

AN ANALYSIS OF THE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF BANGLADESH

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Abstract:

Now a day of welfare oriented world, it is fairly obvious to provide better facilities to the citizen of the state. It's a great means of socio-economic development of the state. Bangladesh, which is less developed country of the South East Asia, is not far from its human development initiatives. Though it has limitations and barriers, the government of Bangladesh has been taking continuous initiatives to ensure the facilities for its citizen. The government of Bangladesh is spending more than 20% of its annual budget for its social sector. It is obvious that the highest allocation was given to education sector in the annual budget. The Health and Family Planning indices; Youth, Sports and Culture, Labor and Manpower, Social Welfare, Women's Affairs and Liberation War Affairs, and Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs are getting priorities in the annual budget. The focal of the study is to analyze Bangladesh government initiatives for its social sectors and reveal the trend or flow of its disbursement by analyzing the Bangladesh Economic Statics of the Ministry of Finance.

Keywords: Human, Development, Bangladesh, Government, Budget.

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Introduction:

Human development is acknowledged as one of the important means for national growth. Human capital is an essential precondition to achieve desired economic development and it is measured as a fundamental part of development schema of the world. According to the declaration made in the World Summit on Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995, the Government of Bangladesh has been spending more than 20 percent of the budgetary allocation in socio-economic sectors (Bangladesh Economic Review, 2012). In order to create efficient and competent human resources various development programs have been assumed and executed in the sectors related to human resource development like education and technology; health and family welfare; women and children; social welfare; youth and sports development; culture and labor and employment. A substantial progress has been made in the social sector of the country as the government has given priority to the education, health, nutrition, population, morality and culture and empowerment sector in accordance with the targets set out in the Millennium Development Goals.

Overall economic development of a country significantly centers on human resource development. Human resource development is considered as an essential part of world development agenda. Importance of education, health and social welfare programs in human resource development cannot be over emphasized. Sports and cultural development can also remarkably contribute to the process. Since majority of the population are women, children and youths, identifying problems and hurdles in those areas, and then taking appropriate measures can help turn them into human resources. Now in measuring the stage of development, human development is considered as an important index.

Apart from of the stage of development, people in any country must have the right to live a longer life, live healthier life, acquire necessary knowledge and access to resources. If rights are ensured in all the social areas, people may get the opportunity to live a long, healthy and civilized life. An educated, trained and healthy population can be an asset and play an important role in improving the excellence of life, reducing poverty and attaining sustainable economic growth. Bangladesh Government is continuing its development efforts to improve human development indicators, for improving the living standards of the underprivileged and the poor.

Country Profile:

Bangladesh's estimated population in 2012 is over 160 million and the country is one of the most densely populated in the world. Bangladesh is divided into 7 administrative divisions, which are further divided into 64 districts or zilas. The population is relatively young, with more than one-third under the age of 15 years compared to less than 5% ages 65 years or older (Barkat. A and others, 2012).

Facts and Figures¹:

Population Growth Rate (Percentage): 1.34 (2011)

Male- Female Ration: 100.3

Population Density (sq. km): 964

Crude Birth Rate (Per 1000 population), 2010: 19.2

Crude Death Rate (Per 1000 population), 2010: 5.6

Infant Mortality Rate (Per 1000 live birth, bellow 1 year of age), 2010: 36

Total Fertility Rate per Women (15-49), 2010: 2.12

Life Expectancy (years), 2009: 67.2

Persons per Registered Physician, 2010: 2785

Upper Poverty Line, HIES 2010: 31.5

Lower Poverty Line, HIES 2010: 17.6

¹ . Bangladesh Economic Statistics, 2012

GDP at Current Price, 2011-12, (In billion TK): 9147.84
 GDP Growth at Constant Price, 2011-12: 6.32
 GNI per capita, 2011-12, (US\$): 818
 Unemployment: 4.8%²

Methodology:

The analysis is based on the secondary data. Bangladesh Economic Review Reports of 2010, 2011 and 2012, published by Ministry of Finance of the Government are used in order to analyze the Human Development initiatives of the Government of Bangladesh.

Conceptualization of the Related Terms:

Human development can be simply defined as a process of increasing facilities for human. Human beings have a series of choices – some economic, some social, some political, some cultural. Human development is both a process and a result.

Here are some definitions of human development:

"Human development, as an approach, is concerned with what I take to be the basic development idea: namely, advancing the richness of human life, rather than the richness of the economy in which human beings live, which is only a part of it."³

.....Prof. Amartya Sen⁴

"The basic purpose of development is to enlarge people's choices. In principle, these choices can be infinite and can change over time. People often value achievements that do not show up at all, or not immediately, in income or growth figures: greater access to knowledge, better nutrition and health services, more secure livelihoods, security against crime and physical violence, satisfying leisure hours, political and cultural freedoms and sense of participation in community activities. The objective of development is to create an enabling environment for people to enjoy long, healthy and creative lives."⁵

.....Mahbub ul Haq⁶ (1934-1998)

It also means "protection of the life opportunities of future generations...and...the natural systems on which all life depends" (UNDP, *Human Development Report 1996*).

Key Human Development and Social Sector Public Expenditure of Bangladesh Government:

The social sectors have the potentials for generating higher value addition to the economy through creation of increased openings for production, income, employment and sustainable development. Due to this overriding importance, all UN member countries in the World Summit on Social Development (WSSD), held in Copenhagen in 1995, reached a consensus that each member country should allocate at least 20 percent of the public outlay for social sector⁷.

The Government of Bangladesh regards especially as social sector as groundwork for human development and there is an increasing trend in the allocation chart of annual development and non development budget.

² . <http://www.heritage.org/index/country/bangladesh> accessed on 25/11/2012

³ . <http://hdr.undp.org/en/humandev/> accessed on 26/11/2012

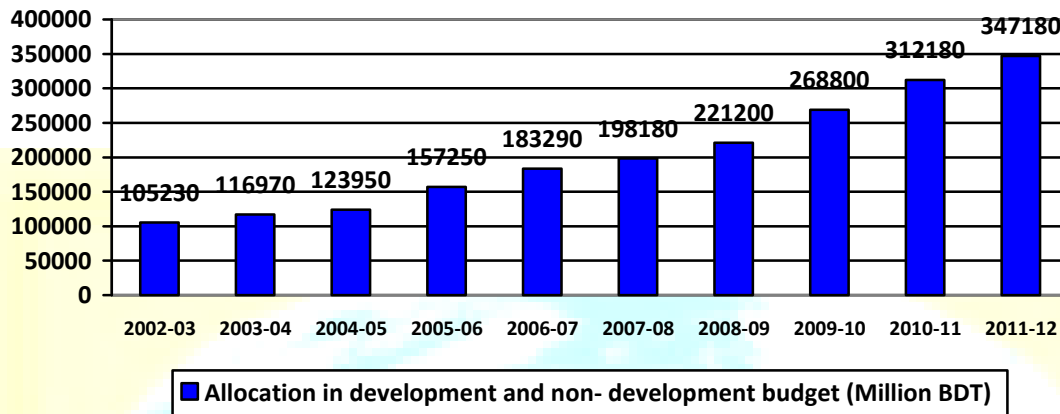
⁴ . Professor of Economics, Harvard University, Nobel Laureate in Economics, 1998

⁵ . <http://hdr.undp.org/en/humandev/> accessed on 26/11/2012

⁶ . Founder of the Human Development Report

⁷ . Bangladesh Economic Review, 2011

Figure 1 shows the total allocation in development and non- development budget in the social sector during FY 2002-03 through 2011-12.⁸



It is obvious from the figures that the total allocation for the social sector in development and non- development budgets shows mounting trend over the last ten years. Bangladesh has been spending more than 20 percent of the total public expenditure in the social sector⁹.

It is obvious that the highest allocation was given to education sector in the annual budget. Likewise sufficient provision has been made for the health sector in the current fiscal year. By adopting practical programs, the Government has been trying to play active role in improving the health and family planning indices; such as reducing fertility rate, child and maternal mortality rates; containing the spread of contagious diseases including TB and AIDS and increasing average life expectancy. Similarly, some others sector like Youth, Sports and Culture, Labor and Manpower, Social Welfare, Women’s Affairs and Liberation War Affairs, and Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs are also getting priorities in the annual budget.

Table 1 shows the total allocation in development and non- development budget in the social sector during FY 2011-12.

Sector	Fund Allocation (Million BDT)
Education, Science & Technology	203160.00
Health and Family Welfare	88690.00
Youth, Sports and Culture	9240.00

⁸. Ibid, 2012.

⁹. Bangladesh Economic Review, 2012.

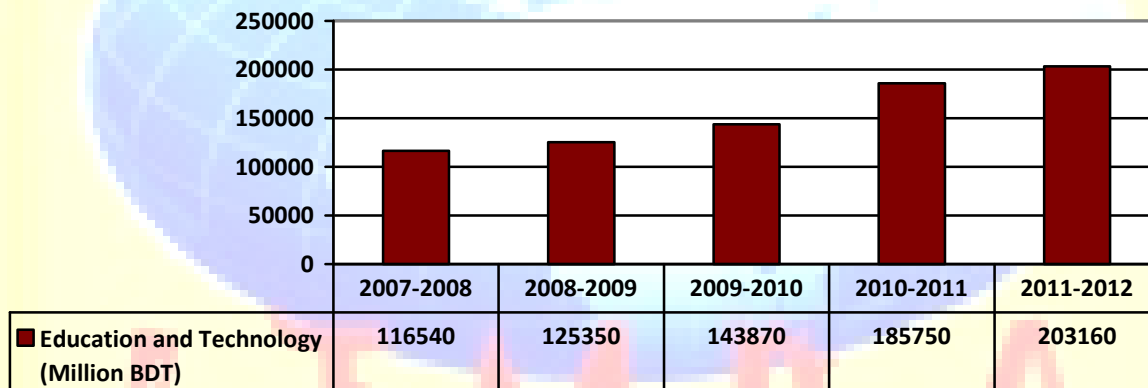
Labour and Manpower	820.00
Social Welfare, Women's Affairs and Liberation War Affairs	39670.00
Chittagong Hill Tracts Affairs	5600.00
Total Allocation (Development and Non- Development)	347180.00

Sources: Finance Division, Ministry of Finance, Planning Commission, Ministry of Planning¹⁰.

Various Social Sectors Public Expenditure of Bangladesh Government:

Education and Technology

It is also well thought-out as one of the key tactics of poverty mitigation and human resources development. A lot of actions have been taken up to build 'Digital Bangladesh' by giving the top most priority to the education sector.



Fig

ure 2 shows the total allocation in Education and Technology sector in the development budget during FY 2007-08 through 2011-12¹¹.

Primary and Mass Education:

The Government is giving high priority to primary education and Government is committed to ensure education for all by 2015. In the Revised Annual Development Budget of FY 2011-12, an amount of Tk. 8014.49 crore has been allocated to the primary education sub-sector. In 1991, the total number of primary schools in Bangladesh was 49,539. At present, the number stands at 82,981 including the madrashas.

Physical Infrastructure Facilities

In FY 2011-12, reconstruction of 1,016 government and 122 registered non-government primary schools was completed; reconstruction and extension of another 165 and 676 government and registered non-government schools respectively are in progress. Construction of a total of 41,000 additional classrooms has been completed. Arsenic free tube-wells have been sunk in 1,814 schools and 3,658 toilets have also been constructed in different schools. Construction of 233 primary schools-cum cyclone shelters has also been completed.

¹⁰ . Ibid.

¹¹ . Bangladesh Economic Review, 2012.

Terminal Examination and Scholarship

As many as 22 thousand talent pool and 33 thousand general scholarships have been awarded among the students on the basis of the result of the terminal examination. Special scholarships are given to the meritorious working children studying at the Shishu Kallyan Trust (SKT) schools; the students are getting TK400 in the primary level and TK600 in secondary level, up to SSC exam.

Stipend Project for Primary School Students

The Primary Education Stipend Project (2nd phase) for 2008-13 has been implemented at an estimated cost of Tk. 3900.26 crore. The project sheltered 48.16 lakh students, a poor family receives a stipend of Tk. 100 per month for sending one child and Tk. 125 per month for sending more than one child to the school.

Free Book Distribution

The Government has been issuing books free of cost among the students of the primary schools at the commencement of every new year. In the academic year 2011 about 9.09 crore books were distributed.

Teachers Recruitment

By using the resources from the non-development budget as many as 45,000 assistant teachers have been recruited under PEDP-II.

Program for Out-of-School and Working Children

The Reaching out-of-school children (ROSC) project is being implemented with an estimated cost of Tk. 684.32 crore over 89 selected upazilas of the country.

Secondary and Higher Secondary Education

To ensure and help the poor meritorious student government has implemented "Prime Minister Education Assistance Trust Law, 2011". The initial seed money of TK100 crore has sanctioned to the Ministry of Education to facilitate the student from secondary to master's level.

Technical Education

Two projects namely Skills Development Project and Skills and Training Enhancement Project (STEP) have been undertaken for the development of technical education sub-sector. 11 modern language training centres have been established in the divisional headquarters of the country offering communicative language courses.

Higher Education

Four new universities, under public sector, have been established in Rangpur, Jessore, Barishal and Pabna and establishment of one more universities in Gopalganj is in progress. In addition, 10 new universities under private sector are granted by the government.

Madrasha Education

A total of 290 madrasahs including 250 at the Dakhil stage, 30 at the Alim stage and 10 at Fazil stage have been brought under MPO.

ICT in Education

Laptops and multimedia projectors have distributed in 13700 Secondary Schools, 5200 Madrasahs and 1600 Colleges, with a vision of building an ICT based education system.

Female Education

Girls' education is free up to higher secondary level. Textbooks have been distributed at free of cost to the secondary level students like primary level students and girls education make free up to degree level.

Reform Activities to Improve the Quality of Education

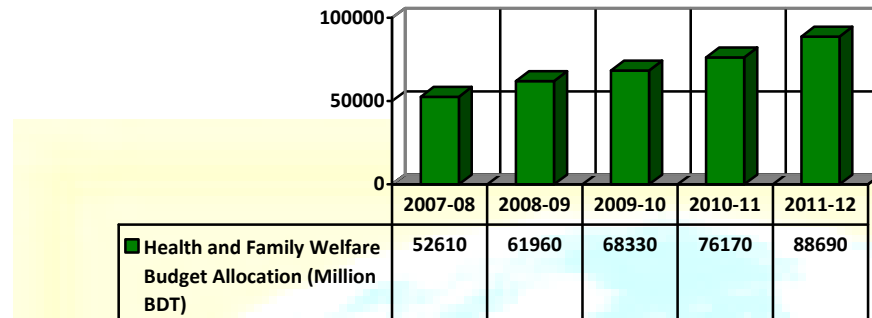
The Secondary School Certificate (SSC) examination with creative structured question paper has been initiated and Junior School Certificate (JSC) examination after Grade-8 has been introduced as public examinations. An amount of Tk. 550 crore has been spent to distribute 23 crore textbooks at free of cost.

Health Sector:

Health sector is an important sector for human development. It is the constitutional responsibility of the government to facilitate the health sector and ensure health services to its citizen. The government of Bangladesh is giving

continuous support to ensure the health facilities of the mass of people and annual budgetary allocation is uprising continuously.

Figure 3 shows the total allocation in Health and Family Welfare sector in the development budget during FY 2007-08 through 2011-12.



Family Welfare Program

In FY 2011-12, 20 projects including one Sector Development Program (HNPSDP), 12 Investment Projects, 03 JDCF projects, and 03 Technical Assistance projects have been taken up by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. A total of Tk.3040.55 crore has been allocated in the ADP of 2011-12.

Health, Nutrition and Population Sector Program

To accelerate family welfare, reproductive health, and maternal and child health program the Government implemented the second sector wide program titled Health, Population & Nutrition Sector Development Program (HPNSDP) from 2011 to 2016 at an estimated cost of Tk. 56993.54 crore.

Community Clinic

A five-year (2009-14) development project Revitalization of Community Health Care Initiative in Bangladesh (Community Clinic Project) was approved with the view to revitalizing community clinics.

Health Service

A number of program continue to help eliminate diseases like diarrhea, malaria, filaria and, tuberculosis (TB) and distribution of anti-helminthes, in the rural area.

Extended Program on Immunization (EPI)

The Government ongoing EPI program to control preventable diseases like diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, TB, measles, Hepatitis B and to eradicate Polio has made remarkable progress.

Reproductive Health Program

Under the Maternal Health Voucher Scheme, vouchers have been distributed among 5,60,527 persons in 53 upazila up to December 2011. Emergency obstetric care has been performed at the 132 upazila health complex.

Medical Education

The number of students admitted in the MBBS course in the academic session 2011-12 has been increased to 2494 (including Armed Forces Medical College Hospital) in 18 public medical colleges. 7 new Institutes of Health Technology have been established to expand the opportunities to increase the number of medical assistants.

Nursing Services

There are 43 Government Nursing Institutes, 7 basic nursing colleges and 1 post basic nursing college under the Nursing Directorate. Besides, there are 39 private Nursing Institutes, 9 nursing colleges and 5 post basic nursing colleges in the country.

Pharmaceutical Industries

The Directorate of Drug Administration has, therefore, been upgraded into Directorate General of Drug Administration. There are two public pharmaceutical laboratories for the analysis of the quality of drugs.

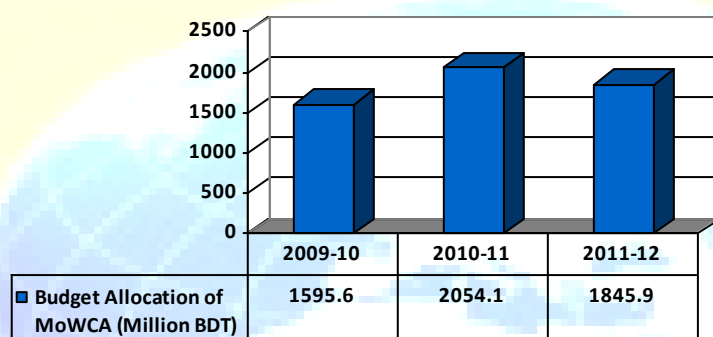
Private Health Sector

The Government is extending various incentives including financial assistance to encourage private investments. At present, there are 44 private medical colleges, 12 dental colleges, 2,501 private hospitals and clinics in the country.

Ministry of Women and Children Affairs (MoWCA):

The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs is playing a pioneer role for the advancement of women and children by various development projects and program. Department of Women Affairs in 64 districts and 412 upazilas, Jatiyo Mohila Sangstha in 64 districts and 48 upazilas and Bangladesh Shishu Academy in 64 Districts are implementing various program. Through these projects and program, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs aims to ensure active participation of women in the mainstream socio-economic activities including their empowerment.

Figure 4 shows the total allocation in Women and Children Affairs sector in the development budget during FY 2009-10 through 2011-12.



In the FY 2011-12, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs undertook 18 investment projects and 9 technical assistance project for the development of women and children, and total of Tk. 184.59 crore has been allocated.

Some Important Initiatives for Women Development

The Ministry of Women and Children Affairs has taken up several important initiatives for overall socio economic development. These include, inter alia, the following:

- Women Training Centre (WTC) at District Level- aims to upgrade the existing women training centers (WTC) at 64 District Women Affairs offices to facilitate capacity building as well as skill development, a total of Tk.4.3 crore has been allocated for FY 2011-12.
- Training for Disadvantaged Women on Ready Made Garments (RMG), amount of Tk.1.3 crore has been allocated in the FY 2011-12.
- District Based Women Computer Training (2nd Phase) is implementing by Jatiyo Mohila Sangstha to be implemented from July 2008 to June 2012 with an estimated cost of Tk.167.54 crore.
- Urban Based Marginal Women Development Project from October 2008 to September 2013 with an estimated cost of Tk. 188.19 crore.
- Promotion of Women Entrepreneurs for Economic Empowerment (2nd Phase) project of Tk. 97.50 lakh has been allocated in the FY 2010-11 for this project.
- Skill development training to the poor, backward and unemployed women for their self-employment and economic emancipation, a total of Tk.1.32 crore has been allocated for FY 2011-12.
- Promotion of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (PGEWE) project is being implemented, an amount of Tk. 2.87 crore has been allocated in FY 2011-12.

- Policy Leadership and Advocacy for Gender Equality (PLAGE –II) project of Tk. 5.98 crore in FY 2011-12.
- A program information Sister to empower women by information technology is initiated and an amount of Tk. 1.66 crore has been allocated in FY 2011-12.

Some Important Initiatives for Child Development

In order to protect child rights and to ensure children welfare, the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs is implementing various projects and programs which include among others the following:

- Early Learning for Child Development project is being implemented and an amount of Tk. 217.5 crore has been allocated in FY 2011-12.
- A technical assistance project Sisimpur Outreach Project has been undertaken and an amount of Tk. 8.7 crore has been allocated in FY 2011-12.

Ministry of Social Welfare:

The Ministry of Social Welfare is working for poverty reduction, human resource development and other development activities for rehabilitation of the neglected segment of population along with the persons with disabilities (PWDs), orphans, destitute, poor and helpless.

Welfare and Service Delivery Programmes

In FY 2011-12 till February 2012, as many as 5,35,000 poor persons received such services. Under the integrated education programme, visually impaired students get educational facilities along with the normal students in the local educational institutions.

Addressing the Social Disintegration Programmes

With a view to preventing juvenile delinquencies and rectifying juvenile delinquents the Department of Social Services (DSS) is running 6 Sharkari Ashroy Kendra for the vagrants and DSS has established 6 safe homes for the women and adolescent girls.

Training, Research, Evaluation and Publication Programme

The Department of Social Services provides in-service training facilities through one National Academy and six Regional Training Centers for about 11000 officer/staff members. **Human Resources Development Programmes**

There are 85 state orphanages (Sharkari Shishu Paribars) under the Department of Social Services for providing subsistence, education, training and rehabilitation of orphans. The Government has allocated Tk. 630 millions as grants for non government orphanages in FY 2011-12.

Ministry of Youth and Sports:

Youth Development

Youths are the main driving force of the socio-economic development in our country. One-third of the total population of the country represents youth. The Department of Youth Development (DYD) is implementing different programmes to make the youth self-dependent through training. The department has imparted skill development training to 36,88,314 male and female youth since its year of inception (1981) to December 2011 on various trades under different completed and on-going projects. Among them, as many as 19,52,607 young people have already become self-employed as on December 2011.

In compliance with the election pledge for job creation, the Government has undertaken the 'National Service Program' in order to provide employment to educated unemployed youths. In FY 2011-12 an amount of Tk.205 crore has been allocated for this program.

The DYD is working for the advancement and expansion of Information Technology (IT). Educated youths are being provided training by 70 centres across the country on computer basics, graphic design and internet usage in 64 districts. Till date, a total of 1,09,651 youths have been provided training on IT.

Sports Development

Young generation and people as a whole achieve physical and mental well being by means of games and physical education. An amount of Tk. 120.57 crore has been allocated in the FY 2011-12 to implement 11 projects of four departments under the Ministry of Youth and Sports.

Ministry of Cultural Affairs:

The history, civilization, identity of a nation is reflected in its culture. In line with the course of cultural progress in the world context, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs is making relentless efforts to preserve, promote and conserve the rich cultural heritage of Bangladesh through its 17 organisations.

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy, Bangla Academy, Public library and National Book Centre are working to nurture and promote Bangla literature by publishing research works, books, and journals. In order to promote culture and preserve the cultural heritage, an allocation of Tk. 89.38 crore was made in the RADP of FY 2011-12 for 14 development projects under the Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

Ministry of Labour and Employment:

The Ministry of Labour and Employment plays a vital role in developing skilled manpower by creating training facilities. It deals with the trade union activities in the country, resolves labour unrest, and promotes labour welfare by imparting skill development training to make them capable of working abroad as skilled labourers. Under this department 30 labour welfare centres are functioning in major industrial belts of the country for rendering educational, recreational and medical facilities to the workers.

They have been implementing projects to eradicate child labour from both the formal and informal sectors. Currently, a project titled Eradication of Hazardous Child Labour in Bangladesh (3rd phase) is being implemented by the ministry. An allocation of Tk. 22.12 crore was made in the RADP of FY 2011-12 for 6 development projects under this Ministry.

Own View and Recommendations:

Bangladesh is a small nation with a huge population; in spite of its utmost efforts and growth prospects Bangladesh is yet to reach to the stream of the middle income countries and to improve effectively the quality of life of its people because of its age old poverty, structural weakness of its economy and lack of productive capacities for development. Bangladesh has made a rare achievement among the least developed countries in the field of education at primary and secondary levels by ensuring gender balance.

To achieve the goal of poverty reduction, attainment of MDGs, social development, infrastructure development and human development, the country has to maintain a well plan for pro-poor growth. Bangladesh must have to focus on the following priority areas:

- 1) Increasing the Investment/GDP ratio, increasing revenue, improving export performances, sustaining remittance growth, reduce inflation.
- 2) Reducing poverty and hunger through sustainable and inclusive development;
- 3) Attaining food security through sustainable agricultural development;
- 4) Human resources development through knowledge base education, training and research and promoting descent employment through job creation programs;
- 5) Infrastructure development in communication, energy, power and information technology;

- 6) Enhancing private sector development through public private partnership (PPP) and providing business friendly environment for private investment.
- 7) Improving performance in agriculture, fisheries and livestock sub-sector through increasing productivity, diversification and intensification.
- 8) Achieving faster poverty reduction, by giving attention to the extreme poor, women in poverty, landless poor and other vulnerable groups and bring them under social safety-net programs.
- 9) Special training should be given to the laborers and ensure health safety facilities by maintain ILO rules.
- 10) Undertaking measures in the areas of policies, planning, regulations and capacity building to face the environmental challenges.

Conclusion:

Bangladesh is one of the world's poorest nations, and the majority of its people work in agriculture, though service industries now account for over half of GDP. Weak institutions, poverty, and too much government intervention, which leads to corruption, undermine economic development and fuel social and political unrest.

Disbursement and allocation on social sector facilitates generating resourceful and creative possessions both financial and physical for the deprived, which in twist will help to get rid of the ferocious circle of deficiency.

The current government has taken steps to curb their activities. This has immense implications on proper discipline, sound health, dynamic leadership and standard ethics in national life. In spite of resource constraints, the Government has undertaken and implemented a number of development projects to promote sports.

The past decades have seen substantial progress in many aspects of human development. Most people today are healthier, live longer, are more educated and have more access to goods and services. Even in countries facing adverse economic conditions, people's health and education have greatly improved. And there has been progress not only in improving health and education and raising income, but also in expanding people's power to select leaders, influence public decisions and share knowledge. Yet much more remains to be done in expanding choices and improving well-being for all people in all countries and communities, and for generations yet to come.

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