

Preface

Bangladesh has achieved accelerated economic growth along with remarkable progress in socio-economic development. The main driving forces behind this success have been access to education of girls, primary healthcare, improvement in accessibility, women empowerment, enhancement of their skill and employment generation. They have now become an integral part of our development endeavor. Advancement of Bangladeshi women has attracted the attention of international organizations too. According to 'Global Gender Gap Report' 2016 published by World Economic Forum, Bangladesh ranks 72nd among 144 nations of the world. Bangladesh is at the top among SARRC nations in Gender Gap Index. In terms of women empowerment we stand at an enviable 7th position globally.

Bangladesh was awarded the prestigious "Women in Parliaments Global Forum Award" in 2015 for her success in closing gender gap in the political sphere. In 2016, the UN-women recognized Hon'ble Prime Minister as "Planet 50-50 Champion" while the Global Partnership Forum recognized her outstanding contributions to women empowerment with the prestigious "Agent of Change Award".

The Constitution of the country expresses its commitment towards women's rights through article 27, 28, 29 and 65(3). Bangladesh is a signatory to almost all international conventions and covenants related to women development. The Government has put special emphasis on programs towards women development in its Perspective Plan, 7th Five Year Plan and National Women Development Policy, 2011.

To achieve inclusive growth and sustainable development, we have to pave the way for socio-economic development of disadvantaged groups specially, women, children, indigenous people and backward sections of the society. We recognize that gender based disparities have to be eliminated and efforts towards that end must form an integral part of our development enterprise. Government has created a special fund for developing women entrepreneurship and enhancing their skills. Social security programs targeted for poor mothers, working women, old and widow are expanding every year.

Like previous years, we are publishing the Gender Budget Report this year also. It is a detailed report on activities and budgetary allocations of 43 ministries/divisions and that includes analysis of policies, strategies and programs with a view to bring about qualitative changes in women's lives. It gives an account of our efforts for empowering them and eliminating gender based disparities. I am sure the report will help the policymakers and relevant stakeholders immensely and this will be able to come up with policies in order to address the challenges mentioned in the report.

I express my gratitude to all the officials of the Finance Division and the line ministries concerned for putting their best efforts in publishing this report.


(Abul Maal Abdul Muhith)
Minister
Ministry of Finance