



Monday, 26 August 2013

Forge effective dev partnership: Muhith

Finance Minister AMA Muhith emphasised on Sunday addressing the problems of the poor and unemployed people, especially in Asia, in forging effective development partnership in the 'Post-2015 Development Agenda', reports UNB.

"The task is gigantic—the number of poor people, very poor people and the number of unemployed people -- the three targets that we should focus in the coming days," he said.

Muhith was addressing the inaugural session of the three-day 'Asia Workshop on the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation: Links to the Post-2015 Development Agenda' held at a city hotel.

Planning Minister AK Khandker and UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative Neal Walker spoke at the session chaired by Economic Relations Division (ERD) secretary Md Abul Kalam Azad. ERD additional secretary Arastoo Khan made the welcome remarks.

The three-day workshop is being organised by ERD with assistance from the UNDP-supported Aid Effectiveness Project aiming to reinforce effective development partnerships for better development results.

Speaking as the chief guest, the Finance Minister said that in the future, there is also need to put particular emphasis on enhancement of productive capacity, to maintain economic stability, to go very hard on domestic resource mobilisation in which Bangladesh is doing well and also to go for usual demand for ODA.

Besides, he said, a new thing -- Public-Private-Partnership (PPP) -- has emerged that featured very prominently in the last 10 years.

Muhith said that for the post-2015 period, Asia has emerged as the area for the future, and for which plan should be carefully worked out.

Planning Minister AK Khandker said Bangladesh has already attained several targets of MDGs including in education and gender parity.

Expressing dissatisfaction over the low-level of Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) provided by the developed nations to the LDCs over the years, he said such ODA stood at 0.29 per cent of their combined GNI although the OECD countries pledged to provide 0.7 per cent of GNI.

"Only strong voice of the developed nations needs to be ensured to this end," Khandker added.

UN Resident Coordinator Neal Walker said that ODA must remain an important part of the development assistance.

Mentioning that Bangladesh has become successful in mobilising revenues from its own sources, he said inward flow of remittance as well as FDI also helped to fill the gaps of ODA for Bangladesh.

Walker, also the LCG co-chair, called upon the development partners to uphold the commitments of aid that they had made alongside improving the quality and quantity of aid. "We must act to ensure that aid is effective," he said.

ERD secretary Md Abul Kalam Azad said that to graduate from aid dependence, Bangladesh is also working on developing an aid policy.

The aim of the three-day workshop is to assist the Asian countries to enhance development cooperation, particularly in the context of transitioning from the MDGs to the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

The findings of the workshop will be presented in the upcoming Global Partnership Ministerial Meeting to be held in Mexico

in 2014 to provide feedback from Asia to influence the Post-MDG Agenda and strengthen support towards the implementation of the Busan Partnership.

A total of six plenary sessions and simultaneously a number of breakout sessions will be held during the three days dealing with the Asian perspective on GPEDC and the Post-MDG Agenda, the possible nature of development financing and cooperation beyond 2015 and the possible role of trade and private sector equitable development in this regard, as well as the Asian approaches on South-South Cooperation.

Government representatives from a number of countries in the Asia Pacific region including Indonesia, South Korea, Cambodia, Lao PDR, Nepal, Mongolia, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Maldives, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste are participating in the event. Members of the global partnership steering committee and representatives from regional platforms are also attending the workshop.



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