

# \$150m WB loan to create jobs for ultra poor

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The World Bank (WB) yesterday approved a US \$150 million credit to Bangladesh to create employment opportunities for the extreme poor in rural areas during the lean and monga periods, said a WB press release.

According to the release, one-third of the job opportunities will benefit poor women. The country is home to 35 million people still in extreme poverty, it adds.

"The WB highly prioritises the well-targeted and well-governed safety net programmes to reduce the vulnerability of the poor," said Ellen Goldstein, country director of World Bank Bangladesh.

"Together, the World Bank and the government are expected to create employment opportunities for approximately 200 million people over a three-year period under this project."

The release said each year the project will run for 100 days, spanning two lean seasons -- one from October to December and the other from March to May -- when rural day labourers are often out of work.

Only households where the head is a manual labourer and which have less than half an acre of land will be eligible for the programme. Wages will be paid through formal financial channels to enhance transparency.

The "Employment Generation Program for the Poorest" will provide

short-term employment to vulnerable households in extreme poverty, especially women. The project will support the ongoing programme of the government, which builds on previous successes.

"The project will target both the poorest upazilas and the poorest households," said Maitreyi Bordia Das, senior social protection specialist and task leader of the project.

"Poverty maps will be used to ensure effective targeting and resource allocation at upazila level. Further, the focus on women's employment is expected to have large positive impact on their empowerment."



Leader of the Opposition in Parliament and BNP Chairperson Khaleda Zia speaks at the party's standing committee meeting at her Gulshan office in the city yesterday. (Story on Page 1)

# 37, out of 231, AIDS patients died in last one year: Health minister

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Two hundred and thirty-one people were diagnosed with AIDS while 37 of them died in last one year in the country, Health Minister AFM Ruhul Haque has said.

He said 343 HIV positive patients were identified last year taking the total number of the affected to 2,088. The total number of AIDS patients in the country now stands at 850, he added.

The minister was speaking yesterday at a seminar organised by the National AIDS-STD Program (NASP) of the health ministry at Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC) in the capital marking the World AIDS Day.

AKM Amir Hossain, additional secretary of the ministry, chaired the seminar.

The minister in his speech highlighted various government efforts to prevent the

deadly disease including adopting the national policy on HIV/AIDS and sexual diseases approved in 1997, and setting up of 146 safe blood transfusion centres across the country.

Led by Mojibur Rahman Fakir, state minister for health and family welfare, the health ministry also brought out a procession at Manik Mia Avenue to create mass awareness against the disease.

STD/AIDS Network of Bangladesh also brought out a procession in the capital and organised an exhibition at the BICC to create public awareness. The World Vision arranged a blood donation programme there.

In 2009, 143 people were diagnosed with the deadly disease and 39 died across the country. At least 241 people died since 1989 when the first AIDS patient in the country was detected.

Marking the World AIDS Day,

Bangladesh Labour Welfare Foundation and Bangladesh Occupational Safety, Health and Environment Foundation jointly brought out a procession that stretched from Russel Square to BICC.

Nari Unnayan Shakti (NUS), which is funded by the government, held different programmes in 31 places of the country. They organised discussions, video shows, cultural programmes and counseling, says a NUS press release.

State Minister Mojibur Rahman Fakir, Acting Director General of the Directorate General of Health Services Prof Khandakar Shefayet Ullah, president of Bangladesh Medical Association Prof Sharfuddin Ahmed, UNFPA Bangladesh representative Arthur Erken, Executive Director of Ashar Alo Society Habiba Akhter and Deputy Programme Manager of NASP Dr Hassan Mahmud, also spoke on the occasion.

# College girl 'commits suicide' in city

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

A college girl allegedly committed suicide by hanging herself from a ceiling fan at her North Shahjahanpur residence in the city yesterday.

The girl's family members said she committed suicide as she had been suffering from asthma for long.

The dead was identified as Sadia Binte Nur, 17, a first year student at National Ideal School and College.

Neighbours told reporters that Sadia's father Nur Ahmed, an official of Bangladesh Bank, knocked on her bedroom door after returning home completing his prayers at a nearby mosque early in the morning.

They broke open the door as Sadia did not respond and found her hanging from a ceiling fan, said a next-door neighbour seeking anonymity.

They rushed her to Dhaka Medical College and Hospital where doctors declared her dead, said the neighbours.

During a visit to the house, the flat of the deceased on the first floor of a six-storey building was found locked from outside while the neighbours said the body was taken to Jamalpur for burial from the hospital.

Dhaka Medical College Morgue sources said autopsy of the body was not done. Officer-in-charge (OC) Toffazul Hossain of Motijheel Police Station said victim's father Nur Ahmed filed an unnatural death case with the police station.

He mentioned in the case statement that his daughter had been suffering from asthma for long and recently the condition deteriorated leading her to commit suicide.

# PRODHAN'S JS MEMBERSHIP Govt, EC asked to explain

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The High Court (HC) yesterday issued a rule upon the government and Election Commission to explain within three weeks under which authority Joypurhat-1 constituency lawmaker is holding his office.

An HC bench of Justice AHM Shamsuddin Chowdhury Manik and Justice Sheikh Md Zakir Hossain issued the rule following a writ petition seeking cancellation of BNP lawmaker Md Mozahar Ali Proddhan's parliamentary membership on charge of providing false information regarding his property to the EC.

ASM Kawsar Uz Zaman, a voter of the constituency on Monday filed the writ petition with the HC challenging the legality of holding the office of parliamentary member by Proddhan.

Advocate Manzill Murshid appeared for the petitioner.

# Dipjol on remand

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka Court yesterday placed actor and Dhaka City Corporation Councillor Monwar Hossain Dipjol on a one-day remand in connection with a case filed for assaulting a traffic police constable on November 16 in the city's Gabtoli area.

Metropolitan Magistrate SK Tofail Hassan passed the order after Darussalam police produced Dipjol before it with a five-day remand prayer.

The court also rejected a bail petition submitted by Dipjol's lawyer.

In the forwarding report, the investigation officer (IO) of the case mentioned that Dipjol was directly involved with assaulting Aftab Uddin, the police constable, on November 16.

# 12th military instt council meet held

UNB, Dhaka

The 12th meeting of the Council of Military Institute of Science and Technology (MIST) was held at the council at Mirpur Cantonment yesterday with Education Minister Nurul Islam Nahid.

The Commandment of MIST Brigadier General Mohammad Habibur Rahman Khan received Nahid, also MIST Council Chairman.

Chief of Army Staff Abdul Mubeen, Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral ZU Ahmed and Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman were present at the meeting as vice chairmen of the Council of MIST.



Planning Minister Air Vice Marshal (ret) A K Khandker, Bir Uttam, attends the closing ceremony of International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centre's 16th Annual Conference at Radisson Hotel in the city yesterday.

# Conference of Int'l Assoc of Peacekeeping Training Centres ends

UNB, Dhaka

The closing session of 4-day International Association of Peacekeeping Training Centres (IAPTC) 16th annual conference-2010 was held at Hotel Radisson Water Garden in the city yesterday.

Bangladesh Institute of Peace Support Operation Training (BIPSOT) organised the conference with the auspices of Bangladesh Army.

Planning Minister AK Khandker was present at the closing session as chief guest.

Chief of Army Staff General Md Abdul Mubeen was present as special guest.

Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Z U Ahmed, Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman, diplomats, high civil and military officers were present on the occasion.

About 120 foreign delegates from 32 member states of IAPTC and different organisations in Bangladesh related to international peacekeeping operations and high civil and military officers attended the conference.

Outgoing President of IAPTC Assistant Commissioner of Australian Federal Police Frank Prendergast spoke on the occasion.

Newly appointed IAPTC President the Commandant of BIPSOT, Brigadier General Abul Basher Imamuzzaman also spoke.

Brigadier General Imamuzzaman of Bangladesh Army assumed the office of President of IAPTC for the term of 2011.

First phase of the conference concluded in Dhaka on December 1 of 2010. The second phase includes visit to BIPSOT and a demonstration in Rajendrapur on December 2.

# Pledge to resist stalking

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Students of different educational institutions of Savar yesterday took an oath to resist stalking and sexual harassment.

They took the oath at an open discussion titled 'Role of youth to resist stalking, sexual harassment and teasing' jointly organised by the Transparency International Bangladesh, Sachetan

Nagorik Samaj (Sanak), NGO Samannay Parishad and Mahila Parishad, Savar Unit; at the office of Adesh, a non-government organisation; at Savar, says a press release.

Addressing the meeting, the students said the youths through their indomitable spirits will certainly establish stalking and sexual harassment-free Bangladesh.

Mahila Parishad Savar upazila unit,

General Secretary Parveen Islam presided over the programme while TIB Area Manager of Savar Atikur Rahman, Sanak Joint Secretary Khandaker Mohammad Hamid Ranju, Social Uplifting Society (SUS) Project Director Rafiqul Islam Mollah, Village Association for Social Development (VADS) Executive Director MA Samad and Adesh Coordinator Yakub Nabi were present at the programme.

# 'Bangladesh, US working on common fields'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Sylhet

The US South and Central Asian Affairs Deputy Assistant Secretary of state Alyssa Ayres said US and Bangladesh are working on common fields like energy, environment and bio-diversity protection, education, health and business.

Activities in those fields are increasing day by day she said, adding that the bilateral relations would be strengthened further in the future.

The senior official was addressing a view exchange meeting with social leaders at a resort in Sylhet on Tuesday night during a 2-day visit.

Expressing her interests in the fields, she said her visit in Bangladesh was to know people's perception about the US-Bangladesh relations.

Praising the natural beauty of the northeastern region of Sylhet, she said the huge number of expatriates from Bangladesh especially from this region

had been playing a unique role to brighten the image of this country.

We would hopefully expand the working relations on the basis of successes in the different fields like health, climate change and economic development, she asserted.

Alyssa also visited a USAID supported project on the Khadimnagar National Forest in Sylhet and joined a programme at the American Corner in Sylhet International University yesterday.

# UK, Australia to share same visa centre from Dec 5

UNB, Dhaka

The UK Border Agency and Australia's Department of Immigration and Citizenship will share the current UK visa application centres in Dhaka and Sylhet from December 5.

A British High Commission release says people to apply for UK and Australian visas will attend the same visa application centres located in ZN Tower, Gulshan Avenue, Dhaka and Garden Towers, Shahjalal Bridge Link Road, Mendhibagh, Sylhet.

The UK and Australia have agreed to share a number of visa application centres and biometric collection facilities worldwide, as Australia begins to collect biometric data from its visa applicants. Dhaka and Sylhet are the first locations where the facilities will be

shared. According to the release, the way customers for UK visa submit their visa applications and biometrics at the visa application centres will remain unchanged. No change will occur also in the process by which the UK Border Agency makes decisions on all UK visa applications.

The customers' biometric and personal data will not be shared as part of this initiative. The information of UK visa applicants and Australia visa applicants will be stored and processed completely separately.

British High Commissioner Stephen Evans said more people can now enjoy the visa application facilities. "We remain committed to continuing an efficient and high standard visa service for all our customers in Bangladesh."

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**Sharifah Sasahmed** from the University of East London's International Office will be delivering presentations, conducting interviews and making SPOT OFFERS for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes for qualified students as outlined below:

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**Date: Monday December 06 2010,**  
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**Date: Tuesday December 07 2010,**  
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For further details & to make appointments for interviews, please contact:  
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