

Stakeholders' ownership in companies seen key to ensuring CSR

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Stakeholders' ownership in companies can ensure better practice of corporate social responsibility; economists, entrepreneurs and professionals told a discussion in Dhaka yesterday.

In Bangladesh's present day CSR practice, stakes of employees and community people in companies are not recognised, said economist Rehman Sobhan.

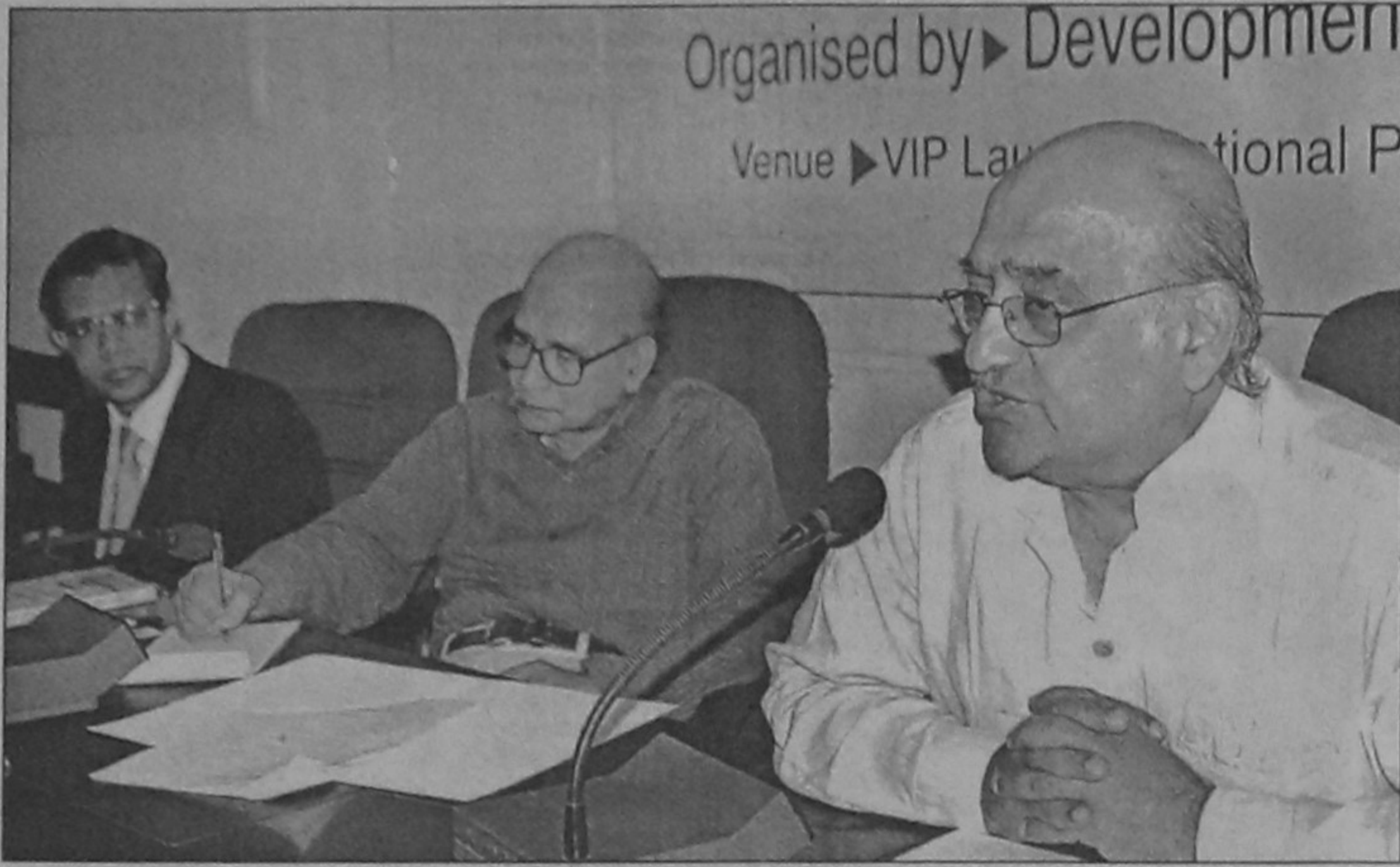
So, the practice of a good corporate culture in the country is yet to be developed, added Sobhan.

Sobhan, also chairman of independent think tank Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD), said the CSR should not be practised only by an individual company or a person, it should be institutionalised.

"Involving different stakeholders in companies will also help establish a stable society," Sobhan told the discussion, organised by Development Strategy Forum at the National Press Club.

He also urged the public entities to follow the CSR as they also have responsibilities for the society.

Chairman of the Transparency International, Bangladesh (TIB) Muzaffer Ahmad said Bangladesh's corporate culture is rather a culture of a family as most of the companies are run by



Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD) Chairman Rehman Sobhan (right) speaks at a discussion on CSR in Dhaka yesterday as Chairman of Transparency International, Bangladesh (TIB) Muzaffer Ahmad (centre) and Chairman of National Board of Revenue (NBR) Mohammad Abdul Mazid look on.

family members. Ahmad said sovereignty of consumers have diminished to a great extent and sovereignty of companies strengthened in recent days due to absence of proper CSR practice in Bangladesh.

He urged the company owners to arrange the training for employees for enhancement of productivity.

Chairman of National Board of Revenue (NBR) Mohammad Abdul Mazid said

owners should create a sense of belongingness to employees so that everybody can think he or she is an owner of the company.

Managing Director of IDLC Finance Limited Anis A Khan said, "Good corporate governance is the key to ensuring proper implementation of CSR."

President of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) Anwar-Ul-Alam

Chowdhury Parvez said the future business of the country is largely dependent on ensuring CSR, eco-friendly environment and following of social compliances.

Economist Atiur Rahman said the real wage of the garment workers declined due to higher inflation following the skyrocketing prices of essential commodities. "So, the wages for the garment workers should be increased," he added.

Central bank intervenes as Philippines peso falls to new low

ANN/Philippine Daily Inquirer

Currency dealers said the market sold down the peso on reports that year-on-year inflation surged to a 14-year high of 11.4 percent in June.

But as the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas unloaded dollars between P45.60 to P45.70, the market saw a good opportunity to lock in gains. As a result, the local currency closed slightly stronger than Thursday's P45.50 to the greenback.

The peso, now Asia's second worst performing currency next to the South Korean won, would have fallen deeper if not for BSP's dollar sales. Some traders estimated that the central bank accounted for as much as half of Friday's volume of \$847.8 million at the Philippine Dealing System (PDS).

But despite the slight bounce that allowed it to close near the day's high of P45.43, the local currency tumbled by nearly P1 or 2.2 percent this week from last week's close of P44.46 to the dollar.

Since the start of the year, the peso has depreciated by about 9.2 percent, wiping out nearly half of the gains against the greenback recorded last year when the local unit was acclaimed as the region's best performing currency.

"The BSP was intervening aggressively but the market knew that the exchange rate had already moved up fast and that the central bank may tighten monetary policy anytime given the clear and present danger of inflation. Knowing that the BSP may even raise interest rates by 50 basis points, and might not even wait for the next policy rate setting (July 17) so some had taken profits," a bank treasurer said.

EBL offers home loan

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Eastern Bank Limited (EBL) has officially launched a loan facility titled "EBL Home Loan" under its consumer banking to help meet the increasing need for finance in construction and purchase of residential units, according to a press release.

Launching the "EBL Home Loan" in a press conference yesterday at a local hotel in Dhaka, EBL Managing Director and CEO Ali Reza Iftekhar said, "Through this new loan facility we have fulfilled another commitment to our valued clients, and we have tried to keep the terms and conditions for this loan as simple as possible."

Under the EBL Home Loan facility an applicant can take loan up to Tk 75 lakh for a maximum period of 20 years for apartment purchase, home construction, extension or renovation.

EBL is offering attractive interest rates for the loan borrowers. For a loan amount of Tk 5 lakh to 15 lakh interest rate is



EBL Managing Director and CEO Ali Reza Iftekhar speaks at the launch of a new loan facility "EBL Home Loan" at a press conference in Dhaka yesterday. EBL Deputy Managing Director Mamoon Mahmood Shah and Head of Marketing Nazeem A. Choudhury are also seen.

14 percent; for Tk 15 lakh to 25 lakh, 14.25 percent for Tk 25 lakh to 40 lakh, 14.50 percent and for Tk 40 lakh to Tk 75 lakh, 15 percent.

As a special offer, existing home loan borrowers can transfer their loans to EBL at 0 percent processing fee and the

interest rate will be 1 percent less than what they are paying now, subject to certain terms and conditions.

Among others, EBL Deputy Managing Director Mamoon Mahmood Shah and Head of Marketing Nazeem A. Choudhury were present.

European bourses post sharp falls

AFP, London

European stock exchanges suffered sharp falls Friday on fresh fears for the health of the banking sector sparked by a report from Goldman Sachs.

The US investment bank said in a note it had lowered its 2008-2010 forecasts for more than 40 European banks, warning that some of them may have to raise between 60 and 90 billion euros (94-141 billion dollars) to shore up finances in the face of a nearly year-long credit crisis.

In London the FTSE 100 shed 1.16 percent to close at 5,412.80 points, while in Paris the CAC 40 fell 1.80 percent to 4,266. The Frankfurt Dax lost 1.28 percent to finish at 6,272.21.

The Euro Stoxx 50 index of leading eurozone companies closed 1.67 percent in negative territory at 3,275.20.

Wall Street was closed for the Independence Day holiday.

In London banks were also hurt by news that TPG, a US investment fund, had decided against taking a stake in Bradford and Bingley after

Moody's lowered its recommendation on the British bank. Bradford and Bingley fell 18.03 percent to 50 pence while Barclays lost 4.45 percent to end the day at 279 pence.

Elsewhere mining giant BHP Billiton added 0.80 percent to reach 1,763 pence after announcing a steep rise in prices for iron ore that it supplies to Baosteel of China.

In Paris, analyst Yves Marcais of Global Equities said his group "believes that a correction in the banking sector is far from over."

Mittal tops UK's richest power list

PTI, London

Money and power being "natural bedfellows" is not necessarily true in the British business world except for steel tycoon Lakshmi Mittal who figures right on the top of a new 'Richest Power List', compiled after combining two separate rankings of the most powerful and the richest in the UK.

Giving Mittal company on the new list, compiled by the 'Times' newspaper, is another Indian-origin executive Arun Sarin, the world's top mobile firm Vodafone's outgoing CEO who has made it to 24th in the combined list, even though he does not figure among to top 1,000 richest persons in the UK. Mittal, with an estimated fortune of 27.7 billion pounds, had also topped this year the Sunday Times Richest List, which has been combined with the Times Power 100 list to make the 'Richest Power List'.

The Power 100 is an annually compiled survey of the top names in business in the UK. The Times newspaper cross-referenced those on the Power 100 list with another annual ranking. The Sunday Times Rich List, to produce the Richest Power List.

The daily said, "Money and power have always been thought of as natural bedfellows you only stand a chance of holding sway if you have the wealth to back it up."

Aarong launches 30th anniversary celebration

STAR BUSINESS DESK

Aarong, one of the country's leading fashion and lifestyle retailer inaugurated its 30th founding anniversary celebration by holding a press conference yesterday in Dhaka, said a press release.

The main highlight of the event was the unveiling of the anniversary logo, especially created with essence of folk art,

craftsmanship and festivity to commemorate the occasion.

MA Rume Ali, managing director of Brac Enterprises, launched the logo. Tamara Abed, director of Aarong and Farheen Khurum, senior marketing manager of Aarong, were also present.

Aarong has designed a year-long plan of events to showcase the heritage, culture and crafts of Bangladesh. The events

including exhibitions, fashion shows and in-store campaigns will further strengthen the brand promise to Aarong's loyal customers, patrons and well-wishers.

As part of the programme an Eid preview fashion show will take place on August 27, 2008 at the Radisson Water Garden Hotel. The fashion event will showcase Aarong's latest collection created for Ramadan Eid.



MA Rume Ali, managing director of Brac Enterprises, formally inaugurates Aarong's 30th founding anniversary in Dhaka yesterday.

Iran inflation tops 26pc

AFP, Tehran

Iran's inflation rate, which has provoked intense criticism of the government, topped 26 percent in June, according to a central bank statement published in the press on Saturday.

"During the Iranian month of Kordad (to June 20) inflation reached 26.4 percent compared with the same month a year ago," according to the statement published in the economic newspaper Sarmayeh.

The previous month, annual inflation was running at 25.3 percent.

President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has been blamed by many economists for directly fuelling the price rises by ploughing huge amounts of cash into the economy to fund local infrastructure projects.

There has been a sharp increase in money supply growth -- a key indicator of future inflation trends -- to almost 40 percent during the years of the Ahmadinejad presidency.

He was elected in 2005 on a platform of making the poor feel the benefits of the OPEC member's massive oil wealth, and he has made implementation of economic "justice" the main government slogan.

Oil prices surge to records highs

AFP, London

The price of oil set a record high above 146 dollars a barrel this week owing to falling reserves of US crude, simmering tensions over Iran and a weak dollar, traders said.

OIL: Brent North Sea oil for August delivery surged to a lifetime peak of 146.69 dollars a barrel on Thursday, before cooling as traders banked their profits.

New York's main oil contract, light sweet crude for August delivery, leapt to an all-time pinnacle of 145.85 dollars the same day. "Prices rose to set new all-

time highs ... supported by a decline in US crude oil inventories," said Barclays Capital analyst Kevin Norrish.

Oil prices, which have doubled in value over the past year, were driven by news that American crude stockpiles fell by 2.0 million barrels to stand at 299.8 million barrels in the week to June 27.

The latest record-breaking price surge also came after Iranian Oil Minister Gholam Hossein Nozari said that Iran would react fiercely to any military attack against the oil exporter.

The OPEC oil exporting group said it would be difficult to replace the crude output of

Iran should the country face attack.

The oil market also found key support from the struggling US currency, which makes dollar-priced commodities cheaper for foreign buyers and tends to encourage demand, analysts said.

By Friday, Brent North Sea crude for August jumped to 144.86 dollars a barrel from 140.81 dollars a week earlier.

New York's main oil futures contract, light sweet crude for August climbed to 144.10 dollars a barrel, from 140.85 dollars.

PRECIOUS METALS: Gold, seen as a haven in times of economic troubles, reached

946.40 dollars a tonne, the highest level since April.

"You've got inflation, geopolitical risk, extremely high oil prices and a weak economy. All the pieces of the puzzle are there for gold to go higher," said Matt Zeman, a metals trader at LaSalle Futures Group.

On the London Bullion Market, gold advanced to 931.25 dollars per ounce at Friday's late fixing from 919.50 dollars a week earlier.

Silver grew to 18.01 dollars per ounce from 17.40 dollars.

On the London Platinum and Palladium Market, platinum dropped to 2,012 dollars per ounce at the late fixing on

Friday from 2,053 dollars a week earlier.

Palladium slid to 456 dollars per ounce from 467 dollars.

SUGAR: Sugar prices reached the highest levels since March as oil prices surged.

The raw material is used in the production of ethanol, which is a cheaper alternative to motor fuel.

By Friday on LIFFE, the price per tonne of white sugar for October delivery rallied to 393 pounds from 377.80 pounds the previous week.

On NYBOT, the price of unrefined sugar for October delivery increased to 13.91 US cents per pound from 13.10 cents.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
 Bangladesh Public Service Commission
 Old Airport Building, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215

Request for Expression of Interest For Selection of Lead Consultant (International)

EOI Ref No: PSC/Admin-5/Project-Strengthening(BPSC-3/2008/164) Date: 03-07-2008
 Bangladesh Public Service Commission (BPSC) Secretariat has been allocated public funds from Reimbursable Project Aid (RAP), a grant of the IDA towards the cost of the Strengthening BPSC's Organizational Structure with emphasis on its Recruitment Functions, January 2008 to December 2009 and intends to apply part of the proceeds of these funds to payments under the contract for the provision of consultancy services for the project by an individual lead consultant (international).

1. Consultant-Lead (International): 01 (Duration: 7 mm split over the project period of two years to be started from September 2008.)

Required Qualification and Experience:

- PhD or advanced degree from a well reputed university, located preferably in America or Europe, in management sciences, social sciences, public administration or related fields;
- Minimum 20 years' national and international experience with reforming civil services, specially the recruitment functions;
- Proven knowledge and experience about contemporary public service recruitment system;
- Specialized skill about developing examination management system;
- Analytical capability in identifying and resolving potential issues that may arise during project implementation;
- Knowledge and understanding on Bangladesh system of civil service, hierarchy, civil service recruitment, education and curriculum;
- Strong communication skills in presenting, discussing and resolving difficult issues;
- Proven ability to work effectively in a multidisciplinary team;
- Knowledge and understanding of technical and legal aspects of the World Bank-financed project;
- Previous project implementation experience including organizing overseas study tour and training programs;
- Sound knowledge in computer and ability to work independently.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Work under the overall guidance of the Chairman of Bangladesh Public Service Commission.
- Lead and guide other consultants engaged in the project.
- Develop work plan and sequence of activities.
- Coordinate outputs of all individual consultants and consulting firms.
- Provide operational advice on concepts, policies, procurement and any other areas the project needs.
- Prepare papers for mid term review by appropriate agencies.
- Closely monitor individual consultants' job and all the matters related to project implementation and bring any slippage of activities immediately to the attention of the designated Project Director.
- Prepare reports as per GOB and World Bank requirements.
- Submission of the half yearly progress report to the Secretary BPSC and the World Bank for review.
- Conduct diagnostic analyses on delays, inefficiency, etc. in the system, and provide recommendations to improve the same, if required.
- Prepare papers and write-ups etc in connection with the project.
- Help organize overseas study tour and foreign training for BPSC officials.
- Make necessary recommendation to the Secretary, BPSC as and when it is felt necessary for efficient project implementation.

BPSC now seeks applications from qualified consultants and each application must accompany a detailed Curriculum Vitae which should include, inter alia, employment history with duties and responsibilities, major professional achievements, current remuneration, academic details including information on any distinctions earned, major publications (if any), two references, contact address, telephone number, and email address. Extensive international working experience is a pre-requisite for this vacancy. Interested Applicants may obtain the detailed ToR and CV format from the office of the undersigned during normal office hours or at www.bpsc.gov.bd. This EOI is available at websites www.bpsc.gov.bd, www.cptu.gov.bd, UNDB online and dgMarket websites. Consultants will be selected using the selection of individual consultant method in accordance with The World Bank's Consultant Guidelines (May 2004).

Expressions of Interest shall be submitted by 2:00pm on 28 July 2008, in sealed envelope delivered to the Project Director, Strengthening BPSC's Organizational Structure with emphasis on its Recruitment Functions, Bangladesh Public Service Commission, Old Airport Building, Room No: 102(A), Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215 and be clearly marked "Request for Expressions of Interest for Selection of Consultant (Lead (International))." Electronic submission of applications is also allowed under this request.

The procuring entity reserves the right to accept or reject any or all EOIs.

Md Mosta Gausul Hoque
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