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| **Chapter-12**  **Ministry of Information** |

# 1.0 Introduction:

A state is obliged to take necessary measures to ensure health, education, social security for children without an iota of discrimination and violence; in which the future of the country depends. And these facilities must be in consonance with the changing global requirements. Their most important right is to grow in a friendly, enabling environment. Ministry of Information has continued to carry out activities aimed at ensuring such environment. Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television are constantly airing various programs for children, massive publicity on child rights and welfare are being carried out through the District Information Offices under Department of Mass Communication that include, among others, drama, song, spot, courtyard meeting, mobile film show, folk songs etc. These programs play an important role in the development of children. Children's Docudrama is being created through the Department of Films and Publications. Bangladesh Press Institute (PIB), Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS) and various private sector media outlets are also preparing special programs for children’s entertainment and education.

**2.0 Activities undertaken for the development of children in the light of National Policies and Strategies:**

| **Policy/Strategy and its brief description** | **Activities** |
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| Article 39 of The Constitution of The People’s Republic of Bangladesh guarantees Freedom of thought and conscience | The spirit of this article is taken into consideration while making and airing programs. While guaranteeing freedom of thought and conscience, it is also kept in mind that feeling of anybody is not hurt. |
| **Sustainable Development Goal (SDG):**  End abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence and abuse against children. | To achieve 6 targets set forth in Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and eliminate violence, torture, exploitation and trafficking of children; different programs are shown in public media for mobilizing public awareness. |
| **National Broadcasting Policy 2014:**  According to this policy utmost care has to be taken so that the tenderness and sensitivity of children are not affected. Necessary traits of life such as politeness, cleanliness, religious values, social responsibilities, along with teachings from lives and works of great people should form part of these programs. The programs must emphasize family bonding, love and respect between siblings and others. Scenes of violence, malevolence and machinations must be avoided. Instead, more focus should be given on morality, education and patriotism. | Special attention is given in instilling among children the virtues of patriotism and morality encompassed through the programs broadcasted by Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television. In addition, few other activities are taken up such as:   * Formation of teenage audience club and get them in touch with Radio and TV broadcasts meant for them; * Organize debate competitions among teenagers; * Field based reporting; * Organize school based education programs * Provide grants for making child-friendly films. |
| **Policy of Bangladesh Television for Private Sector Program:**  Use of abusive language, obscenity and violence must be avoided. Programs should rather concentrate more on moral education and patriotism. | In these programs issues related to health, education, nutrition, rights of children etc. are given priority. The programs are closely monitored under the Broadcasting policy. |
| **Advertisement and Supplement Policy-2008:**  Any element that may have a debilitating impact on a child’s mental, physical and spiritual growth must not be included in an advertisement. The innate simplicity and gullibility of a child must not be used to yield any commercial benefit,   * Advertisements must not show scenes of dangerous objects such as explosives, lighting matches, petrol or other incinerating materials, risky machinery including electrical machineries, drugs and medicines etc. under any circumstances * Advertisements must not contain any scene that may inflict fear, stress or any kind of agony on a child, elderly person and ill person. They must not show either scenes of molestation, violence, teasing or any other obscene gesture done to a teenage girl or a woman. | Advertising policies are being scrupulously followed. In case of any complain, action is taken after due investigation. |
| **Community Radio Establishment, Broadcasting and Operation policy-2017 :**  It must be ensured by the authority who has obtained permission to operate a community radio, that nothing is contained in a program which tend to:   * Degrade children; * Mock people with disabilities; * Encourages or supports use of drugs including alcohol, narcotics and tobacco. | These policies are being followed in broadcasting and operation of Community Radio. To strengthen the activities of community radio, training on making and broadcasting of programs are being imparted through BB, NIMCO and PIB. |

**3.0 Achievement of the last three years in terms of child budget implementations**

In the last three years, the Ministry of Information and its subordinate organizations have conducted various promotional activities to create mass awareness about child health, education, nutrition, participation in social issues, safety, caring for pregnant woman, sanitation, hand washing and other issues. These programs were very well received in the society. Activities undertaken by this Ministry in the last three years are as follows:

* Bangladesh Betar and Bangladesh Television have arranged six training programs on making programs for children. A grant amounting to TK. 270.00 lakh was provided to make children-based movies;
* A total of 9874 movies were shown at field level;
* Music programs were performed in 8842 villages;
* A total of 1023 courtyard meetings were organized;
* 27 spots and 105 dramas were made;
* 101 school based and 410 community based Adolescent Listener’s Club were formed to link them up with Radio and TV programs;
* A total of 107 debate competitions were arranged for young adolescents;
* 177 field based reporting were made;
* 6 school based educational programs were arranged;
* A total of 312 ‘child fair’ were arranged throughout the country by the district information office;
* Grants were awarded for 7 child-based movies;
* 11 training programs were arranged for producers through Bangladesh Betar , NIMCO and PIB in order to bolster activities of the community radio;
* A total of 3,60,000 copies (with 10,000 copies per month) of Nabarun, a periodical for children, were published;
* Nabarun Mela, Meena Mela, Konnya Shishu Mela (Girl child festival) were organized throughout the year;
* Programs like Kalakakoli, Sobuj Mela, Ami Meena bolchi and other ones for young students were made and broadcasted by the Bangladesh Betar.

**4.0 Share of child budget in Ministry’s overall budget**

| *(Figures in Billion Taka)* | | | |
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| **Description** | **Budget**  **2020-21** | **Budget**  **2019-20** | **Actual 2018-19** |
| MoI Budget |  | 9.89 |  |
| *Operating* |  | *7.04* |  |
| *Development* |  | *2.85* |  |
| Child-Focused Budget in MoI |  | 0.94 |  |
| *Operating* |  | *0.67* |  |
| *Development* |  | *0.27* |  |
| **Total Government Budget** |  | **5,232** |  |
| *GDP* |  | 28,859 |  |
| *Total Government Budget as % of GDP* |  | 18.13 |  |
| *MoI Budget as % of GDP* |  | 0.03 |  |
| *MoI Budget as % of Total Budget* |  | 0.19 |  |
| *Child-Focused MoI Budget as % of GDP* |  | 0.00 |  |
| *Child-Focused MoI Budget as % of Total Government Budget* |  | 0.02 |  |
| ***Child-Focused Budget as % of Ministry Budget*** |  | ***9.50*** |  |

Source: Finance Division

Children's Right to Development has three thematic areas. One is Education which is the prime responsibility of Ministry of Education provided through two of its Divisions. The other two, Information and Leisure, Recreation and Cultural Activities are the responsibility of the Ministry of Information. Considering these responsibilities, this Ministry has been included in the child budget analysis. The Ministry has a number of departments through which it promotes child sensitive social awareness agenda, child friendly television and radio programs, films and documentaries. The child sensitive budget of this Ministry as percentage of the Ministry's total budget has increased to 5.20% in FY 2018-19 from 0.79 percent in FY 2017-18.

**5.0 Good Practice**

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| **Story of Nanjeeba**  Nanjeeba Khan. Yet to become 18. But she is a myriad –minded girl; a trainee pilot, journalist, short film maker, presenter, writer, brand ambassador, BNCC Cadet, and a debater. After receiving some training on film making, script writing, news making and presentation from the National Institute of Mass Communication, Nanjeeba has become an expert media worker. Accolades from all have inspired her to go the extra mile and transcend herself. Presently Nanjeeba is receiving training as a trainee pilot at Arayrang Flying School. The sky is her dream. Side by side, she works as a journalist with BDnews24.com, regular anchor of the BTV, and an ambassador of the American resource center. She has also achieved the ‘Meena Media Award’ from UNICEF as a documentary maker.  After two years of extensive research, Nanjeeba has completed her first book ‘Autistic Shishura Kamon Hoy’ (How are the Autistic Children?). Nanjeeba herself has done the cover page of the book. She is anchoring programs titled ‘Amra Rongin Projapoti’ (we are the Colourful Butterflies), ‘Amader Kotha’ (Our Voices/Stories) ‘Anondo Bhubon’ (world of joy) and ‘Shuvo Shokal’ (Good Morning).  Nanjeeba directed her first short film ‘Careless’ at the age of only 13. She achieved ‘Meena Media Award’ from UNICEF for directing her first documentary ‘Sada Kalo’ (Black & White). Stunningly, the fund for making this film came from the savings of her Tiffin money! She has also made few more documentaries like ‘Grow UP’, ‘The Unstitched Pain’ etc.  Nanjeeba said that she had never thought of making a short film. Now she has been trying to learn the job. Things became easier for her after taking a few training from the National Institute of Mass Communication (NIMCO). NIMCO has been her encouragement; given her the opportunity to work in various media and that too in a beautiful work environment. It has also given her a new identity and increased her depth of thought. She can now make the camera doing the talking, can capture things that other mediums cannot. She is grateful to NIMCO for such an elevation in life.  One day Nanjeeba will represent Bangladesh and herself as a successful media personality and whole world will see her. It’s not far away that her dream of flying in the sky will come true. |

**6.0 Ministry’s Challenges to ensure child welfare:**

* Very few programs taken by the Ministry exclusively considers children's requirements;
* There is no specific assessment of children's demand that help making a realistic child budget proposal ;
* Lack of interest on the part of prominent makers to make child-based films/programs ;
* Lack of manpower to implement child budget;
* Parents are not much interested to encourage children to be engaged into cultural and journalistic pursuits;
* Now children have to spend more time in studies.

**7.0 Child-centric development plans for 2018-19 fiscal year**

* More importance will be given in making child-based programs;
* Another 100 adolescent radio listeners club will be formed by the Bangladesh Betar;
* 225 programs will be organized participated by teenage girls. After the programs awards will be given through a quiz competition;
* 25 School Based Outdoor Exhibitions will be organized by the BTV with children from remote areas of the country;
* Arrangements will be made to create and promote 25 programs participated by children;
* 5 training programs will be organized for children journalists on different issues;
* 8 training programs will be organized for producers by the Bangladesh Betar , NIMCO and PIB to make community radio more attractive;
* Under the NIMCO , two media workers will be given training on Internet broadcasting: Internet use and application for Adolescent / Child journalist
* In the next financial year 1,30,000 copies of 'Nabarun' will be published;
* 10 TV Fillers will be created through the Department of Films and Publications.

**8.0 Conclusion:**

We can expect a bright future only when proper protection, security, growth and participation of children in social activities are adequately ensured. A child grown up merrily will not engage himself in militancy or any other anti-social activities. Therefore, it is imperative that we try assiduously to create an environment that is safe and healthy for the ebullient growth of all children. Various media are running lot of awareness-building programs to sensitize people about the rights of children. The child-centric budget is being properly utilized by making different types of programs that can have a catalytic impact on the overall development of children. Efforts are on to increase this budget. All in all, this Ministry is working to ensure a suitable environment for children, through tireless publicity in the media and flow of information by other means.