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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is seen offering a prayer after laying the foundation stone of an 810 meter long bridge, to be constructed by LGED, on the old Brahmaputra river in Gafargaon upazila of Mymensingh district on 31 March 2011. Minister for LGRD & Cooperatives Syed Ashrafur Islam was also present on the occasion along with local MPs, local elites and high officials.



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PM lays foundation of a bridge on the Brahmaputra river in Gafargaon

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said, her government will evaluate activities and performances of all public representatives in the local government. The Prime Minister made the remark while she was addressing a public rally at Gafargaon after formally laying the foundation stone of an 810 meter long bridge, to be constructed by LGED, on the old Brahmaputra river on 31 March, 2011.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina said, the government is determined to further strengthen the local government for expediting development in the rural areas. She also asked the public representatives to come up with development proposals and thus help the government to chalk out effective programmes for rural areas. The Prime Minister also renewed her vow to make a prosperous Bangladesh rooting out terrorism and eliminating poverty.

After the construction of the bridge on Saltia-Haziganj-Dewanganj Bazar Road at Gafargaon upazila in Mymensingh district, an uninterrupted road communication

network will be established in the region to reduce travelling cost and time facilitating marketization of local agricultural produces. Nearly 50 lakh people living in Nandail, Ishwarganj, Gouripur, Kendua, Kishoreganj Sadar and Hossainpur upazilas of Mymensingh, Netrokona and Kishoreganj districts will enjoy the privilege of the long-awaited bridge to extend their keen interest and participation in the mainstream of all development activities taken by the present government as embodied in their Charter of Change. The bridge is expected to be completed by the end of October 2012 costing around Taka 66 crore from the JDC fund.

Besides, LGED is also constructing two more bridges over the river Brahmaputra in Islampur Upazila under Jamalpur district at a cost of Taka 73 crore, which will be completed by 2013. LGED has also taken up the responsibility of constructing 182 bridges measuring a total length of 24,755 meters ever since the present government started functioning.



Editor's Note

LGED's participatory approach in infrastructure development

LGED considers beneficiary participation an important aspect in planning and implementation of project activities. It believes that sustainability of any project largely depends on people's participation. LGED has been putting its efforts to develop infrastructures like construction of roads, bridges/culverts through participation by the local government institutions and the local people.

In all the three categories of project activities- rural, urban and water resources sectors- participatory process has been adopted by LGED. Location of main project components (roads, bridges/culverts, markets, ghats etc.) are selected using active involvement of beneficiaries.

In the Urban Infrastructure Development Projects of LGED, beneficiary participation is stressed in planning and implementation of project activities. This generates 'ownership' of project components leading to sustainability through involvement of the communities in design, construction, operation and maintenance including measures to reduce or mitigate adverse environmental and public health impacts.

Within LGED's Small Scale Water Resources Project, participation is emphasized in identification of project and later in its operation and maintenance. The philosophy under planning the process is that local stakeholders are the owners and driving force behind the Small Scale Water Sector subprojects.

LGED also gives special attention to participation of women in all development activities. This initiative of LGED is expected to strengthen mainstreaming of gender development at all stages of the project cycle and enhance women's involvement in projects as beneficiaries.



Minister for Water Resources Mr. Ramesh Chandra Sen, MP, laid the foundation stone of a 275.26 m bridge near the boat-landing ghat on the river Tangon adjacent to Fersadanga Bypass Road in Thakurgaon district on 6 February 2011. Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED, alongwith local elites was present on the occasion. The bridge will be constructed by LGED at a cost of Tk. 11.5 crore.

Annual Review Meeting 2010-2011 of LGED held

The two-day Annual Review Meeting of LGED for the FY 2010-2011 began in Dhaka on 10 March 2011. LGED's Additional Chief Engineers, Superintending Engineers, Project Directors, Deputy Project Directors and Executive Engineers from the districts and from the HQ attended the meeting. The meeting dealt at length wide ranging issues relating to the three sectors of LGED. On the concluding day of the meeting, LGED bade farewell to some of LGED's recently retired officials. Chief Engineer, LGED, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman gratefully acknowledged their sincere and dedicated services rendered to LGED. He

wished them a very happy and healthy life.

At the concluding session of the Review Meeting, the Chief Engineer urged the attending engineers to imprint marks of skill, transparency and accountability at every stage of their assigned works so that the goodwill earned so far by LGED can be sustained. Finally, the Chief Engineer expressed the hope that every member of the LGED family should contribute his best to fulfil the nation's goal to build a Digital Bangladesh and realize the Charter of Change as embodied in Vision-2021 declared by the present government.



Chief Engineer, LGED, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman addressed the attending engineers at the two-day Annual Review Meeting 2010-2011 of LGED which began in Dhaka on 10 March 2011.

Workshop for Pourashava Mayors inaugurated by LGD Secretary

A three-day Project Orientation Workshop for thirty five Pourashava Mayors under LGED's UGIIP-II was held at BRAC Center in Gazipur from 19 to 21 March 2011. Organized by UGIIP-II, the inaugural session of the Workshop was graced by the presence of Mr. Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan, Secretary, Local Government Division as the chief guest. Chaired by Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED the inaugural session was also attended by, among others, Mr. Shamim Al-Raji, Secretary General, Municipal Association of Bangladesh, Mr. Abdul Malek, Joint Secretary (Dev), LGD, Mr. Anisur Rahman, Deputy Secretary, LGD and Mr. Muhammad Azizul Haque, Additional Chief Engineer (Urban Management), LGED, Mr. Md. Abdul Gaffar, Advisor, Urban Planning and Management, GTZ, Mr. Md. Nurullah, Superintending Engineer (Urban Management), LGED, Mr. Shafiqul Islam Akand, Project Director, UGIIP-II, LGED, Mr. Rafiqul Islam, Senior Project Implementation Officer, ADB, Mr. Alexander Tachnow, Coordinator, GTZ and Mr. Habibur Rahman, a representative from KfW.

The workshop was all about pourashava laws, UGIIP-II activities, urban governance, financial responsibilities, administrative transparency, Town Level Coordination Committee (TLCC), Community Based Organization (CBO), Poverty Reduction Action Plan (PRAP), Gender Action Plan (GAP) and role in implementation of physical infrastructure and responsibilities of Mayors concerning related aspects of governance and development to be exercised in Pourashavas.

The second session of the first day's workshop was presided over by Mr. Muhammad Azizul Haque, Additional Chief Engineer, LGED (Urban Management).



Mr. Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan, Secretary, Local Government Division was the Chief Guest at the inaugural session of the Project Orientation Workshop for Pourashava Mayors under LGED's UGIIP-II at the BRAC Centre, Gazipur held on 19 March 2011. It was chaired by Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED.

LGED's mileposts of development in last 2 years

The present government, headed by Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, is committed to make Bangladesh a happy, growing and prosperous nation through implementation of 'Charter of Change' leading to the realization of Vision-2021 as revealed in their election manifesto. Against this backdrop, LGED stands out to be one of the flared up partners in the progress.

Roads & bridges development:

During the last two years, LGED constructed 3240 kms of upazila roads at a cost Tk.1520 crore, 2938 kms of union roads at a cost of Tk. 1160 crore, and 2122 kms of rural roads at a cost of Tk.552 crore. In the current fiscal year, development of 3854 kms of roads of different categories are in progress. Besides, LGED has also constructed 40,520 meters of bridges/culverts costing Tk.748 crore and repaired and maintained 14,700 kms of road costing Tk.1320 crore in the said period.

Poverty Reduction: The government is committed to reduce poverty level by 25% and extreme poverty level by 15% by the year 2013. In this context, LGED created employment for 270 million mandays in the years 2009 and 2010 by way of implementing different rural and urban development projects. Besides, LGED distributed Tk. 103 crore to rural people and Tk. 47 crore to urban poor as microcredits.

LGED's Sunamganj Community Based

Resource Management Project handed over 261 waterbodies to 5949 fishermen's families on a lease for 10 years. LGED also hopes to hand over 300 beels to the targeted poor within 2013.

Water Resource Development:

In the last two years, LGED developed 45,000 hectares of waterbodies through 75 Water Resources Sub-projects. Development and reconstruction of embankments measuring 295 kms, re-excavation of 370 kms of canals and 120 water regulatory infrastructures were constructed or repaired at a cost of Tk. 187 crore. Moreover, LGED planted 28,84,247 siblings, 89% of which are still alive. Besides, 17,680 latrines and 10,510 tube-wells were also installed under different projects in the last couple of years.

LGED in less developed regions:

LGED constructed 248 kms of roads and 1,880 meters of bridges/culverts spending Tk. 170 crore at upazila and union levels in the districts of Bandarban, Rangamati and Khagrachhari. Under the project named 'Urban Partnership for Poverty Reduction', LGED has also taken up a massive programme to improve the standard of living for 4,64,186 poor families in the township adjacent to 30 cities. In the last two years, 87,370 meters of footpath and 33,087 meters of drains were constructed and 17,680 sanitary latrines and 3,086 tube-wells were installed.

For the people in char areas in Barisal, Patuakhali, Bhola, Noakhali and Lakhmipur districts LGED has been implementing three specific projects. In the last two years, 448 kms of upazila/union roads, 44 hats/markets and 12 ghats were constructed in the said regions.

LGED has a project in Sunamganj district to improve the standard of life of the poor communities in haor areas. Some 3000 village organizations have been formed from among 90,000 families to reduce poverty through trainings and credit facilities under the said project.

Human Development: In the last two years, a total number of 6,89,626 persons were trained in 21,289 batches through 540 courses, 84% of them were beneficiaries. In the said period, 153 engineers of LGED were trained abroad on relevant subjects, which knowledge and skill they are now executing in their respective fields.



Transparency Issues: LGED believes in transparency and accountability. In the last two years, as many as 292 reports were published in our national dailies questioning the transparency and accountability of LGED. Only 30 of those were found to be authentic after thorough examination. Necessary actions were accordingly taken against those.

LGED has developed Quality Control Laboratories at its Headquarter, 10 regional and 54 district offices.

Empowerment of Women: With the objective of yoking gender issues in the mainstream of LGED's all activities there exists a Gender Forum in LGED. This Forum



has prepared a sector-wise Gender Equity Strategy and Action Plan for the period from 2008 to 2015.

In the last two years, about 6 lakh women in less developed regions of the country were trained to be organized, self-employed and



self-sufficient and they were successfully inducted in the social safety network of the country. About 98,000 women workers worked for about 611 lakh mandays in infrastructure development and maintenance works during the said period.

Strengthening LG: LGED completed construction of 622 Union Parishad Complexes during the last two years. The construction works for 386 UP Complexes are in progress. LGED also constructed 266 kilometers of road at a cost of Taka 92 crore, 394 meters of bridges/culverts at a cost of Taka 15 crore, 243 kilometers of drains costing Taka 72 crore, 3 bus terminals costing Taka 3 crore and 30 town centres at a cost Taka 28.5 crore under 30 selected



municipalities. Besides, Taka 502 crore was spent for maintenance and renovation of 1876 kilometers of roads, 124 kilometers of drains and 751 meters of bridges and culverts in the years 2009 and 2010.

Education: LGED, during the last two years, reconstructed 1629 primary schools at the cost of Taka 2000 crore. Installation of 7325 arsenic-free tube-wells were completed in primary schools. Besides, 4 District Primary Education Office and 38 Upazila Primary Education Office buildings were constructed. In the Sidr-affected regions, 166 primary schools and 48 cyclone-shelters-cum-primary schools were constructed.

Information Technology: In the last two years, LGED updated GIS Database for 460 upazila roads through Dynamic Segmentation, prepared Disaster Database of rural infrastructures on pilot basis in 25 upazilas and distributed 5 Softwares to 133 municipalities for development of their financial and administrative management. LGED is about to introduce e-Procurement on trial basis in 4 districts and all district and upazila maps and Database would be incorporated within LGED's Web Portal in near future.

LGED's commitments fulfilled: After two years of running the administration of the country the present government awarded a Certificate of Merit to LGED for successfully achieving 100% annual targets in 33 on-going projects. Asian Development Bank also conferred on LGED the Best Performing Award for its 4 different projects. LGED is fully committed to render dedicated services to fulfil the realization of 'Vision 2021' to reduce poverty and improve the lot of the people for a change.

What makes LGED so effective ?- A Case Study by JICA Research Institute

JICA Research Institute has recently published their Working Paper on "What Makes the Bangladesh Local Government Engineering Department so effective ?" It is an isolated case study conducted by Yasuo Fujita, a Senior Research Fellow in JICA Research Institute, under the Institute's umbrella study- "Revisiting the Capacity Development Approach Through Comparative Case Analysis". The said working paper attempts to answer the following two related questions: (i) Why is LGED so effective, and (ii) has there been complementarity between LGED's own strengths and the capacity development support of its donors.

In the very introduction of the working paper it has been written-"While there is a general consensus that public organizations in Bangladesh are inefficient, the Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) under the Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives (MLGRD&C) is acknowledged to be one of the few exceptions. LGED is one of the largest public sector organizations in Bangladesh, with a staff exceeding 10,000 and a development budget of 39.2 billion taka accounting for 14% (FY 2009-102) of the total development of the Government of Bangladesh (GOB)".

Commenting on what actually LGED features, the working paper further adds-"LGED currently performs the following major functions: (i) develops and maintains rural and urban infrastructure and water resources infrastructure; (ii) provides technical support to line ministries and LGIs; (iii) provides human resources development for LGED, LGIs and other stakeholders; and (iv) creates planning maps, databases, technical specifications and manuals. LGED is a highly decentralized organization, where almost 99% of the staff work at either district or upazila (sub-district) levels. This decentralization is a key factor in its high implementation capacity in rural areas".



LGED, Dhaka district, constructed a unique court building at the prison compound of Dhaka Central Jail in the shortest possible time to facilitate trial of those involved in the BDR Mutiny of 2009. LGED took only 27 days to build the semi-pucca court house measuring an area of 14,130 square feet at a cost of Taka 1.5 crore. The said structure is supposed to accommodate 824 persons all at a time for trial. Such a huge court building for the trial of a large number of persons hardly exist anywhere in the world. At one stage of its construction, Chief Engineer, LGED, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman inspected the site. Executive Engineer, LGED Dhaka district, Mr. Md. Khurshid Hasan and Mr. ABM Nazrul Islam, SBIDS were present on the occasion. (A partial view of the court building could be seen in the picture)

The working paper reports- "A main reason for LGED's reputation in Bangladesh for effectiveness is that it implements projects faster than other organizations, delivering project benefits more quickly. This is very much appreciated by project beneficiaries, local contractors, policy makers and donors."

The working paper further says- "LGED has in fact received an increasing share of both GOB budget and donor assistance. In its use of resources, LGED has emphasized the development of staff competency, construction of office space and ICT investment, all of which not only improve its effectiveness, but also motivates its staff".

JICA Research Study says- "LGED has institutionalized clear hierarchical supervision and coordination in each unit and the necessary complementary horizontal mechanism: direct communication and coordination among concerned staff, monthly/weekly meetings, and a project director system".

The working paper also adds- "LGED's main strength has been in organizational behavior.

In spite of the rigid GOB's rules, LGED exercises discretion in providing both direct and indirect staff incentives. LGED's group cohesiveness, collective decision-making practices, internal communications, leadership, and organizational culture have impacted positively its effectiveness, thus complementing the division-of-labor system and coordination mechanisms".

On the question of leadership practiced in LGED the Working Paper refers to- "The Chief Executive of LGED holds the title of Chief Engineer, the current one being the sixth. Q.I. Siddique, the first Chief Engineer (1992-1999), was a top LGED leader from the beginning of the Works Program (1960s). He had the charismatic leadership qualities and he used them very effectively in the inaugural period and during the organization's rapid expansion."

In the concluding remarks the working paper advocates- "LGED is considered to be an exception among the public sector organizations in Bangladesh because it is outstandingly effective."

CBRMP Fisheries Management gives poor fishers an access to beel resources

Fisheries development is one of the major components of CBRMP which aims at poverty alleviation of the poor community in Sunamganj through improved management of beel resources. The project has a target of accessing to 300 beels (86 above 20 acres and 214 below 20 acres) and transferring those to 3000 Beel User Groups (BUG) comprising a total of 9500 members of which 30% are to be women.

The unique part of the beel management is in all works related to beel resource management including demarcation, re-excavation, harvesting, guarding, and conservation. The community fishers themselves plan, implement and monitor in a participatory manner.

So far 211 beels have been transferred to the project under first package and the rest 89 are under process. Out of total transfer the project has handed over 157 beels to equal numbers of BUGs comprising 6360 members of which 23% are women.

A good number of activities have been taken to improve the beel resources. For restoring the beel habitat, 128 beels have been re-excavated spending Tk. 225.94 lac, and that has created an employment of 111660 labourdays where 25% women were engaged. A total of 37 fish sanctuaries have



State Minister, Ministry of Land, Mr. Mostafizur Rahman, MP, is distributing profit to BUG members at Jamalganj.

been established at some strategic zones for promoting fish biodiversity. For connecting the beels with locality, 13 numbers of roads of total 10.25 km have been built by Labour Contracting Society (LCS) formed solely including BUG members. A total number of 93,858 swamp trees have been planted on beel side for regenerating swamp forestry in haor areas, 91 beels have been demarcated by concrete pillars and plants to maintain a sustainable demarcation. From the sale of fish, an amount of Tk. 373.60 lac has been earned, from which Tk 131.07 lac has been distributed equally to 2995 BUG members of harvested beels. On an average, by sale of fish and through wage earning by harvesting and re-excavation activities a member of BUG earns an income of around Tk 10,000

per year, and that increases with increased production of beel fisheries.

The beel management activities so far taken have brought positive changes in beel resources development and improvement of livelihood of the poor fisher community. The Fish Biodiversity Study recently conducted by Worldfish Center has revealed that through systematic management the production of beel has increased by 11.4% per hectare and total by 19%. Another livelihood impact study conducted by the same institute has found that the food crisis (food deficit from 1-3 months) which was among 74.7% poor fisher families in 2008 has reduced to 58.4% in 2010. The access to beel was a dream to poor fisher as it had been traditionally vested in few local influential people. It was thought that the poor fisher could not pay the lease fee and thereby their access would never be possible. But it has been proved wrong. The BUGs are regular in paying the lease fee to government account. The beel user ownership of fisher has largely impacted on the livelihoods of the fishers as well as the beel ecology, and these are further progressing with their organized efforts and commitments.

However, the access to beel and its management is not an easy task. But it is expected that the community would be more skilled in beel resource management and this system would be a model for effective beel resource management in other haor areas of Bangladesh.



Dr. Shirin Sharmin Chowdhury, State Minister, Ministry of Women & Children Affairs, is seen visiting the stall of LGED's Gender Forum and UPPR Project at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre in Dhaka on 14 March 2011, organized by USAID.

Foreign Training/ Overseas Visit

- Syed Mahbubur Rahman, Project Director, RIIP-II, LGED and Mr. Hasan Kabir Khasru, Deputy Project Director, STIFPP-II, LGED participated in the "Sub-Regional Workshop on Gender, Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment" held in Kathmandu, Nepal from 01 February to 03 February, 2011.

LGED's Project helps Zeaul to reduce poverty

Five years ago, Zeaul took part in the apprenticeship scheme of Local Partnerships for Urban Poverty Alleviation Project of LGED, UPPR's predecessor. Learning the basics of rickshaw repair and maintenance, he initially joined a rickshaw garage, and subsequently turned these skills into a thriving business. With two loans from the Community Development Committee (CDC), one worth 3000 taka and the second worth 5000 taka, Zeaul is now the proud owner of nine rickshaws, as well as the countless spare parts and tools that litter his workshop beside a busy road in Mymensing town.

Zeaul's father in his old age stands today boastfully beside his son in the workshop. His eldest sister is now married and lives with her own family, and his brothers work as mechanics. Zeaul looks after his father, and his dream, he says, is to expand his business enough to be able to properly support his another sister who is about to complete the final years of high schooling. Life is still difficult for Zeaul, but the pleasure and pride he takes in his work are evident. While his garage is busy, it is by no means comfortable, and as small business owners across the globe would attest, when you work this close to the margins, nothing is guaranteed. Yet, thanks to his training, and the loans he received from the UPPR of LGED -supported CDC's, each month Zeaul manages to earn around 3000-4000 taka. Thanks to his hard work, initiative and drive, because he has built up a business that is supporting him and his father, and he hopes, others in the future.

Beside a bustling road, Zeaul is, with the help of his community, its leaders in the CDC and the UPPR project of LGED, working at



In observance of the International Women's Day 2011 a seminar on "Scoping Access to Education, Training & Science for Women : LGED Context" was held at LGED Bhaban in Dhaka on 10 March 2011. At the inaugural session of the seminar, Chief Engineer LGED, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman announced LGED's acknowledgement of Sk. Md. Mohsin, Project Director, Community Based Resource Management Project (CBRMP) as a successful implementer of the project particularly in gender development and poverty alleviation in Sunamganj haor area. State Minister for LGED&C Mr. Jahangir Kabir Nanak, MP awarded Mr. Mohsin with a crest in recognition of his dedicated services. The Chief Engineer appreciated Mr. Mohsin's commitment and challenging attitude especially to empower the poor people through giving them beel users rights, livelihood technologies, and communication facilities even at the remotest villages. Mr. Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan, Secretary, Local Government Division; and Mr. Abdul Malek, Joint Secretary, Local Government Division were present on the occasion as special dignitaries who also appreciated the activities of CBRMP and hoped that the project would be a model to be replicated in other rural areas of Bangladesh to realize the government's strategy for poverty alleviation.

keeping himself and his business busy. With nine rickshaws standing by awaiting attention, and a constant stream of many

more coming to his workshop's door everyday, there is little doubt his services are required and in demand.



Zeaul is repairing rickshaws in the garage that he owns now with a UPPR block grant.



In observance of the International Women's Day LGED organized a seminar on 'Scoping Access to Education, Training and Science for Women : LGED Context' in Dhaka on 10 March 2011. At the inaugural session of the seminar the State Minister for LGRD&C Mr. Jahangir Kabir Nanak, MP, and the Chief Guest distributed crests and certificates to nine destitute women engaged in LGED's different projects for their outstanding feats in making themselves self-reliant. Mr. Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan, Secretary, LGD and Mr. Abdul Malek, Joint Secretary, LGD were present as special guests. The session was presided over by Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED. The award winning women are also seen in the picture.

'Let's build a nation based on gender equity' – State Minister for LGRD&C at LGED Seminar

'Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman had dreamt of a social order based on equity. The present government is firmly determined to build a nation based on gender-equity'. This was observed by the State Minister for LGRD & Cooperatives Mr. Jahangir Kabir Nanak, MP while inaugurating a seminar on "Scoping Access to Education, Training & Science for Women : LGED Context" on 10 March 2011 at LGED Bhaban in Dhaka.

The inaugural session of the seminar was scheduled to be inaugurated by the Minister for Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives Syed Ashraful Islam, MP. But as he was summoned to a high command meeting at the same time he had to make a last minute change. The State Minister for LGRD & Cooperatives Mr. Jahangir Kabir Nanak, MP was however present on the occasion to inaugurate the session as chief guest.

Immediately after his arrival at LGED Bhaban the State Minister was taken round different stalls and photo-galleries installed at the premises to display LGED's gender based activities. Later, he witnessed a video presentation depicting gender equity in LGED, distributed crests and certificates to destitute women employed in LGED's

different projects for their outstanding feats in making themselves self-reliant.

The inaugural session of the seminar, organized in observance of the International Women's Day 2011, was also attended by, among others, the Secretary for Local Government Division, Mr. Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan and the Joint Secretary, LGD, Mr. Abdul Malek as special guests. The session was chaired by Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED.

The State Minister for LGRD & Cooperatives also said in his inaugural address, LGED has been yoking women along with men in building up rural and urban infrastructure ever since its inception. Besides creating opportunities for employment and self-employment for women, LGED has also been endeavouring to stabilize empowerment of women, women's participation in decision-making and leadership.

The special guest on the occasion Mr. Abu Alam Md. Shahid Khan, Secretary for LGD said, the government has approved National Women's Development Policy (NWDP) 2011 on March 7, 2011. He also said, we shall wipe off the existing discrimination between men and women; we shall free our women

from all sorts of violence, deprivation and marginalization.

Mr. Abdul Malek, Joint Secretary, LGD also spoke as a special guest on the occasion and said, the present government is firmly committed to build up a social order free from discrimination and violence to women.

Earlier, the chairperson and Chief Engineer of LGED Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman in his address of welcome said, in the FY 2009-10 LGED created employment opportunities for 89,729 destitute women and 1 lakh 11 thousand 999 destitute women were given training on different fields. The Chief Engineer further said, 5 softwares have been distributed to 25 municipalities of the country for improvement of their financial and administrative management. Moreover, e-Procurement (e-GP) is about to be started on trial basis in 4 districts and Digital Master Plan is going to be introduced in 233 municipalities. In future, all district and upazila maps and Database are going to be connected with LGED's WEB Portal. A major number of persons engaged in these works are women, he said.

Later, a vote of thanks was delivered by Begum Sultana Nazneen Afroze, Deputy Project Director, LGED.