

ICCB, UNICEF join hands to advance children's well-being

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Online Desk: A new partnership has been launched to address the challenges affecting children in Bangladesh and reinforce a shared commitment towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The International Chamber of Commerce-Bangladesh (ICCB) and UNICEF have officially joined forces to promote children's rights and well-being in Bangladesh and strengthen cooperation efforts to achieve SDGs by 2030, said a news release on Tuesday.

During the launch event, ICCB President Mahbubur Rahman and UNICEF Representative to Bangladesh Sheldon Yett signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), committing to work together to leverage expertise, mobilise resources, and collaborate to protect and promote children's rights in Bangladesh, including during emergencies and disasters.

"Thank you to UNICEF for taking the initiative to collaborate with the private sector for the well-being of children in Bangladesh. We are proud to strengthen our cooperation with UNICEF to turn aspirations of the global goals into actions in Bangladesh," Mr Rahman was quoted as saying.

"To attain the SDGs by 2030, it is very necessary to invest in children now to equip them with the resources and skills to face future challenges. It is crucial to urgently prioritise our investment, particularly in health, nutrition, education, and other economic sectors key for children," he added.

"Children in Bangladesh are buffeted by multiple simultaneous crises. Approximately one in three children in Bangladesh, nearly 20 million children, for example, are affected by the direct impact of climate change. Both the state and the private sector need to invest to help children grow to their full potential," said Mr Yett.

"When businesses put forth innovative ideas and leverage resources to invest in children, we improve the lives of every child, drive economic growth, and shape the future of Bangladesh. Our partnership with the ICCB will help tackle the challenges children face, strengthen cooperation around the SDGs, and help drive a brighter future for every child in Bangladesh."

With robust global networks and shared interests in sustainable development, the two organisations are uniquely positioned to join hands and address the most urgent crises that children in Bangladesh confront.

Both will work together to harness collective strengths and tackle barriers preventing children in Bangladesh from surviving, thriving, and fulfilling their potential, according to the release.

The signing ceremony was also attended, among others, by ICCB Vice President Naser Ezaz Bijoy, ICCB Executive Board Member Aftab Ul Islam, Abul Kasem Khan, Managing Director of A. K. Khan Telecom Ltd., ICCB Secretary General Ataur Rahman and Fiona Ward, Miki Fukuhara and Zahidul Islam from UNICEF.

In September 2022, during the 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, the Chair of the ICC, Maria Fernanda Garza, and UNICEF Executive Director, Catherine Russell, signed a Memorandum of Understanding committed to protecting children from the impact of conflict, climate change, and the COVID-19 pandemic and strengthening cooperation around the Sustainable Development Agenda.