Economic growth doesn't ensure youth employment



14 percent of the globally unemployed were young people (aged between 15 and 24). However, the situation was

N 2014,

not uniform across different regions of the world. For example, while the South Asian average youth unemployment rate was 10.3 percent, the rates were much higher in the Middle East and North Africa (30.4 percent) and in the European Union (25 percent). The corresponding figures for Sub-Saharan Africa, East Asia and Pacific, Latin America and Caribbean, and North America were 14.1 percent, 11.6 percent, 14 percent and 13.9 percent respectively. According to the ILO estimates, together, the unemployed and the working poor account for 40 percent of the global youth labour force.

In South Asia, countries differ in youth unemployment rate quite widely. In 2014, while Nepal had the least rate (4 percent), the highest rate was for Maldives (26.9 percent). Also, while Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Pakistan had rates between 8-10 percent, the rates were quite high for Afghanistan (20.8 percent) and Sri Lanka (19.1 percent). Yet, during 2010 and 2014, except Nepal, all South

Asian countries experienced a rise in the youth unemployment rate.

High level of youth unemployment leads to economic, social and political costs, such as foregone output, increased poverty and social exclusion, and social and political unrests. The reasons behind youth unemployment are manifold and complex. Among them, the quality and relevance of education and training, inflexible labour market and regulations, lack of supporting government policies, and lack of inclusiveness in the economic growth process can be considered the main ones.

How does economic growth affect youth unemployment? The answer is not very straightforward. As an example, we have plotted the trends in real GDP growth rates and youth unemployment rates in Bangladesh for the period between 1991 and 2014. The figure suggests an inconclusive association between real GDP growth rate and youth unemployment rate in Bangladesh (in fact, there is a very low overall positive correlation coefficient!). During 1991 and 1994, both these rates moved along. During the years between 1995 and 1999, with a moderate upward trend in real GDP growth rates, the youth unemployment rates fluctuated quite a lot. During 2000 and 2002, youth unemployment rate declined along with a downward trend in the GDP growth rates. However, during 2003 and 2007 both these rates had



upward trends. Also, during 2009 and 2014, with an overall rising trend in the GDP growth rates, youth unemployment rates saw a rising trend. All these suggest that economic growth in Bangladesh is yet to be conducive for youth employment.

At the global level, the association between economic growth and youth unemployment is rather alarming!

Our econometric analysis using a cross-country panel data for 171 countries with a time span for 24 years (1991-2014) suggest that 10 percent rise in the per capita income (PPP at constant 2011 US dollars) at the global level is associated with a rise in the youth unemployment rate by 1.2 percent, and this association is statistically significant. Also, during

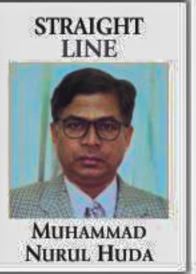
1991 and 2014, globally, a point increase above average economic growth rate was associated with 0.02 percent increase in the youth unemployment rate!

The aforementioned analysis points to the fact that, economic growth is not a guarantee in tackling youth unemployment. There is a need for flanking policies, which may differ for

different regions of the world depending on the level of developments. However, few policy issues are common and are also very relevant for countries like Bangladesh and other countries in South Asia. The policies for job creation should be at the top of the agenda. This will require actions from governments in the form of widening the scopes and coverage of relevant training programmes, supporting the sectors with high potentials for youth job creation by removing the binding constraints these sectors face, and supportive fiscal and monetary policies for the promotion of youth entrepreneurship. There should also be targeted programmes for the specific disadvantaged segments of youth population (i.e. female youth or youth from lagging regions of the country) through skill-development and appropriate labour-market policies, which include customised training and work experience programmes, job search assistance and other employment services. Furthermore, there is a need for building public-private partnerships, in collaboration with international organisations, for investments to improve the working conditions aiming at the promotion of decent jobs

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The unresolved Taqi-Tonu-Mitu cases



has __ always been the most grievous and heinous of all criminal offences in any society. Every civilised society intends to inflict

URDER

the maximum punishment upon the offender who commits murder. However, despite such intentions, it has not always been possible to punish murderers on account of several factors. At times, the offenders have been powerful enough to silence the victims into submission and inaction; while on other occasions, the guilty have escaped punishment by taking advantage of procedural

In Bangladesh, in recent years, there have been a number of murder cases of freethinkers, activists, young women, children and people of ordinary means, in which the investigative work has been less than satisfactory. Not surprisingly, many perpetrators of those crimes are suspected to have utilised their powerful connections in stalling the process of law. The end result has been an all-pervasive atmosphere of frustration and despondency, which surely does not bode well for a democratic society. For obvious reasons, the sliding confidence in the evenhandedness of the State institutions has to be halted in public

interest. It is in the context of the above scenario that the society would like to see even handed dispensation of justice towards the victims of all murders, irrespective of their identity.

Such an aspiration brings us to the issue of the widely publicised unresolved murders of three young Bangladeshis, who in their youth were most cruelly deprived of their

To start with: the gruesome murder of Taqi of Narayanganj a couple of years ago. We have the tragic spectacle of an academically bright teenage boy and a progressive social activist who became a victim of criminal gang's depredations. Investigations by Rapid Action Battalion reportedly indicated

At times, the offenders have been powerful enough to silence the victims into submission and inaction; while on other occasions, the guilty have escaped punishment by taking advantage of procedural flaws.

the involvement of the scion of a local politically powerful family and the accusation is that powerful quarters have prevented the investigations of the case from reaching its lawful end. The wait for justice has been excruciating for Taqi's parents, while his innocent, beaming boyish face continues to haunt many mothers.

The rape and murder of Tonu, a young cultural activist of Comilla

Victoria College in the Cantonment area and the delay in locating the culprits, suspected to be men in uniform, has shocked and infuriated the whole nation. The victim's parents reportedly did not get the desired assistance from the authorities and are yet to recover from the trauma. Here is a case where quite clearly the State, the complainant in a criminal prosecution, should have operated with full force to the support and solace of a grief-stricken family of modest means. In fact, the full application of State power would have soothed many bruised hearts.

The brutal murder of Mitu, a young woman, in broad daylight in front of her child in Chittagong city and the subsequent developments have shocked and frustrated citizens across the spectrum. In this case, the deceased's husband, a highly placed police official and apparently a credible suspect in the murder, has only been forced to resign from service, while criminal proceedings are yet to commence against him despite the alleged unearthing of incriminating evidence. Here is also a case where it appears that the law enforcer has been spared the rigours of law. No wonder, the evenhandedness and integrity of the State institutions has been open to question.

In the world of law enforcement and justice, the powerless multitudes look to the powerful minority for redressal of wrongs. Redressing wrongs is, in many religions, an attribute of the Divine. Let us remember that the law serves one of its greatest social purposes when it dethrones wrong.

The writer is a former IGP and a columnist of The Daily Star.

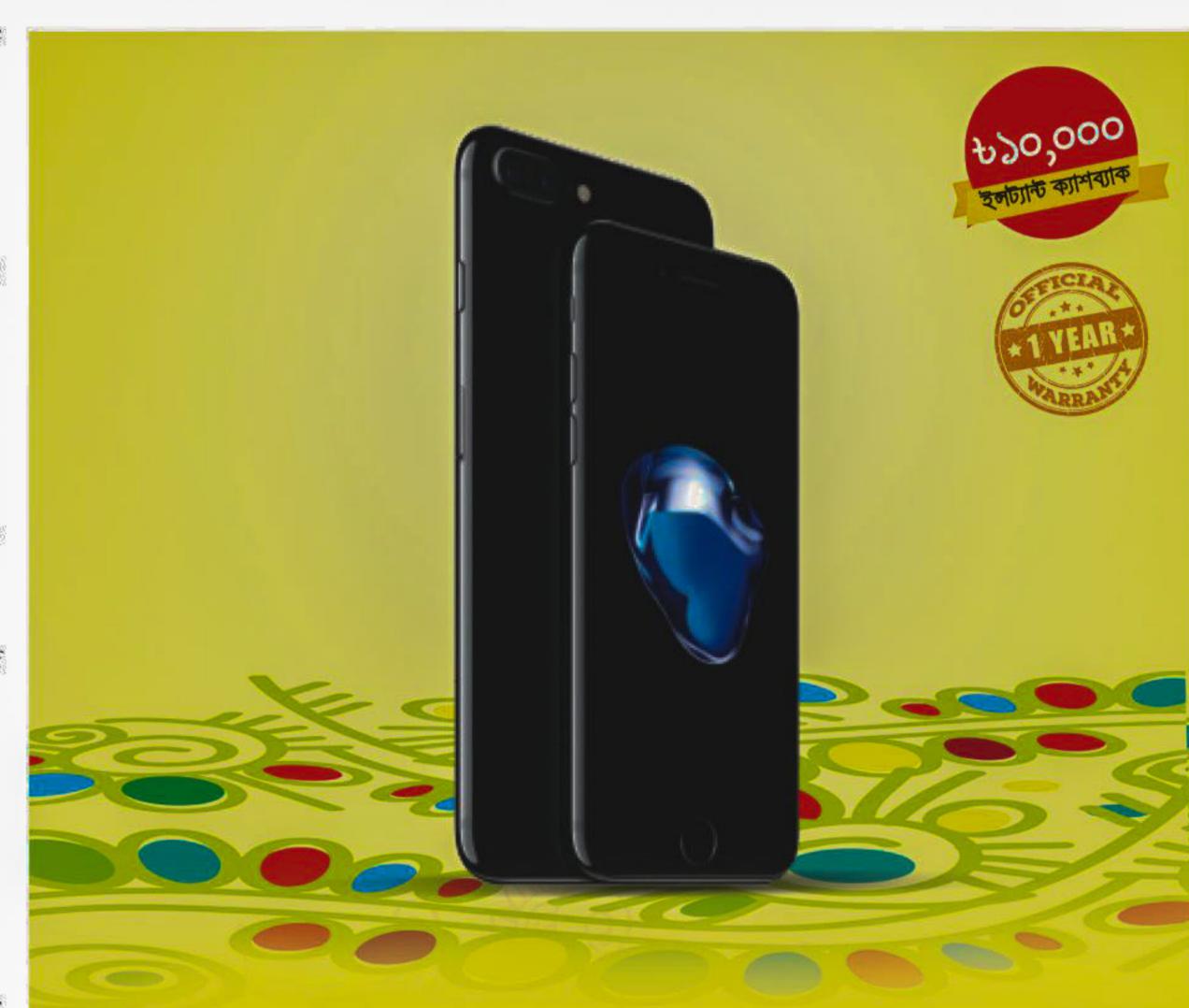
BEETLE BAILEY

BY MORT WALKER





for youth.



এই বৈশাখ মাস্টারকার্ড-এর সাথে হয়ে উঠুক PRICELESS!

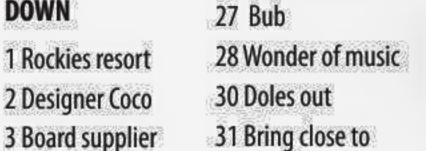
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always show, that a vast, of the truth arises from the seemingly irrelevant.

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24 Highway sight

27 Lions' prides

25 Really impresses

EDGAR ALLAN POE American writer, editor,

and literary critic Experience has shown, and a true philosophy will perhaps the larger portion

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34 DVR button

35 Folder's phrase

36 Tadpole, e.g

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40 Darlings

41 Raised

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9 Sedimentary rock 16 Prickly plant

18 Beginners 20 Tie the knot DOWN 21 Singer cleo 22 Outlaws 23 Joplin tune

2 Designer Coco 3 Board supplier

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4 Caribou's cousin 5 Quasimodo's

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37 PD alert

7 Bug indicator

10 Diner activity

12 Oboe parts

17 TV's "-- Haw"

22 Vault setting

24 Winter airs

25 Once more

26 Exercise lead-in

8 Morose

19 Slant



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