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Begum Motia Chowdhury, MP, Minister for Agriculture, Government of the Peoples' Republic of Bangladesh is seen delivering her address as the chief guest at the award-giving ceremony to the best self-reliant women organized by LGED. The special guest Mr. Monzur Hossain, Senior Secretary, LGD and Chairperson Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED are also seen in the picture.

"LGED's development programmes through intervening in remote regions help women's progress"

—Agriculture Minister at LGED's award-giving ceremony for best self-reliant women.

Speaking as the chief guest at the award-giving ceremony for the best performing self-reliant women, organized by LGED on 14 May 2014 as a part of the observance of International Women's Day-2014, Begum Motia Chowdhury, MP, Minister of Agriculture, Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh said, "LGED's development programmes through intervening in remote regions are leading the women of Bangladesh toward gender equity". Held at the LGED Headquarters in Dhaka, the ceremony was attended by Mr. Monjur Hossain, Senior Secretary, Local Government Division and Dr. Selina Hayat Ivy, Mayor, Narayanganj City Corporation as special guest. Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman,

Chief Engineer, LGED chaired the session.

The minister for Agriculture further added, "Retrogression is still prevalent in our society. It is said even today that women are not required to be educated beyond class four. Those who say so are not less in number". She said, there exists progression in our society as well. We have to dream for going ahead keeping in mind the trend of retrogression. She said, more susceptible attitude from men is essential in this respect. She however expressed hopes to achieve gender equity breaking all barriers of prejudices.

In his address as special guest the Senior Secretary of LGD Mr. Monjur Hossain said, if we

want to narrate the tales of our women, it would be century-old episodes of tormenting tales. In spite of that it is proven that our women have reached today to be almost at par with men. LGD Secretary stressed on further women's development through more-empowerment of women and women-friendly establishments. He however admitted LGED's contribution to women's success.

In his address as Chairperson Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer LGED said, access of women to LGED's development programmes was introduced in 1984. He expressed his gratitude to all the development partners including ADB specifically recalling the support of ADB in establishing gender equity in LGED.

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Editorial

'National Physical Plan': a need of the time coping with development

Bangladesh is a developing country of divergent seasons. Bangladesh is progressing ahead with economic growth surpassing various hazards because of having a well-organized framework of running the state and she is well confident to be a country of middle income by 2021. With this aim in view, the ministries and other agencies have been formulating their own objectives, strategies and work-plans.

The outstanding basic element of all developments of a country is physical development. Unless divergent physical developments are attained, no other related development can be achieved. In the sphere of physical development including socio-economic development of the country, the government in different times took up policies, plans and development strategies. Prominent among those are- Rural Development Strategies 1984, Rural Infrastructure Strategies Study 1996, National Rural Development Policy 2001, National Land Transport Policy 2004, Urban Management Policy Proclamation 1999, National Water Policy 1999, Poverty Reduction Strategy, Five Year Plan, Review Planning 2010-21, etc. These strategies, policies and plans are mainly prioritized with objectives of higher economic growth, integrated rural development, trade extension, rudimentary services, increased production, cost-effectivity of production, poverty reduction, social upliftment, and improvement of living standard. Though Bangladesh seemed to have progressed in strategies, policies and plans formulated by the government in different times, people are deprived of sought after benefits in many sectors because of existing unplanned trend in urban development and lack of physical planning for rural areas and other regions.

Land is an essential factor in the implementation of planning for any country. Whatever is the planning for economic, social, agriculture, industries, education or any other sector, land is obviously an essential element. For, land will be required for implementation of that planning at a certain stage. Bangladesh is not merely an over-populated country. It is one of the most over-populated countries in the world. Land seems to be limited here in contrast to the bulk of population. A long-term physical planning is overwhelmingly needed to make the country developed fulfilling all requirements of 160 million people or even more than that. For three distinctive yet inter-related phenomena – imprudent uses of natural resources, climate risks, and socio-economic order for an ever-increasing population, and for ensuring competent infrastructures and environment for sustainable development it has become inevitable today to prepare a long-term physical planning for Bangladesh and its strict adherence.

One percent of the country's cultivable land is being urbanized and industrialized every year. Indiscriminate grabbing and polluting of rivers and canals is not only curbing the flow of water, but also causing severe damages to the country's environment and surroundings. Environmental disasters due to unplanned urbanization, unsafe road communication, misuse of funds for construction of unnecessary infrastructures and many other multifaceted perilous interventions are exemplary instances to show why the question of preparing a long-term physical plan and its strict adherence have become a priority in Bangladesh.

Two sectors (public and private) are required to work simultaneously for the progress of a country. The government has multiple responsibilities in a modern, democratic and welfare state. In the

perspective of socio-economic development, measures to reduce poverty in one hand and infrastructure improvement on the other will have to be ensured in a way to encourage private entrepreneurship in all sectors including industries and to create opportunities for employment in the country. Similarly, the state's prime responsibility is to manage, use and preserve the national resources properly. Land is required for usage and development of all sectors of the country. For both public and private enterprises, land is essential for agriculture, industry, rural habitats, urbanization and communication sectors. Similarly, preservation and application of natural resources of this country full of natural diversities and bounties. In order to preserve resources necessary for life and environs like forest, hills, rivers, haors and beels, land-use has to be specified. There are at present 42 ministries in Bangladesh to perform state responsibilities. For direct implementation of the specific responsibilities of these ministries there exist different types of directorates, offices and autonomous bodies under the ministries. The ministries and the agencies under them, engaged in shouldering responsibilities of state and the government, are required to use land in two ways. First, to establish offices up to grass root levels. Second, some ministries and their agencies are liable to implement development and service-oriented programmes through various infrastructure construction. The Ministries of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, Housing & Public Works, Power, Fuel & Mineral Resources, Road Transport & Bridges, Railways, Inland Water Transport, Civil Aviation & Tourism and their respective agencies act as partners to peoples, mobility, fuels and production mainly through construction of various types of infrastructure. A number of ministries and agencies are, on the other hand, are responsible to use private land. They are required to acquire land for establishing industries and habitats. An appropriate plan is necessary to create integration between current and future needs for both public and private efforts. All developed countries of the world have prepared their National Physical Plan and accordingly in tune with it they are preparing and implementing regional, local and sector-wise planning. It is the key to be grooming into a developed country.

With the application of the National Physical Plan, a long term plan for land use and planned infrastructure development could be ensured after analyzing the country's actual situation of land and water, bodies, natural diversities, sector-wide needs, topographical problems, potentialities, various development planning and strategies. National Physical Plan is essentially the physical constituent part of a country's implementation of all sector-wise strategic plans, development planning and policies. In real sense the long term development strategy of the country will be reflected through it. In Bangladesh, master plans for different cities are being prepared. Upazila based master plans integrating rural and urban areas are also being prepared. In all these master plans land-use has been specified. The absence of a National Physical Plan is affecting the master plans in fulfilling the overall objectives of the country's development. It is necessary to synchronize the 'master plans' for different cities with the National Physical Plan in a bid to achieve the country's integrated physical plan. Various information and data of LGED's district and upazila level would be helpful for preparing National Physical Plan. Now it is the need of the time to prepare the National Physical Plan under overall supervision of the Prime Minister's office with active participation of all ministries and agencies and in harmony with all plans of the regional, district and local levels. ■

Presentation of Comilla City Corporation's Draft Master Plan & views-sharing meeting held

Presentation of Comilla City Corporation's Draft Master Plan & a views-sharing meeting were held on 26 May 2014 at the conference room of Comilla City Corporation under the auspices of Local Government Engineering Department's (LGED) District Town Infrastructure Improvement Project (DTIIP). Chaired by Mr. Manirul Haque Sakku, Mayor of Comilla City Corporation, the meeting was attended by Mr. A.K.M. Bahauddin Bahar, MP of Comilla-6 Constituency, as the chief guest. Mr. Md. Nurullah, Superintending Engineer (Urban Management), LGED and Director of UMSU and Mr. Md. Abdus Salam Mondol, Project Director, DTIIP, were present on the occasion as special guests. Speaking on the occasion as the chief guest Mr. A.K.M. Bahauddin Bahar, MP, said, the country has achieved much progress in many sectors. In contrast to the neighbouring countries, our living standard is better in many respects. He said, in a bid to reduce stress on Dhaka City there is no alternative to better management and development for other cities. Referring to the Draft Master Plan he said, Master Plan prepared for an area of 150 square kilometers needs clarification about the mode of its implementation. He recommended for further discussions with all concerned, if necessary, and taking some more time to prepare the Masterplan. Special guest Mr. Md. Nurullah said, Comilla City Corporation, situated in between Dhaka and Chittagong carries much significance. He assured all that recommendations made by the chief guest would be started out and incorporated in the Masterplan. The elites of Comilla city, mediamen, Assistant Directors of RUMSU Comilla region and consultants of Sheltech were present at the meeting among others. ■



Mr. Md. Nurullah, Suprintending Engineer (Urban Management), LGED is seen interacting with a cross-section of people at the exchange of opinions meeting on the presentation of Master Plan for Comilla City Corporation on 26 May 2014 in presence of the chief guest Mr. A.K.M. Bahauddin Bahar, MP.

UGIIP-3 Approved at ECNEC Meeting

LGED's Third Urban Governance & Infrastructure Improvement Project (UGIIP-3), designed to promote the Pourashavas to be strong, sustainable, effective, transparent and accountable institution through improving the living standard of the municipal residents and their participation in it and creating dynamism in municipal services by way of increasing capacities of the Pourashavas, has been approved at the ECNEC Meeting recently.

The implementation period of this six-year project, funded by the Government of Bangladesh (GOB), Asian Development Bank (ADB) and OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), is from July 2014 to June 2020.

The first phase of the project will be implemented from July 2014 to June 2016, the second phase will be from July 2016 to June 2018 and

the third phase will be from July 2018 to June 2020. The total cost of the project will be Taka 2600.48 crore of which Taka 728.48 crore will be provided by GOB, Taka 1560.00 crore by ADB, and Taka 312.00 crore by OFID.

The measures to implement UGIIP-3 have been taken up to increase capacity and improve services of 31 pourashavas of the country in consequence of successful implementation of LGED'S UGIIP-1 and UGIIP-2 projects.

It is to be noted here that the new project would take up modern and epoch-making approaches to improve urban governance and overall living standard of municipal residents through development of the poor and women in the light of the experiences gained in UGIIP-1 and UGIIP-2 projects. UGIIP-3 would play a vital role in fulfilling Bangladesh government's commitment to achieve MDG targets and implementing the government's Vision-2021. ■

A self-confident woman

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She got to know from the local Women's Councilor that under Gender Action Plan of the Pourashava under UGIIP-2 there was an opportunity to have training on sewing.

She however managed to attend successfully a 3-month training course on sewing and at the end of the course she was given a sewing machine as a grant. With that sewing machine she established a tailoring shop. She started making frocks, blouses, salwars and kameezes. Through hardwork she earned the goodwill of a tailor. A single sewing machine changed the wheel of her fate. Today, Lipi Chakma is a self-reliant woman – an icon of success to numerous poor women of Khagrachhari. She is now much more confident. She opines, self-determination is the key to bring in changes in life.

It is to be noted that UGIIP-2 has been assisting empowerment and development of women through creating self-employment opportunities for the residents of Pourashavas under the project. ■

Joint Review Mission visit UGIIP-2

A Joint Review Mission of the development partner visited Ghorasal, Madhavpur, Sreemongal and Sunamganj Pourashavas from 7 to 9 May 2014 and Faridpur, Bhanga, Patuakhali, Kalapara, Barguna and Jhalakathi Pourashavas from 15 to 18 May 2014 to see the progress of Second Urban Governance & Infrastructure Improvement (Sector) Project (UGIIP-2). During the visit they reviewed the progress of various development works and physical infrastructure development works accomplished by the project at the field levels. The Mission attended TLCC meetings of a number of Pourashavas and exchanged views with the members. The Mission reviewed issues like procurement status, contract award and disbursement, UGIAP implementation, PRAP,

GAP and social safeguard implementation situation, CBO implementation, quality of works, consultant services, etc.

The Mission led by Mr. Md. Rafiqul Islam, Senior Project Officer, ADB Dhaka included Mr. Md. Shafiqul Islam Akand,

Project Director, UGIIP-2, Miss Rina Sengupta, Gender Consultant, ADB, Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, Associate Project Analyst, Dr. Pradip Kumar Dev, Team Leader of MDS Consultant, Mr. Nazmul Ahsan Khan, Gender Specialist and

some senior officials and consultants.

Later, a wrap-up meeting was held on 22 June 2014 where satisfactions were expressed at the progress of activities in achieving the targets of the project. ■



During the visit of the Joint Review Mission of the development partner agency to UGIIP-2 in Patuakhali, the members shared views with the members of a TLCC meeting. Members of TLCC are seen in the inset.

CRDP reviewed by Mid-Term Review Mission

A Mid-Term Review Mission comprised of representatives from Asian Development Bank, KfW and Swedish SIDA reviewed City Region Development Project (CRDP) from 20 to 27 May 2014. Mr. Ming Yuan Fan, Urban Development Specialist, ADB Head Office, was the leader of the Mission.

The Mission reviewed at length the progress of works of CRDP and the future steps to be taken up. The Review Mission also had elaborate discussions with the Chief Engineer of LGED Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman and other officials and consultants of the project on various activities. ■

Agriculture Minister at LGED's award-giving ceremony for best self-reliant women

(contd. from front page)

The Chief Engineer said, LGED's Gender Development Forum has been counseling to establish gender issues in the mainstream of LGED's revenue and development activities.

A total number of nine self-reliant women, associated with various development programmes of LGED, were awarded at the ceremony. Three women were selected from each of three sectors of LGED – rural development, water resources development and urban development. In Rural Development Sector, Anwara Begum of Sunamganj got the first prize, Mahinur Begum of Patuakhali got the second prize and Shondhya Rani of Lalmonirhat got the third prize. In Water Resources Sector, Madhura Jong of Mymensingh got first prize, Jarina Akhter of Mymensingh got second prize and Sudevi Mondol of Gopalganj got third prize. In Urban Development Sector, Roxana Parvin of Bogra Municipality got first prize, Sahera Banu of Pabna Municipality got second prize and Itirani Sheel of Brahmanbaria Municipality got third prize. Besides, Narayanganj City Corporation, Natore Municipality and two Union Parishads were also awarded for achieving success in implementing LGED's gender activities.

It is to be mentioned here that the Chief Engineer of LGED made an impromptu announcement that the first prize winning three successful women and Chairmen of the two Union Parishads would be sent abroad for training.

The award-giving ceremony was highlighted with the presentation of a video-documentary on LGED's gender equity programmes. Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED presented a souvenir of LGED to the chief guest Begum Motia Choudhury.

Earlier, Syeda Asma Khatun, Member-Secretary, Gender Development Forum, delivered an address of welcome. Mr. Md. Abul Kalam Azad, Additional Chief Engineer, LGED & President of LGED's Gender Development Forum, also spoke on the occasion. All the officers and employees of LGED Headquarters, Consultants, award-winning self-reliant women, personnel from electronic and print media, officials from city corporations and representatives from the Municipalities and Union Parishads were present on the occasion. A colourful cultural programme was arranged in the evening. ■

Review Meeting of 'Narashunda River Rehabilitation & Kishoreganj Pourashava Region' Project held

Progress Review Meeting of 'Narashunda River Rehabilitation & Kishoreganj Pourashava Adjacent Area' Project was held recently with Syed Ashrafur Islam, MP, Minister for Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives in the chair. The Minister gave instructions to accelerate the pace of on-going works of the project by evicting the illegal land grabbers along the river-side.

The project activities began in December 2012. The second DPP for the project at a cost of Taka 11,085.25 lakh has recently been approved. The major components of the project are – Re-excavation of 34 kms river, protecting of 2.5 kms river banks, construction of 11 new bridges and expansion of 4 bridges, construction of 8 kms of footpath and drain,



Photo shows the Progress Review Meeting of "Narashunda River Rehabilitation & Kishoreganj Pourashava Adjacent Areas Development" Project chaired by Syed Ashrafur Islam, MP, Minister for Local Government, Rural Development & Cooperatives and participated by concerned officials.

construction of 18 kms of road, construction of two parks, 8 ghats and 1 observatory tower. With improvement of these infrastructures by the project, communication system along both sides of Narashunda river

is being improved, water-logging in the town is getting removed, environment is being developed, the town is getting beautified and recreational facilities for the local people are being created.

In the meantime, five new bridges have been constructed, 3 bridges have been expanded and re-excavation works for 28 kms have been accomplished. The works for the other components of the project are going on ■

Safeguard & Quality Control Training for CRDP held

A day-long training/workshop on 'Safeguard & Quality Control' under City Region Development Project (CRDP), funded by Asian Development Bank, KfW & Swedish SIDA, was held on 18 and 24 June

2012 at Gazipur and Khulna City Corporation respectively. Mayor of Gazipur City Corporation Professor Abdul Mannan was present as the chief guest at the inaugural

session of the workshop held at Gazipur City Corporation, while Mayor of Khulna City Corporation Mr. Md. Moniruzzaman was the chief guest at the inaugural session

of Khulna workshop. The engineers and contractors of the concerned City Corporations attended the workshop. ■

Workshop held in Manila

(contd. from page 7)

relevant points were raised at the workshop. Mr. Md. Shafiqul Islam Akand, Project Director of Second Urban Governance and Infrastructure Improvement Project of Bangladesh delivered a multi-media presentation showing how his project has been contributing to women's development, their economic emancipation and progress of the country through women's participation in the mainstream of development works. ■



Mayor of Gazipur City Corporation Professor Abdul Mannan is seen delivering his address as chief guest at the training workshop on 'Safeguard & Quality Control' under City Region Development Project (CRDP). Mr. Gopal Krishna Devnath, Deputy Project Director, CRDP along with the Superintending Engineer of Gazipur City Corporation is also seen in the picture.



Mayor of Kushtia Pourashava Mr. Anwar Ali is distributing crests to the trainees after completion of the training course on swimming arranged for the children by Kushtia Poura Swimming Club.

Kushtia Poura Swimming Pool completes training on swimming

Kushtia Pourashava is keen to arrange various programmes to develop physical and mental growth of children, of which training on swimming has been taking place since a long time at the behest of Poura Swimming Club. The training

for February-April 2014 batch was recently concluded. A certificate-giving ceremony to this effect was held on 01 May 2014. Mr. Anwar Ali, Mayor of Kushtia Pourashava was present on the occasion as the chief guest. In his address the

Mayor said, health and mind could be set aright through swimming. He appealed to the trainers to become competent swimmers through regular practices in a bid to mark their feat of performances at the national and international levels.

Chaired by Mr. Saiful Haque Murad, Councillor of Kushtia Pourashava, the ceremony was also attended by Mr. Md. Amirul Islam, Joint Secretary, Bangladesh Swimming Federation, Kazi Rafiqur Rahman, Assistant General Secretary, Kushtia Zila Krira Sangstha and Mr. Md. Ataul Haque, Deputy Director, Islamic University's Information, Publication & Public Relation Department. Besides, the Councillors, officers and employees of Kushtia Pourashava and elites of the city were also present on the occasion. The ceremony was conducted by Mr. Md. Rashiduzzaman Khan Tutul, Supervisor of Poura Swimming Pool and Section Officer of Islamic University's Information, Publication & Public Relation Department. ■



Dreams and struggles have changed the wheel of life for Lipi Chakma. Once a crestfallen woman, she has now become a source of inspiration to many destitute women in Khagrachhari Poura areas.

Lipi Chakma of Khagrachhari : a self-confident woman

It is really unbelievable for an individual to gain a firm foothold, whose life had been subjected to constant hindrances. But those who are determined and committed to be established in life, they can overcome hindrances to their

coveted goals. Lipi Chakma happens to be one among them.

A resident of Khagrachhari Pourashava – a hilly township of Bangladesh, Lipi Chakma is now a woman with footing, who had been combating poverty

ever since her childhood. In her early adolescence she had been yoked with wedlock. Coming ashore to a new life she had dreamt to have a better living. She thought of having two meals a day in her husband's family. But within a

few days all her hopes were broken to pieces. She got to know that her husband, a motor mechanic, was addicted to alcohol. He was a regular loser in gambling. The drunken husband used to torture Lipi quite often and ask for money from her parent's home. A pall of gloom overshadowed Lipi's life. Nightmares gripped her. She looked around to see only thickening darkness in lieu of highland beauty.

Lipi could not attain much progress in her education earlier because of financial constraints. But she would have to live a life. She was averse to be defeated in life's struggle. She wanted to do something with profound self-confidence. Every day she inquired about ways and means to become self-reliant through earnings. The lives of common people in hill-tracts region are strewn with poverty. It is difficult to get rid of poverty there. But Lipi was a hard nut.

(See page- 3)



Mr. Md. Shafiqul Islam Akand, Project Director, UGIIP-2, LGED is seen delivering at the workshop on 'Gender, Voice & Agency' held at ADB Headquarter in Manila a brief presentation on measures taken and better practices by his project for women's participation and their empowerment.

Workshop on 'Gender, Voice & Agency' held in Manila

Development Partner Agencies have been working on women's economic and social emancipation and development since long through yoking the neglected women of the developing nations to development activities. In pursuit of this a workshop on 'Gender, Voice & Agency' was held at the headquarters of Asian Development Bank in Manila from 2 to 4 June 2014.

In a bid to make the role of women stronger and more dynamic to overcome the current crisis of women in Asia Pacific regions, (See page- 5)

Implementation of Master Plans essential for making planned urbanization & liveable towns

Master Plans for 244 Pourashavas under 'Upazilla Towns Infrastructure Project' and 'District Towns Infrastructure Project', to be implemented by LGED, are now being prepared. The preparation of these Master Plans is being accomplished with utmost significance to direct participation and support from all the concerned Pourashavas and opinions of the community people. The Master Plans would act as the guidelines to develop towns in a planned manner. However, parallel to these Master Plans, the question of successful implementation of the plans is very important to groom our towns to be liveable for the present and future generations. For successful implementation of the Master Plans, the capacity development of local government bodies, harmony between different departments and peoples' participation are necessary. No Master Plan could be implemented fully without these. Local Government Division and LGED are taking various measures in this respect. Measures like training courses on Master Plans and translating Master Plans from English to Bangla seem to be parts of an endeavour to impart development planning and guidelines comprehensively to the people. Such an endeavour would help increase capacities of local government institutions and other agencies to implement the Master Plans in one hand, and to create awareness among the people on development planning and their responsibilities and duties to it on the other. Consequently, it would be feasible to develop all the towns and even the rural areas as sustainably liveable places phase by phase. ■

Guardians' Corner implemented by Faridpur Gender Committee

The sight of guardians waiting outside school premises on adjacent footpaths or open spaces after sending their wards off to attend classes is nothing new these days. The women guardians in this respect are the worst sufferers.

Taking this issue into serious consideration, Gender Committee of Faridpur

Pourashava constructed a guardians' corner beside the main entrance of Faridpur Girls' School from its own resources as a part of implementation of Gender Action Plan of UGIIP-2.

With construction of this corner, the guardians, especially the women guardians are not required to

loiter under the open sky. They have no longer lack of security and now they can pass their time gossiping with each other. Because of this additional facility the rate of attendance of girls in the school has increased. The guardians of the students of the school are now quite happy with the intervention of Faridpur Pourashava. ■



Guardians of Faridpur Girls High School are waiting for their wards at the guardians' corner built at the initiative of Gender Committee of Faridpur Pourashava.



Mr. Tofail Ahmed, MP, Minister for Commerce, Government of Bangladesh was the chief guest at the inaugural session of two-day Project Launch Workshop of Municipal Governance & Services Project held at LGED Headquarter in Dhaka on 20 April 2014. Special guests were Mr. Monzur Hossain, Senior Secretary, LGD and Miss Christine E. Kimes, Acting Country Director, World Bank. Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED chaired the session.

"Bangladesh will be groomed into a middle income country by 2021" -Commerce Minister at MGSP Workshop in LGED

"Today we are enlisted as an LDC, but Bangladesh will be groomed into a middle income country by 2021", said the Minister for Commerce Mr. Tofail Ahmed, MP, while speaking as the chief guest at the inaugural session of a two-day Project Launch Workshop of Municipal Governance & Services Project (MGSP) of Local Government Engineering Department (LGED) on 20 April 2014 at LGED Headquarters in Dhaka. The Minister further said, Bangladesh is progressing at a quicker pace in socio-economic sectors as compared to other developing countries in South Asia. Quoting Nobel Laureate Professor Amartya Sen, the Minister informed that Bangladesh is ahead of India in social development and empowerment of women.

In his address as special guest the Senior Secretary of Local Government Division Mr.

Monzur Hossain said, Bangladesh today stands at the crossroad of rapid urbanization, but we have many challenges. Outstanding few among those are scarcity of infrastructure, feeble management, lack of funds, etc. He said, we have to win over those. He also further added, Bangladesh has been progressing adequately in urban sector because our government attaches priorities to it. He however laid specific importance to urban development for attainment of economic growth.

Another special guest on the occasion Ms. Christine E. Kimes, Acting Country Director, World Bank said in her address, rapid urbanization has been going on in Bangladesh since the last 30 years and in future rapid urbanization would be a vital issue in development efforts of Bangladesh. She further added, the objective of MGSP is to support municipal

governance and urban services, and to assist the government in administration and financial management.

In his address as chairperson, Mr. Md. Wahidur Rahman, Chief Engineer, LGED said, MGSP is a performance based project and it is the largest project in LGED's urban sector. He appealed to the officers and employees of the project to restrict audit objections to zero level and to meet the objections on priority basis.

Earlier, an address of welcome was delivered by Shaikh Muzakka Zaher, Project Director, MGSP. It is to be noted here that MGSP, funded by World Bank, is a 6-year project. With a total cost of Taka 2470.93 crore for the project, IDA will provide Taka 1953.65 crore and Government of Bangladesh will spend Taka 517.28 crore. Four City Corporations and 22 Pourashavas are included in

the project. Under the project, development of 638 kms of urban roads, construction of 588 meters of bridges/culverts, development of 410 kms of drainage, 12 bus terminals, 4 truck terminals, 4 jetties, 26 kutcha bazaars, 26 wholesale markets, 36 public toilets, 8 community centres and 6 parks will be constructed.

Ms. Shen Hua Wang, Senior Urban Specialist, World Bank and Task Team Leader of the project informed at the inaugural session that the World Bank approved the project in January 2014. When the project will be implemented, 34 lakh people will be benefitted, she mentioned.

The workshop was attended by the officers, employees and consultants of the project, representatives of development partner agencies, officers of City Corporations and Pourashavas, district and field level officers of LGED. ■

Bangladesh is progressing at a quicker pace in socio-economic sectors in contrast to other developing countries in South Asia.