

Urban poverty deserves more attention: economist

STAR BUSINESS REPORT
The government needs to pay attention to urban poverty alleviation and policymakers need to take long-term and sustainable measures to combat the problem, a leading economist said yesterday.

"We lack sustainable measures to eradicate extreme poverty in the urban slum areas. Instead of taking intermediate steps to eliminate poverty, the government needs to make long-term policies to fight poverty at large," Binayak Sen said.

"Simultaneously, we have to overcome the present culture of 'tokenism' in programmes taken by the government to alleviate poverty. Most of the time, the allocations are very poor and hence, do not make any difference."

The government needs to rearrange the size of allocations it makes under different safety net programmes, pointed out Sen, research director of BIDS.

He suggested the government ensure better access to capital and healthcare,

so the urban poor living in slums can improve their livelihood and quality of life.

He also stressed the need to create sustainable income generating activities for these people.

Sen was presenting the insights from the midterm evaluation of a project titled Breaking the Cycle of Urban Chronic Poverty, jointly organised by the Dustha Shasthya Kendra (DSK), a non-government organisation, Shiree and UK Aid at the Samabai Bhaban in Dhaka.

The DSK-Shiree project conducted the survey on 1404 people living in Kuril and Kamrangirchar in Dhaka, where the project spent Tk 28,000 for each person over a period of two years.

The survey found that the additional income has made a qualitative impact on the targeted people, improving their standard of living. It also found that the notion of extreme poverty is gradually disappearing in these areas although a qualitative difference is yet to be perceived.

Aamra organises corporate awareness programme

STAR BUSINESS REPORT
Information technology solution provider Aamra technologies yesterday organised a corporate awareness programme for the members of Dhaka Stock Exchange at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel in the capital.

The company provides cost-effective technology solutions and comprehensive capabilities across all industries and extensive research, said Syed Faruque Ahmed, chairman of Aamra Technologies Ltd.

He said the company will declare good dividends for its shareholders.

Shakil Rizvi, president of DSE; Rakibur Rahman, former president; Ahasanul Islam, senior vice president; and Waqar A Choudhury, managing director of Green Delta Securities, were also present.

The Securities and Exchange Commission on February 20 approved the initial public offering of Aamra to raise Tk 51.77 crore from the public.

Using the fixed price method, Aamra will float 2.15 crore ordinary shares of Tk 10 each at an offer price of Tk 24, including a premium of Tk 14.

With the proceedings from the IPO, the company will repay its bank loans and set up ATM (automated teller machine) and point of sales terminals.

The company's earnings per share is Tk 2.61, while the net asset value per share is Tk 24.81, according to its 2010 financial statements.

It will be the sixth IT company to be listed on the Bangladesh stockmarket.

32-point recipe for farm budget

STAR BUSINESS REPORT
Unnayan Shamannay, a nongovernmental organisation, yesterday made a 32-point set of recommendations on agriculture budget, which will be subsequently conveyed to the budget makers for inclusion in the next national budget.

It includes introducing agro-commodity credit scheme, providing incentive on setting up mini cold-storage centres and allocating fund for region specific crops research.

The private think-tank made the recommendations following a budget hearing on 'the issues of agriculture: implication for budgets 2012-13' at Ruposhi Bangla Hotel.

The event was chaired by the chairman of parliamentary standing committee on Ministry of Agriculture, and participated by the members of the committee, MPs, concerned government officials, agriculture analysts and sector stakeholders.

Khondkar Ibrahim Khaled, chairman of Bangladesh Krishi Bank, said the government should introduce agro-inventory credit system for the marginal farmers as it will help them get reasonable price of their produce.

He said this system will allow farmers to store agricultural commodities after a harvest until prices increase, thus raising their incomes.

Khaled said poor and marginal farmers are often deprived of fair prices due to poor infrastructure facility.

So, he urged the government to provide incentives for setting up mini cold-storage centres for preserving perishable commodities such as fruits and vegetables.

Shykh Siraj, an expert on agriculture, said the government should have to undertake short-term and long-term measures to achieve self-sufficiency in food.

He said our agriculture budget is designed mainly centering on paddy cultivation. But, it should be adopted focusing on other crops also such as flowers, mushroom, Baukul (a plum variety) and mango cultivation along with the paddy, he added.

Shawkat Momen Shahjahan, chairman of parliamentary standing committee on the Ministry of Agriculture, stressed the need for improving transportation of agro-products. He said railway route would be the best mode of transportation for agro-commodities.

He urged the business community to set up more agro-processing industries in the hill tracts of the country.



Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina hands a cheque for Tk 4.8 lakh as financial assistance from Shahjalal Islami Bank to the families of two martyred army officers killed in the BDR carnage at Pilkhana, at a programme at Gono Bhaban in the capital recently. The bank's Chairman Anwar Hossain Khan was also present.



Abu Hena Mohd Razeed Hassan, deputy governor of Bangladesh Bank, receives a bouquet from Debasish Karmaker, manager for Jessore branch of Bank Asia, at Jessore airport during Hassan's recent visit to the region. Shyamal Kumar Das, general manager of the central bank's Khulna office, was also present.

Irish Banks to axe 2,500 jobs

AFP, Dublin
"AIB's objective is that redundancies will be achieved on a voluntary basis... if we do not achieve our objectives with this programme, we will need to consider other options in due course," the lender said.

Square Group gets new chairman



STAR BUSINESS DESK
The Board of Directors of Square Group yesterday chose Samuel S Chowdhury as the chairman of the group, according to a statement.

Prior to the appointment, he was the vice chairman of the group while his father, late Samson H Chowdhury, was the chairman.

The board also selected Ratna Patra, the only daughter of Samson, as vice chairman.

Investment slowdown may hurt economy

Rushidan Islam Rahman shares excerpts of her book

STAR BUSINESS REPORT
Years of sluggish investments may slow economy growth, an economist said yesterday.

Investment as percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) declined to 24.3 percent in 2010 from 24.7 percent four years ago, raising fears that economic growth may slow down, unless the trend is reversed, Rushidan Islam Rahman said.

The research director of Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) shared with the audience excerpts of her book -- Economy and development of Bangladesh: 40 years after independence -- at a seminar at BIDS.

Analysing data, she observed that economic growth in Bangladesh accelerated every five years. Between 2006 and 2010, the growth rate was 0.62 percent.

And the prospects of the acceleration of growth from 2010-2015 depend largely on the scaling-up of investment. But low rate of investment gives signals of slowdown in economic growth, said Rushidan.

"It will be possible to maintain the growth rate if there is political stability and quality education for the poor to create better human resources," she said.

Divided in 12 chapters, the 259-page book touched upon various issues that began with debates and perceptions surrounding the development prospects of Bangladesh since its birth.

The book written in Bangla and published by Shahittya Prakash is a tribute to those who sacrificed their lives for independence.

In the book, Rushidan cited data on various economic and social sectors and showed that Bangladesh has made progress on various fronts that proved the negative perceptions about the country, such as the 'basket case' of former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, wrong.

She shed light on industrialisation and agriculture, rural non-farm sector, microcredit, jobs, poverty, education, population growth and women in industry.

"I have tried to mark the turning points in the development of Bangladesh since independence."

The country has emerged as almost self-sufficient in food from the food deficit status just after independence.

Poverty declined and more people got jobs as the economy grew, bolstered by industrialisation and steady growth in agriculture and services sectors. Per capita income has increased along with investment and savings as percentage of GDP, she said.

Progress is also seen in various social and human development indicators. Child mortality in per thousand fell by more than half to 20.5 in 2008 from 47 in 1974-76.

A huge number of women joined economic activities due to the growth of the export-oriented garment industry. "Still there are some problems," Rushidan said.

Poverty declined but the rate of savings by families tumbled down to 4.3 percent in 2010 from 17.2 percent in 2005. A major portion of job has been created in informal sectors with export earnings being highly dependent on the clothing industry.

"The economy is at a crossroads."

Rushidan said increased savings and investment, political stability and quality education for poor people will help Bangladesh attain faster development.

The writer mentioned that the small industries are more efficient than the large industries, said Mohammed Farashuddin, former central bank governor. The book has proved the perception of the inefficiency of small industries false, he said in a write-up.

Mahabub Hossain, who follows agriculture and rural economy, praised the writer but said she should have included the issues of health and nutrition, impact of remittances on employment and rural economy.

Shamsul Alam, member of Planning Commission, suggested the writer share her views on the method of calculation of employment and underemployment in Bangladesh in the next edition of the book.

Bangladesh has a lower unemployment rate than in the US, according to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics.

BIDS Director General Mustafa K Mujeri said the book provides an analysis on various issues and will be helpful for all.

Sustainable banks outperform world's largest banks: report

STAR BUSINESS DESK
Sustainable values-based banks, which prioritise people and environment than profit, are outperforming traditional mainstream banks in key financial indicators, a global report suggested.

The report was made public at the annual conference of Global Alliance for Banking on Values (GABV) in Vancouver, Canada yesterday.

The GABV is a network of 15 of the world's leading sustainable banks, including BRAC Bank and BRAC Microfinance Programme.

Muhammad A (Rumee) Ali, chairman of BRAC Bank, is leading a delegation of the bank in the conference, according to a statement of the bank.

As sustainable values-based banking is getting popularity globally, GABV has welcomed Canada-based Assiniboine Credit Union as its 15th member.

Commissioned by the GABV and funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and GABV, the report compared the performance of 17 values-based banks with 29 of the world's largest and most influential banks, including Bank of America, JP Morgan, Barclays.

"GABV takes SME financing of BRAC Bank as a model for sustainable economic development. It makes us proud that GABV banks intend to replicate the financing model of a Bangladeshi bank to serve the unserved community in many parts of the world," Ali said.



Adnan Kazim, divisional senior president of Emirates, receives the "Airline of the Year" gold award at a programme in Athens on Wednesday. Air Transport News -- an air transport industry news provider -- gave the award.

Bangladesh Power Development Board

বিদ্যুৎ সশ্রয়ী বাড়ি ব্যবহার করুন

Notice of Time Extension for Submission of Proposal for the Development of 200-850MW LNG Based Combined Cycle Power Project on BOO Basis at Chittagong, Bangladesh

Ref. RFP Issuance No: 1676-BPDB(Sectt)/Dev-197/2010 Date: 01.06.2011

The date for submission of proposal against Request for Proposal for the Development of 200-850MW LNG Based Combined Cycle Power Project on BOO Basis at Chittagong, Bangladesh has been extended from March 08, 2012 to April 08, 2012. All other terms and conditions of Request for Proposal (RFP) and the subsequent amendments shall remain unchanged.

Biddiut/Jana-1096(6)/7/3/12

Secretary

GD-1051 Bangladesh Power Development Board

ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

স্বর্ণপদক তৈরীর দরপত্র

৪৬তম সমাবর্তন অনুষ্ঠান উপলক্ষে ৫০টি স্বর্ণপদক তৈরী এবং সরবরাহ করার জন্য সমাবর্তনের স্বর্ণপদক তৈরীর অভিজ্ঞতাসম্পন্ন খাতনামা জুয়েলারদের নিকট থেকে যাদের বার্ষিক টার্নওভার কমপক্ষে ২০.০০/- (বিশ) লক্ষ টাকা এবং লিকুইড এসেট কমপক্ষে ৭.০০/- (সাত) লক্ষ টাকা আছে (ব্যাংক স্টেটমেন্ট সহ) তাদের নিকট হতে সীলমোহরকৃত দরপত্র আহবান করা যাচ্ছে। জনতা ব্যাংক লিমিটেড, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় শাখায় দরপত্র ফরমের মূল্য বাবদ অফেরতযোগ্য ১০০০/- (এক হাজার টাকা মাত্র) নগদ জমা দিয়ে তার মূল রসিদ প্রদান সাপেক্ষে দরপত্রের ফরম, স্বর্ণপদকের নকশা, স্পেসিফিকেশন, শর্তাবলি ও অন্যান্য বিস্তারিত বিবরণ আগামী ১৩/০৩/২০১২ ইং তারিখ পর্যন্ত সকল কার্যদিবসে রেজিস্ট্রারের দফতরের শিক্ষা-৪ শাখা থেকে সংগ্রহ করা যাবে। দরপত্রসমূহ ১৪/০৩/২০১২ তারিখ বেলা ১২:০০ ঘটিকা পর্যন্ত কোম্পানি মহোদয়ের অফিসে রক্ষিত নির্দিষ্ট টেন্ডার বক্সে জমা দিতে হবে এবং ঐদিনই বেলা ১২:৩০ মিনিটে দরপত্র সমূহ রেজিস্ট্রারের অফিসের দরপত্র মূল্যায়ন কমিটি কর্তৃক জমা দানকারীদের উপস্থিতিতে (যদি কেহ উপস্থিত থাকে) খোলা হবে। "রেজিস্ট্রার, ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়" এর অনুকূলে বাংলাদেশের যে কোন তফসিলী ব্যাংক থেকে ৪৫,০০০/- (চল্লিশ হাজার টাকা মাত্র) (ফেরতযোগ্য) একটি ব্যাংক ড্রাফট/পে-অর্ডার আর্নেস্ট মানি হিসেবে দরপত্রের সাথে অবশ্যই জমা দিতে হবে। এছাড়া আপ-টু-ডেট ট্রেড লাইসেন্স, টি.আই.এন. নম্বরসহ আয়কর পরিশোধের সার্টিফিকেট, ভ্যাট রেজিস্ট্রেশন সার্টিফিকেট, অভিজ্ঞতার সনদপত্র ইত্যাদির সত্যায়িত ফটোকপি দাখিল করতে হবে। কোন কারণ দর্শানো ছাড়াই যে কোন দরপত্র সম্পূর্ণ/ আংশিক বাতিল বা গ্রহণ করার ক্ষমতা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কর্তৃপক্ষের থাকবে। কর্তৃপক্ষের সিদ্ধান্তই চূড়ান্ত বলে বিবেচিত হবে। কার্যদেয় ইস্যু করার তারিখ থেকে ৭ (সাত) দিনের মধ্যে অবশ্যই পদকসমূহ তৈরী করে বিশ্ববিদ্যালয় কর্তৃপক্ষের নিকট পৌঁছে দিতে হবে।

সৈয়দ রেজাউর রহমান
রেজিস্ট্রার (অবপ্রাণ্ত)
ঢাকা বিশ্ববিদ্যালয়

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