaibandha Sadar upazila under its *Promoting Disaster Ready Inclusive Preparedness Towards Adaptation (PRODRIPTA)*. (See Page 2)

Fair on DRR Held

District Administration organized a fair on Disaster Risk Reduction in Gaibandha on 30 October 2023. Titled with *Disaster Risk Reduction Fair 2023 at Shadinota Prangoan, Gaibandha*, 20 government and non-government organizations working in disaster risk reduction participated in the Fair organizing their respective stalls. SKS Foundation and Care Bangladesh supported the organizing of the Fair under the *Promoting Disaster Ready Inclusive Preparedness Towards Adaptation (PRODRIPTA) Project*.



Sushanto Kumar Mahato, ADC is addressing the audience as Chief Guest.

Chaired by Md. Juel Mia, Assistant Commissioner and District Relief & Rehabilitation Officer, Sushanto Kumar Mahato, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Development & Human Resource Management) inaugurated the Fair in the morning as the Chief Guest. (See Page 2)

Higher Education for Char Girls Demanded



Local people demonstrated the human chain demanding higher education facilities for char girls.

People from all walks of the *char* community demanded the government ensure secondary and higher secondary level education for female students of *char* areas to prevent early marriage and domestic violence. Facilitated by SKS Foundation under its *Community-based Resilience Women's Empowerment and Action (CREA) Project* supported by Manusher Jonno Foundation, the Civil society of the *char* area demanded this demonstrating a human chain on 27 November 2023 and submitted a memorandum at Chandarsar village, a remote and hard-to-reach area in Fuzlupur union of Fulchari upazila of Gaibandha. (See Page 2)