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Eminent economist Prof Rehman Sobhan speaks at a roundtable on 'Workplace safety for the industrial workers: Can't we do anything?' organised by the Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) at the Cirdap auditorium in the city yesterday. On his right is Dr Debapriya Bhattacharya and on his left are Annisul Huq and Fazlul Haque.

PM seeks World Bank help in power, gas sectors

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Khaleda Zia yesterday sought cooperation from the World Bank (WB) in power, water and gas sectors, construction of roads and highways and installation of underground rails in the capital.

The country needs rapid expansion of these services to meet a growing demand, which requires huge amounts of investment. She hoped that the World Bank would come forward in aid to the proposed areas.

The prime minister made the request when visiting World Bank Executive Director Dhanendra Kumar called on her at the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

She also sought cooperation of the donor agency in construction of Padma Bridge and informed that the matter was discussed with Japan.

The WB official appreciated Bangladesh's progress in socioeconomic fields, resulting in a sound macro-economy, reduction of maternal and child mortality rates, women empowerment and female education.

"Bangladesh is closer to the takeoff stage on economic front,"

Dhanendra said following a first-hand appraisal of the situation.

Terming Bangladesh a singularly fortunate country in micro-credit operations, the WB executive director remarked that socioeconomic condition of 95 percent rural women of the country improved through the micro-finance lending mechanism.

He appreciated the prime minister's key initiatives behind those successes.

Thanking the WB for its continuous support to Bangladesh's development projects, the prime minister sought its cooperation in implementation of the schemes laid down in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). The WB executive praised the PRSP of Bangladesh.

Foreign Direct Investment, expansion of infrastructure to attract FDI and Ganga barrage were also discussed in the meeting.

World Bank Country Director Christine I Wallich and Prime Minister's Principal Secretary Kamal Siddiqui were present.



PHOTO: PID

World Bank Executive Director Dhanendra Kumar called on Prime Minister Khaleda Zia at her office in the city yesterday.

Prize giving ceremony

Bss, Dhaka

The prize giving ceremony of a children's painting competition arranged by the Indian High Commission on 'Liberation War of Bangladesh' will be held at the Indian Cultural Centre at 4:00pm today.