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SEGMENT 2

ANNIVERSARY SUPPLEMENTS 2024

DHAKA SUNDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2024

FALGUN 5, 1430 BS

18



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## Digital learning as a catalyst for educational equity and economic growth in Bangladesh

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In places like Moheshkhali, an island grappling with educational challenges due to its remote location, our Distance Learning Program has made significant strides. By collaborating with the International Office of Migration (IOM) and the Government of Bangladesh, JAAGO has brought English language education to over 9,000 children through digital means, complemented by the training of local teachers in computer skills and IT maintenance.

However, the path to digital education is fraught with challenges. Issues like inconsistent internet connectivity, power outages, and lack of digital devices are significant obstacles. The Covid-19 pandemic has exacerbated these issues, making it clear that student learning, especially among adolescents, was at risk with traditional methods. A World Bank study showed that around 55% of Grade 9 students in Bangladesh do not have access to TVs, a primary remote learning resource during school closures.

The pandemic has propelled the infrastructure for online education in Bangladesh. When schools closed in March 2020, the World Bank helped the government redirect its education projects to avoid irreversible loss of learning. This included stipends and tuition fees for 2.5 million secondary students and a revamp of the country's remote learning strategy to make it more inclusive and accessible.

Bangladesh's journey towards becoming a developed country by 2041 hinges significantly on education. In the last 13 years, internet penetration in the country has increased 100 times, indicating a shift towards a digital economy. The Digital Bangladesh vision of 2021 focused on improving service delivery using ICTs and developing a knowledge economy. The anticipated changes in the global and national landscape by 2041 emphasise the need for a skilled and educated workforce, capable of adapting to new technologies and innovations.

Today's students are the core of tomorrow's workforce that will build Bangladesh's next great economy. Digital learning is not just about imparting knowledge; it's about preparing students for jobs that may not yet exist, requiring skills that are continually evolving. The personalised, flexible, and innovative nature of digital learning equips students with the necessary competencies to thrive in a rapidly changing world.

As we navigate through the complexities of digital learning, the experiences and successes of initiatives like those of JAAGO Foundation light the path forward. It's a collective call to action, an invitation to join hands in shaping a nation where every child has the right and the means to learn, grow, and thrive in the digital age.

Digital learning is transforming the educational landscape of Bangladesh, making it more inclusive and equitable. This transformation is crucial for the nation's socio-economic development, preparing a skilled workforce ready to contribute to the global economy. As Bangladesh moves towards its vision for 2041, digital education will play a pivotal role in shaping a future where every citizen, irrespective of background, has the opportunity to learn, grow, and contribute to the nation's progress.

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In rural areas, where traditional educational avenues are often obstructed, digital learning offers a lifeline.

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