Interview of Zeinab Badawi of the BBC World Service Trust

Interview taken by Mahdin Mahboob

THE BBC World Service Trust is the BBC's international development agency. It uses media and communications to reduce poverty, promote human rights and improve people's lives. It has worked in over 40 countries worldwide, implementing projects in health, education, environment, governance, human rights, livelihoods and emergency response.

The BBC World Service Trust launched its first significant programme in this country through "Bangladesh Sanglap" in November 2005. Sanglap is a weekly political debate program produced by the BBC Bengali Service in conjunction with the BBC World Service Trust. In May 2008, the BBC World Service Trust launched its second major program in Bangladesh "English in Action," using television, radio, mobile phones and the Internet to improve English language skills.



The question that we are going to ask is, is there an impending global population crisis? I don't want to give anybody the impression that we are asking if there are too many people in the world?

About Zeinab Badawi

ZEINAB Badawi is the presenter of World News Today, one of BBC World News' hour-long news and analysis programmes. The programme features reports and discussions with leading BBC correspondents, and interviews and debates with people who are making the news around the globe. Previously a presenter of BBC World News' The World, Zeinab has worked in British broadcasting for two decades. She has worked on a range of programmes reporting from Europe, Asia and Africa, where she covered the famine in the mid-Eighties. After a stint in reporting and presenting programmes on British politics live from the BBC's Westminster studios, Zeinab joined BBC World News where she has become a regular face, presenting debates on major issues as well as being a presenter of HARDtalk, interviewing personalities such as the Dalai Lama and US General Tommy Franks.

BBC World News, in association with The BBC World Service Trust, is producing a special edition of The World Debate from Bangladesh. Presented by Zeinab Badawi, the debate will ask 'Are there too many people in the world?' The debate has been recorded at Dhaka's Lalbagh Fort on the 25th of February and it will be broadcast in April on BBC World News.

Experts from different sectors were included in the panel and they have considered a range of issues including:

* Is rising global population sustainable?
* Can technological advances and economic growth provide for all?
* Might migration help address population imbalances around the globe?
* Should population numbers be controlled and if so how?
* Should we worry about population shrinking?

The following interview was taken a day prior to the Debate (on 24th February 2009).

Star Campus (SC): What is the main purpose and functionalities of the BBC World Service Trust?

Zeinab Badawi (ZB): The BBC World Service Trust is a charitable arm of the BBC and it uses the expertise of the BBC in terms of journalism and information dissemination. The fundamentals are based on Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (freedom of expression, freedom of opinion). We were always struck by the fact that the Indian Nobel Prize winning economist Amartya Sen said that 'there has never been famine in a country where there is freedom of expression and freedom of information'. We always try to ensure that local people can disseminate information through whatever media, whatever form, to the people of that country. Mediums that can be used include the radio, or perhaps for a wider