

WORLD DEVELOPMENT REPORT 2007 LAUNCHED

WB calls for developing human capital

UNB, Singapore

Rural productivity needs to be increased in Bangladesh to accommodate the growing number of young educated people coming into the job market every year, said a World Bank economist in a policy recommendation as the donor agency launched its international report here yesterday.

The suggestion came in reply to a question on the occasion of release of the World Bank's 'World Development Report 2007' at Suntec Singapore marking the World Bank-IMF annual meetings being held in this Southeast Asian state.

Lead author of the report Emmanuel Jimenez brought up Bangladesh in the forefront to project the country's successes in education sector, particularly in girls' education, for an instance on how countries in South Asia coming up for developing their human capital.

"Bangladesh has been able to educate its girls...The young girls in Bangladesh at their age of 12-13 are not getting pregnant now," said Emmanuel Jimenez, who is direc-

tor of Human Development in the World Bank's East Asia and the Pacific Division.

The country's education case was repeated again and again in response to questions on how the developing countries could face the challenges of educating their young people.

World Bank chief economist François Bourguignon, also the WB senior vice-president for Development Economics, put it in other words for a concrete example: the young girls working in the readymade garment factories in Bangladesh are now coming after completion of secondary education, which was not in the past.

"Developing countries which invest in better education, healthcare, and job training for their record numbers of young people between 12 and 24 years of age could produce surging economic growth and sharply reduced poverty," says the report.

With 1.3 billion young people now living in the developing world -- the largest-ever youth group in history -- the report said there has never been a better time to invest in youth because they are healthier

and better educated than previous generations. And they will join the workforce with fewer dependents because of changing demographics.

However, it cautioned that failure to seize this opportunity to train them more effectively for the workplace, and to be active citizens, could lead to widespread disillusionment and social tensions.

"Such large numbers of young people living in developing countries present great opportunities, but also risks," Bourguignon said. "The opportunities are great, as many countries will have a larger, more skilled labour force and fewer dependents. But these young people must be well prepared in order to create and find good jobs."

The World Bank noted that far too many young people -- some 130 million 15 to 24-year-olds -- cannot read or write. Secondary education and skill acquisition make sense only if primary schooling has been successful.

"This is still far from being the case and efforts have to be reinforced in this area," said the report. In addition, more than 20 percent of

fringe in countries such as Algeria, Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Estonia, and Zambia, rate poor education and work skills among their workforce as a major or severe obstacle to their operations.

"Overcoming this handicap starts with more and better investments in youth," it said.

The World Development Report identified three strategic policies that may enhance investment in young people -- expanding opportunities, improving capabilities, and offering second chances for young people who have fallen behind due to difficult circumstances or poor choices.

"These address five fundamental transitions facing young people and affecting their whole economic, social and family life, namely getting an education, finding work, staying healthy, forming families, and exercising citizenship."

The report found 300,000 young people under the age of 18 recently involved in armed conflicts, and another 500,000 recruited into military or paramilitary forces.

Police attack on political activists condemned

Dhaka University Teachers' Association (Duta) yesterday brought out a silent procession on the DU campus protesting recent police atrocities on pedestrians and political activists and demanding reforms in caretaker government and the Election Commission, says a press release.

The procession began at the foot of Aparajito Bangla and ended at Central Shaheed Minar which was followed by a rally addressed by Duta President Prof Sharif Ullah Bhuiyan and General Secretary Prof M Akhtaruzzaman.

The speakers condemned the police attack on the pedestrians and political activists and termed the incident as a crime against humanity.

They demanded removal of state minister for home affairs and punitive action against the policemen responsible for the attack.

The speakers also asked the government to accept the reform proposals for a free and fair election.

Prof AK Azad Chowdhury, Prof AAMS Arefin Siddiqui, Prof Khondaker Bazul Haq, Prof Mezbah Uddin Ahmad, Prof Harun-or-Rashid, Prof Ashraf Uddin Chowdhury, Prof SM Imamul Haq, Prof Hossain Monsur, Prof AKM Nurunnabi, Prof Dalem Chandra Barman, Prof Nazma Shaheen, Dr Rahmat Ullah, Prof Anwar Hossain, Dr Wahiduzzaman and Dr Zeenat Huda took part in the procession and rally.

Businessman strangled

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A businessman was strangled in the city's Khilgaon area on Friday night.

The victim, Pranjeet Kumar Dey, 40, of Debidwar in Comilla, was found dead near the Ansars camp at Khilgaon.

Family sources said Pranjeet, who also worked in a firm at New DOHS, left Comilla on Friday evening for Dhaka and was due to leave for Hong Kong yesterday morning for business purposes.

One Mohammad Sohel finding him lying on the roadside around 10:15pm brought him to Dhaka Medical College Hospital where duty doctors declared him dead.

Medical sources said the criminals might have sprayed chilli powder into the eyes of the victim before strangling him as the eyes were swollen.

New English courses of British Council

BSS, Dhaka

The British Council has announced new English courses beginning September 20, as part of its recently launched new courses to help develop local businesses in Bangladesh.

The objective of the courses is to improve efficiency and competitiveness in the international workplace, said a press release.

The courses include 'Management and Influence Meetings', 'Problem Solving and Decision Making', 'Project Management', 'Report Writing', 'Presentation Skills', 'Communication Skills', 'Leadership and Teambuilding with Psychometric Team Management Profiling'.



Dhaka University Teachers' Association takes out a silent procession on the campus yesterday protesting police atrocities on the opposition activists during Prime Minister's Office siege programme.



UNB, Dhaka

Light to moderate rain or thundershowers accompanied by temporary gusty wind is likely at one or two places over Rajshahi, Dhaka, Sylhet, Chittagong, Khulna and Barisal divisions in the next 12 hours as of 6:00pm today.

Day temperature may remain nearly unchanged over the country, Met Office said.

Yesterday's highest temperature of 35.5 degree Celsius was recorded at Chittagong and the lowest of 22.8 degrees at Sayedpur.

The sun sets in the capital at 6:00pm today and rises at 5:46am tomorrow.

The highest and lowest temperature and humidity recorded in some major cities and towns yesterday were:

| City/Town | Temperature in Celsius | | Humidity in percentage | |
|-------------|------------------------|------|------------------------|---------|
| | Max | Min | Morning | Evening |
| Dhaka | 34.3 | 26.5 | 65 | 63 |
| Chittagong | 35.5 | 25.5 | 69 | 75 |
| Rajshahi | 33.7 | 25.8 | 82 | 80 |
| Khulna | 33.8 | 26.8 | 76 | 80 |
| Barisal | 33.4 | 25.4 | 84 | - |
| Sylhet | 33.0 | 25.5 | 87 | 69 |
| Cox's Bazar | 33.5 | 25.8 | 67 | 80 |



Prof Bahauddin Zakaria speaks at a view exchange meeting on 'The role of the media in curbing corruption' organised by Transparency International Bangladesh at a hotel in Sylhet yesterday.

Dhaka calls for united OIC stance against anti-Muslim campaign

BSS, Dhaka

Bangladesh has reinforced its call for consolidated OIC stance on countering "maligning campaign" against the Muslims in the Western media as the information ministers of the forum joined a two-day conference in Saudi city of Jeddah.

"In today's world, coinage of terms such as 'Islamic terrorists, militants or fundamentalists' in the media has contributed to the formation of an anti-Muslim feeling among the rest of the people," an official statement quoted Information Minister M Shamsul Islam at the conference.

This phenomenon, Shamsul said, was not only detrimental to the general inter-cultural harmony but also indirectly helping the handful of terrorists who exploit the sentiments of the common Muslims and commit heinous crimes in the name of Islam.

"The establishment of a multi-lingual OIC (Organisation of Islamic Conference) electronic media is badly needed by the Muslim Ummah to reach out to millions of people across the globe to fight against Islamophobia and misperceptions about Islam and to project a true image of our great religion," he said.

Saudi Arabian Crown Prince and Deputy Premier Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz opened the two-day 7th session of the conference in Jeddah on September 13.

Shamsul Islam said the Muslim world is now confronting a "one-way traffic of information," which, he said, is needed to be faced with "urgent attention" through popularising "our own media."

He identified satellite channels as the most effective vehicles of information and culture, saying the television networks as well as other media of the OIC countries should exchange information and programmes among themselves.

The minister also proposed installation of an international standard media training institute.

"Bangladesh would be happy to provide necessary infrastructural facilities required for setting up the institute. On a positive decision on the establishment by this forum, Bangladesh will submit a specific project proposal in due course of time," he said.



Sramik Karmachari Oikya Parishad (Skop) stages a demonstration in the city yesterday demanding review of wages for garment workers.

Cabinet secy asks Ctg admin to maintain law and order during Ramadan

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Chittagong

Cabinet Secretary Abu Solaiman Chowdhury at a meeting with top officials of the district administration here in the port city yesterday instructed them to maintain law and order in Chittagong before and during the Ramadan, Puja and Eid festival at any cost.

The two-and-half-hour meeting was held at Chittagong Circuit House from 10:00am yesterday and Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Ashrafal Moqbul, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Dr Syed Nesar Ahmad Rumi and deputy commissioners of ten other districts of the division attended it, sources said.

The meeting mainly dealt with the law and order issues ahead of the holy month of Ramadan and the festival of Puja and Eid Ul Fitr and we talked how to maintain law and order situation in Chittagong and elsewhere, the cabinet secretary told reporters, emerging from the meeting.

I also gathered information from the concerned deputy commissioners about the existing law and order situation and asked them to keep strong vigil in future so that none can dare to break law and order situation, he said.

Solaiman Chowdhury, who hails from Banskhalia upazila in Chittagong and took over as cabinet secretary recently, said he would visit other divisional headquarters soon to see the law and order situation there and give necessary instructions.

IMF, WB SUMMIT AEJB condemns threat to arrest protesters

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Alliance for Economic Justice, Bangladesh (AEJB), a platform of 38 organisations, yesterday condemned the threats by Singaporean and Indonesian police to arrest and club protesters during the upcoming summit of International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB).

"We strongly denounce the move of the Singaporean and Indonesian police who stifled the freedom of expression by banning rallies," said Aminur Rasul Babul of the Campaign for Good Governance at a meeting at Central Shaheed Minar in the city.

The programme started with a traditional 'Gomvira' song that depicted the plight of farmers, resulting from the 'flawed prescription' of the WB and IMF.

Abul Hossain of Grameen O Nagar Dandira Federation said that while India and China could defy the prescriptions of the WB and IMF, the country should do the same.

The Indian government has increased subsidy to its power sector to facilitate the farmers and eventually agricultural output in India has been shut up, he added.

Shamima Nasreen, president of Swadhin Bangla Garments Sramik Federation, said WB and IMF have crippled the industrial sector of the country in the name of privatisation.

The speakers called on the government to say 'no' to WB and IMF. "Since we have 4.8 billion dollar remittance, we do not need 1.5 billion dollar from them."

Jafur Alam of Chetona, MA Jaman of Grameen O Nagar Daridra Federation, Sheikh Abdul Jalil of CDP, Munira Begum of SAPI, Anjuman Ara Begum Jolly of Bhasoman Nari Federation and Monowar Mustafa of Unnayan Anneshan also spoke.

Eight accomplices of Shahadat arrested with firearms

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Detective police arrested eight accomplices of Shahadat, a notorious criminal in Mirpur, along with two revolvers, one shotgun, one pistol and 91 bullets from Mirpur area in the city yesterday.

Of them, Alamgir, Rubel, Liton and Nazim Uddin were arrested from different areas in Mirpur in the early hours of yesterday.

Acting on their confessional statements, the police arrested four others - Monir Hossain Polash, 25, Masudur Rahman Tota, 26, Mahmudur Rahman Sohel, 23, and Hannan, 35, -- along with the arms and ammunition

from the Botanical Garden at around 12:00noon. The four were wanted in a number of murder cases, police said.

Sohel, a student of accounting department at Dhaka University, told this correspondent that he is involved with the gang for about one year and he maintains the database of the gang members.

He also said that there are about 250 members who commit various crimes at the instruction of Shahadat and receive a monthly payment.

Police said they have long been committing crimes, including extortion, in Mirpur area.

Cross-border crimes to figure in Kolkata meet

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh will raise the issue of Bangladeshi criminals' activities on Indian soil, other security matters and the handover of the newly surveyed 766 acres of land by India in the forthcoming border conference in Kolkata.

The four-day Bangladesh-India border conference begins tomorrow in Kolkata to discuss steps for enhancing mutual relations and understanding through resolving the outstanding issues between the two next-door neighbours, an official announcement said yesterday.

During the Deputy Director General and IG-level conference between Bangladesh Rifles and the Indian Border Security Force (BSF), the BDR side will also press for keeping Tin Bigha Corridor open round the clock and electrification of Angorpota-Dahagram enclave.

Killing and injuring innocent

Bangladeshis by Indian citizens and BSF, and the smuggling of various goods, including illegal arms and explosives, into Bangladesh, incursions by BSF and Indian nationals, and kidnap and arrest of Bangladeshis by BSF, and push-in of the Bengali-speaking Indian nationals into Bangladesh are also on the agenda.

Obstruction by BSF to development work and planting tea saplings inside 150 yards of international border line, and installation of border pillars following a joint survey, and false propaganda in Indian media against Bangladesh and BDR will also be on the discussion list.

Deputy Director General of BDR Brigadier General SM Golam Rabbani will lead a nine-member delegation while IG of BSF North Bengal Frontier SR Tewari lead a 14-member delegation of the host country.

ACC files cases against 10 forest staffs

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) yesterday filed five cases against 10 forest officials and employees on charge of plundering timber worth over Tk 78.87 lakh from the preserved forests in Chittagong Hill Tracts during 2004 and 2005.

The accused are Divisional Forest Officer Rezaul Shikder, Assistant Forest Conservators Saiful Islam and Tariq Kamal, Forest

Rangers Bakhtiar Hossain, Shafiuddin and Ailmuzzaman Shikder, Deputy Rangers Gias Uddin Ahmed and Abdul Jabbar and Foresters Nurul Haq and Hasan Kabir.

Jahangir Alam, deputy assistant director of ACC in Chittagong, filed the cases with Kotwali Police Station in Rangamati after a preliminary investigation found that they are involved in plundering timber.

Reforms in laws a must to curb corruption

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

There are constitutional and legal limitations which obstruct the process of curbing corruption, said the speakers at a seminar yesterday.

"We need reforms in the existing laws to eliminate corruption," they added.

The seminar was organised jointly by Transparency International Bangladesh (TIB) and Sacheton Nagorik Committee (SONAC) at Savar municipality auditorium.

Terming corruption a global problem and Bangladesh, a more vulnerable country in this regard, the speakers said hunger for absolute power is the main cause of corruption.

If corruption can be brought to a reasonable level, the GDP would rise further, they said, adding that due to corruption, the country's development is witnessing frequent hold-ups.

The speakers said though accused in corruption are being brought to trial, they are not tried properly keeping corruption unchecked.

The political scenario is very fragile, the speakers said, adding that in order to make the country dynamic and a welfare state, nominations have to be made keeping the candidates' involvement with people in mind.

"This would make them accountable to people," they observed.

They also stressed a united movement like '52, '69, '71 to eradicate corruption from the country.

With SONAC Convenor Joyal Abedin in the chair, the seminar was participated by Dr Dewan Md Salahuddin MP, Advisor to former caretaker government and Treasurer of TIB Trustee Board M Hafizuddin Khan, noted academican Khan Sarwar Murshid, President of Bishwa Shaitiya Kendro Prof Abdullah Abu Sayeed, eminent journalist Kamal Lohani, Chairman of Savar Municipality Md Refatullah, TIB Executive Director Dr Iftekharuzzaman, SONAC member Mir Hamida Begum and freedom fighter Khondokar Md Hamid Ronju.

Hartal victim dies

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A cab driver, badly burned during the Opposition's hartal on September 10, succumbed to his injuries at Dhaka Medical College and Hospital on Friday.

Abdul Malek, 27, a resident of Jasim Uddin Road in Uttara, sustained severe burns when the pickets set fire to his cab near Fakirapool in the city during the hartal hours.

NATIONALISATION OF JOBS Non-govt pry teachers begin sit-in

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Teachers of non-government primary schools yesterday began a 48-hour-long sit-in programme in the city demanding nationalisation of their jobs.

The teachers under the banner of 'Bangladesh Non-government Primary School Teachers' Association' said if their demand is not met by this time, they would go for hunger strike and self-immolation to realise the demand.

Earlier, they organised a rally at Muktangan which was attended by hundreds of non-government primary school teachers.

Addressing the rally, association Secretary General Abdur Rahman Bachchu said on September 10, 2001 the then opposition leader and present Prime Minister Khaleda Zia pledged that if they were voted to power, BNP-led four-party alliance would nationalise their jobs.

But nothing has been done so far to nationalise their job in last five years, he added.

Lamenting on their grievances, Rahman said they are performing the same duty as is done by the government primary school teachers, but they are getting far less amount than them.

"The government provides us 95 percent of our basic salary plus Tk 300 as house rent and Tk 200 as medical allowance. But there is no provision for time scale and pension for the non-government primary teachers," he added.

Rahman called upon 89 thousand teachers of 20 thousand non-government primary schools to abstain from taking any class until their demand is met.

Association President Muhammad Nasir Uddin Ahmed presided over the rally which was addressed by its Finance Secretary Sarbeshwar Saha, Publicity Secretary Md Shamsul Alam Shikder and Office Secretary Humayun Kabir.