



## Personal hygiene awareness session at Bangladesh Police Academy, Sardah

The Rajshahi Area office of SMC EL has recently organized an orientation program on 'Personal Health and Hygiene' with the female police officers and promoted Joya sanitary napkin at the Bangladesh Police Academy (BPA) Sardah, Rajshahi. A total of 100 officers from 37<sup>th</sup> BCS batch of Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) and 38<sup>th</sup> batch of Sub-Inspector attended the session.

Mr. Khandoker Golam Faruk (bar), ppm, Additional Inspector General of Police and Principal of the BPA graced the event as the chief guest where Mr. Muklesur Rahman, Additional Deputy Inspector General of Police (Curriculum) attended as the Chairperson. Dr. Nasim Akhter Arena, Deputy Director, Family Planning, Rajshahi, attended the session as the guest speaker to illuminate the female audience on personal health and hygiene issues and guided them on healthy management and practices. Mr. Quazi Mohd. Jafrullah, Head of Region, North-South of SMC EL in his welcome note, highlighted SMC's vision, mission and field level activities.

Amongst others, Ms. Fatema Islam, Additional Superintendent of Police; Mr. Mohammad Habibur Rahman, Sales Manager, Rajshahi; Mr. Md. Rafiqul Islam, Senior Territory Sales Officer, Rajshahi and Mr. Tareq Mahmud, Senior Sales Promotion Officer were also present on the occasion.

## “Ma Shomabesh” to commemorate “World Breastfeeding Week 2020”

In observance of the 'World Breastfeeding Week 2020 (1<sup>st</sup> week of Aug'20)', SMC's MISHD community mobilization partner 'Shimantik' arranged the 'Ma Shomabesh' (Mothers' gathering) in the month of August 2020. Approximately 1,560 mothers, having children under 5 years of age were reached out through 146 events organized in different Upazillas under Sylhet Division. The campaign was designed to promote exclusive and daily breastfeeding practice; supplementary feeding after 6 months of age, the importance of micronutrient powder and so on. The events were facilitated by Project Staffs and Gold Star Members where they have also highlighted the importance of micronutrient powder 'MoniMix' for the children aged from 6 to 59 months. MoniMix branded gift items (bowl and spoon) were distributed among the participants to promote the brand.



## Premium pill brands 'SmartPill' and 'SmartPill Lite' launched

SMC EL increased its product basket by introducing the 4<sup>th</sup> generation regular birth control pill namely 'SmartPill' and 'SmartPill Lite'. This is the most recent development of combined oral contraceptive (COC) pills that contain drospirenone and ethinylestradiol. Considering the hormonal sensitivity of female health as well as the market demand, this premium pill has been launched in two different doses; one is 'Smartpill' that contains 21 hormone pills and the other one is 'Smartpill Lite' that contains 24 hormone pills. This new formulation of OCP has high efficacy and least side effects including no acne, less weight gain, no abnormal hair growth and no chance of anemia.



Honorable Chairman of the Board of Directors of SMC EL, Mr. Siddiqur Rahman Choudhury officially announced the launching of the product through a virtual ceremony on

November 12, 2020 which was attended by Mr. Abdul Haque, Managing Director, SMC EL and members of the senior management. With the slogan "The smart choice for smart women", the brand is reaching its target group (TG)

through digital platforms where it is expected to get positive market feedback due to its unique features going forward.

## SMC Chairman inaugurates Blue Star training on virtual platform

A three-day long Blue Star basic training program was held at the resort town of Cox's Bazar from October 19-21, 2020. The event was inaugurated by the Honorable Chairman of the Board of Directors of SMC, Mr. Siddiqur Rahman Choudhury through virtual platform. In his opening address, the Chairman expressed his gratitude and thanks to the Blue Star providers for their contribution in implementing SMC's health and family planning programs over the last two decades. He emphasized on creating awareness among the local community regarding adolescent health, use of sanitary napkins, mother & child nutrition, tuberculosis, family planning and other health related issues.

The Managing Director & CEO of SMC Mr. Md. Ali Reza Khan and Chief of Program Operations (CPO) Mr. Toslim Uddin Khan also joined the inaugural session and provided welcome remarks to the newly enrolled Blue Star Providers. The CPO moderated the session and also delivered a conceptual presentation on the contents of this



basic training such as Family Planning Injectable contraceptives; Micronutrient Powder 'MoniMix'; Growth Monitoring Program; Maternal, Neonatal and Child Health (MNCH); referral for Tuberculosis (TB); Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives (LARC).

The training team of SMC Program Division organized the session with a limited number of participants (13 new providers) adhering strictly to the health and safety measures as per WHO and IEDCR

guidelines due to the outbreak of the pandemic COVID-19. The Chairman appreciated the arrangement of this session that enabled the new providers to accomplish their training during the pandemic.

In FY 2020-21, SMC management has planned to provide Blue Star basic training to 1,200 new providers across the country. The vision of SMC's Blue Star Program is to build the capacity of the community level non-graduate medical service providers in the private sector to ensure quality and affordable services to the target population from their service delivery points.



## SMC Purified Drinking Water now at Parjatan Hotel Shaikat, Chattogram

SMC EL's Chattogram Area Office has promoted 'SMC Purified Drinking Water' by selling 6,000 bottles to Hotel Shaikat located beside Chattogram Railway Station under the management of Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation (BPC).

The bottles were handed over at a simple ceremony at the hotel premises on November 8, 2020 which was represented by Mr. Md. Sarwar Uddin, Manager, Hotel Shaikat and Mr. Abdulla

Al Mamun, Sales Manager, Chattogram, SMC EL. Mr. Md. Tofazzal Hossain Khan, Senior Sales Promotion Officer and Mr. Mahin Uddin, Sales Officer of Chattogram Area Office played the key role for promoting our brand to this prestigious hotel. Our product was appreciated by the hotel management for its superior quality and competitive price. Meanwhile, our sales team took the opportunity by promoting SMC's 'Taste Me' and 'Germ Kill' among the members of the hotel management.

The Hotel Manager thanked SMC EL for providing drinking water and also expressed his desire to introduce 'Taste Me' as their Welcome Drink soon. It is pertinent to mention here that BPC supplies drinking water to various Government organizations including Bangladesh Railway (BR). This effort of our sales team will certainly enhance the bondage of relationship thereby putting a strong footprint in the market.

## Chattogram Area Office partnered with an international NGO



SMC EL's Chattogram Area Office has promoted Joya sanitary napkin in Cox's Bazar district along with the technical & financial support of UNICEF since August 2020 partnering with International Development Enterprise (IDE), an international non-government organization. As a part of their monthly plan, IDE will purchase around 7,000 packs of 'Joya' and will deliver the same door-to-door to the six Upazilas (Cox's Bazar Sadar, Teknaf, Ukhiya, Chakoria, Maheshkhali, Pekua) under Cox's Bazar district through female Sales Agents.

The distribution will continue for the next two years. IDE exclusively hired 70 female Sales Agents and organized two basic training programs with the technical assistance from SMC, that were held at Cox's Bazar Sadar and Chakoria Upazila during August 2020. SMC's training facilitators imparted knowledge on menstrual hygiene management "Personal Hygiene Practice" and about the essential features and benefits of using 'Joya' sanitary napkin with the Sales Agents. The programs were highly successful

where the Sales Agents of IDE were satisfied to gather knowledge about health and hygiene. Around twenty local female entrepreneurs were also attended the sessions with a view to promote Joya through their own business platforms (beauty parlor, tailoring shop, boutique shop, etc.).

Amongst others, Mr. Abdulla Al Mamun, Sales Manager, Chattogram and Mr. Dhiman Bhoomik, Senior Sales Promotion Officer and officials from IDE were present the sessions.



SMC continued its capacity development efforts to enhance the skill and knowledge of the Pink Star Providers on Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives (LARC) during the period of July-November 2020 at the height of the current pandemic. Pink Star is a health network of SMC to offer LARC methods through graduate doctors

(mostly OBGYN) who are engaged in private practice. Since 2013, SMC is offering its LARC services to increase the accessibility and utilization of IUD, Implant and Injectable services through its private medical practitioners having chamber and private facilities with the support of USAID.

During this pandemic, SMC organized twelve training sessions and provided basic training to 62 providers of the Pink Star network. Each training session was conducted with a limited number of

participants. The training team thoroughly briefed the participants about the precautions and strictly adhered to all required health and safety measures such as hand washing/sanitizing, wearing masks and physical distancing following the WHO and IEDCR guidelines for COVID-19. On successful completion of the training sessions, Dr. Salahuddin Ahmed, Head of Training and Service Delivery, appreciated his team for the smart arrangements which eventually proves the growing interest of the doctors for LARC service delivery.

## MISHD Community Mobilization partner promotes COVID-19 awareness campaign at 'Grameen Haat'

With a mission to address the COVID-19 pandemic issues, SMC's community mobilization partner Shimantik, under the (MISHD) program, has organized a promotional campaigns at the Grameen Haat to create awareness on health and hygiene among the rural communities. Shimantik organized 20 events in five Upazilas of five districts (Sylhet, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar, Habiganj, Brahmanbaria). As a part of the awareness campaign, they decorated a promotional vehicle carrying Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) materials which was also adorned with a number of awareness messages on COVID-19. They also designed a temporary tent to organize the event at the haat. Two performers playfully communicated important information in the health sessions using the voice recorded messages. The key communication messages that were disseminated include: use of masks, gloves, frequent handwashing with soap or using hand sanitizer, maintaining social distance, adopting healthy practices in daily life like care-seeking and refraining from harmful activities, etc. They also

distributed different types of leaflets and highlighting the importance of using our products (MoniMix, SMC Zinc, Easy Clean, Germ Kill and Taste Me) which are helpful during the ongoing pandemic. SMC's paper soap 'Easy Clean' was also promoted through hand washing demonstrations in the events where approximately 1,860 community people participated. Among others, Upazila Nirbahi Officers, Upazila Health & Family Planning Officers, Union Parishad Members, Panel Chairmen, Union Parishad Chairmen and Food Inspectors also attended the event. They also participated in the handwashing demonstration session using Easy Clean paper soap. The Government officials and the local government representatives highly appreciated the initiatives and requested to organize more such activities in the communities way forward.



## New automation towards increased efficiency



A snapshot of SMC e-DMS

The pandemic is driving a shift in companies to use and apply technology, leveraging automation and digitalization of industries from this year's economic turbulence. SMC and SMC EL were also operational utilizing the technology and web-based

state-of-the-art software applications. As a part of the advancement, our MIS & IT department has recently introduced a few more automated systems in different business processes of the organizations. The most notable one among these innovations has been the introduction of the automated Supply Chain Management System where the existing Decision Support System (DSS) has been customized towards a paperless process. This new version was also launched as a debut towards the introduction of high-tech system in SMC.

The department has also implemented new electronic Distribution Management System (e-DMS); another

large-scale venture for the operation of our Distribution Sales (Secondary part of Consumer Sales). Around 400 Sales Representatives (SR) are utilizing it to generate Electronic Sales Orders through their official smart phones. A total of 273 Point of Service (POS) printers were distributed to the Distribution Houses across the country to print the delivery slips (invoices) against the effective orders. The e-DMS system has also been integrated with the existing web-based Sales (e-Sales) & Inventory system. Despite the challenge of proper communication with SRs, e-DMS orientation sessions were conducted on virtual platform successfully.

A decent digital archiving solution will help the company to preserve the valuable objects and will enable us to get easier access to necessary information. With this objective, our MIS & IT department has launched a Digital Archiving System for both the companies. It has secured long-term retention of valuable process assets of the organization in a tech-based environment where various historical data, creative files and company policies, forms and manuals, etc can be conserved conveniently.

## SMC conducted products' availability study

During the period October 2019 to January 2020, SMC conducted an 'Availability Study of SMC and its competitors' products' to assess the availability and acceptability of its own products as opposed to that of the competitors' brands all over the country, particularly at SMC's Blue Star (BS) and Green Star (GS) outlets. The survey covered availability of the product categories like Oral Contraceptive Pill (OCP), Condom, Injectable Contraceptives, Emergency Contraceptive Pill (ECP), Oral Rehydration Salt (ORS), Micronutrient Powder (MoniMix), SMC Zinc, Safe Delivery Kit (SDK), Sanitary Napkins and at the same time assessing satisfaction of the sellers in respect to uninterrupted supply of the SMC brands. A total number of 1,349 of outlets were covered for the study and among these 845 were BS outlets and 504 were GS outlets.

The following table signifies the intensity of aforementioned SMC products at BS and GS outlets:

Product Availability	Available at BS outlet	Available at GS outlet
At least one SMC OCP brand	97.9%	98.8%
At least one SMC Injectable brand	99.5%	98.0%
At least one SMC Condom brand	96.1%	96.8%
At least one SMC Sanitary napkin brand	92.3%	90.9%
At least one SMC Zinc brand	93.1%	88.5%
At least one SMC ECP brand	85.4%	85.3%
'ORSaline-N' is the most available ORS brand	98.8%	99.4%
'MoniMix' is the most available MNP brand	98.9%	98.4%
'Safety Kit' is the most available SDK brand	74.4%	45.6%

The survey also revealed that around 93% of the sellers (both BS and GS outlets) are satisfied by selling SMC products where only a few outlets faced stock-out situation. Major ways of product replenishment found through 'after call delivery' by sales Officers (47.2%), 'wait for company SO' (27.7%) and 'buy from market' (18.6%). The facts findings of the study also manifests that SMC's BS and GS networks are playing vital role to enhance the demand of SMC products and services and also contributing significantly to sell SMC's pharmaceutical products. Currently, SMC has 8,013 BS and around 4,500 GS who are community level non-graduate medical service providers, obtained training on family planning, reproductive health, child health & nutrition and so on offering quality services to the community people including public health priority areas.

To conclude it can be said that strong availability of SMC products in the outlets opens up the window of opportunities to explore and introduce more public health products to serve the community.



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