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Disability Alliance, UNDP call on govt for wider disability inclusion

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— Courtesy Photo

Disability Alliance on SDGs Bangladesh and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have called on the government of Bangladesh for ensuring wider disability inclusion in the social protection



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UNDP and Disability Alliance, a network of 27 national and international organisations working for promoting disability rights in Bangladesh, have made this appeal to the government in a national seminar titled “Leadership and Participation of Persons with Disabilities toward an Inclusive, Accessible and Sustainable Post-Covid-19” at the Bangabandhu International Conference Center in Dhaka on Saturday, said a press release.



Zuena Aziz, principal coordinator for SDG Affairs at the Prime

Minister's Office,
attended the seminar
as the chief guest with
Khandaker Jahurul
Alam, executive
director of Centre for
Services and
Information on
Disability (CSID), as
the chair.

The keynote paper was
jointly presented by
Aminul Arifeen from
UNDP and Ayon
Debnath from
Sightsavers showed
that the Covid-19
pandemic has
unleashed a human
development crisis that
has yet to completely
unfold or be
understood.

“However, it is evident
that the effects of the
crisis are unequally
distributed, and people
who have already
been marginalised on
the grounds of
disability or gender
have been
disproportionately
affected. This makes
the need for action
more urgent so that the

progress made in recent years isn't undone," it said.

The keynote paper further highlighted that leadership and participation of persons with disabilities must be ensured toward an inclusive, accessible and sustainable post-Covid-19 world.

"The Government of Bangladesh is committed to upholding the rights of the people with disabilities in Bangladesh. The Persons with Disabilities Rights and Protection Act 2013 has been enacted and the Action Plan on Disability has been prepared by the government in 2019," Zuena Aziz said while addressing the seminar.

She also acknowledged that disability is an integral part of achieving the

targets of Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs.

Meanwhile, Amrita Rejina Rozario, convener of the Disability Alliance on SDGs Bangladesh and country director of Sightsavers, said “The government should measure the implementation status of the eight commitments made by Bangladesh during the first Global Disability Summit 2018 ahead of the upcoming second Global Disability Summit taking place in Norway February next year.”

Persons with disabilities and leaders of organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) from different parts of the country have engaged in an open discussion with the policymakers and shared their expectations about wider disability

inclusion in the country and about the upcoming Global Disability Summit 2022, the press release said.

Shibani Bhattacharjee, additional secretary at the Ministry of Social Welfare, Md Hamidul Haque, director at National Foundation for Development of the Disabled Persons, and Tahera Jabeen, social development adviser at British High Commission Dhaka, were present as special guests among others, including representatives from ILO, Access Bangladesh Foundation, Women with Disabilities Development Foundation.

Two video documentaries premiered in the event also showcased the sufferings of the persons with disabilities in Bangladesh due to the

Covid-19 pandemic,
the release added.

In his concluding remarks, Muhammad Mushfiqul Wara, country director of CBM International Bangladesh, urged the government of Bangladesh for ensuring the effective implementation of the country's disability laws realising the true need of people with disabilities and their organisations.

The Social Security Policy Support (SSPS) Programme of the Cabinet Division, and the General Economics Division, Planning Commission, DFAT and UNDP provided technical support to organise the seminar.

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