

Live from China:

China Learns from Bangladesh

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WE all know that China has achieved tremendous results in its economic and social development. China's success particularly in the last 30 years has provided us with a refreshing case of economic growth and development. "In poverty reduction China has reached some extraordinary levels. A comparison of poverty levels in 1981 and 2004 proves a major breakthrough. China's absolute poverty headcount (below US $1) in 1981 was 634 million with a domestic poverty incidence of 63.76%. By contrast, in 2004, the number of people in absolute poverty in China, defined by the same poverty line was reduced to128 million, with a poverty incidence of 9.9%. Since 1980s, China's government has implemented state-led, learning-oriented and incremental step-by-step economic and political reforms, which has brought about among others a continuous high-speed economic growth. The social services have also developed remarkably." I am quoting this paragraph from the book, "Comparative Perspectives in Development and Poverty Reduction in China and Africa", edited by Li Xiaoyun. China is now the second largest economy in the world after the US.

So there are many things to learn from the experiences of China especially in field of Poverty Reduction. In the last 30 years, China has lifted about half a billion people above the poverty line. The organisation where I work, the IPRCC (International Poverty Reduction Centre in China, Beijing), has taken the responsibility to exchange the experiences in Poverty Reduction in and among developing countries. Through research, training, exchange and cooperation, IPRCC is promoting South Cooperation, especially disseminating China's experiences in Poverty Reduction in both developing and developed countries.

However, from my long experiences in poverty reduction, training and teaching in Bangladesh and abroad, I am of the view that there may be many experiences in developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America from which China and other countries could also learn and adapt. Such mutual learning from each other could address the world poverty issues and bring benefits to millions of disadvantaged people around the world. With this end in view, I started writing a research paper, "Poverty Alleviation Strategies and Development Experiences of Bangladesh". This is now online and can be viewed in IPRCC website www.iprcc.org in section 'publications/research papers'. In this paper, I basically highlighted five aspects of Bangladesh's development: birth of Bangladesh; evolution of poverty situation;