

Annual Review 2022

Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) Trust

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From the end of 2021 to the whole year of 2022, human activity has increased manifold, and therefore, the whole year was quite eventful. Last year i.e. in 2022, the economic condition of the country was weak, according to the statistical estimation of the government, the inflation rate was about 9 percent, which affected all areas of the society. But the current government's development activities, initiatives, and efforts were not lacking at any stage. Throughout the year 2022, in the post-corona period, there was an urge for people to return to the previous healthy normal state in society, culture, health, business, economy, environment, and all other fields. That's why at the beginning of the year, the interest of the people in taking the free 3-dose corona vaccine from the government was also the highest, but as the year comes to an end, the interest and vaccination rate has decreased.

The census was supposed to be carried out in 2021, but it was completed in 2022 due to the Covid-19 pandemic and other

reasons. The preliminary results of the Sixth Population and Housing Census 2022 were announced on 27 July 2022. According to the results, the population of Bangladesh was 16 crore 51 lakh 58 thousand 616 people. Among them, the number of men was 8 crore 17 lakh 12 thousand 824 people, the number of women was 8 crore 33 lakh 47 thousand 206 and the population of the third gender was 12 thousand 629, the number of small ethnic groups was 16 lakh 50 thousand 159. According to the World Health Organization Report 2022, the average life expectancy of people in Bangladesh was 74 years and 3 months. However, the healthy life expectancy was 64 years and 3 months. The average life expectancy in 2021 was 72 years and 9 months. The average life expectancy has increased this year, but according to public health experts, the increase in average life expectancy is not the main achievement, but the increase in healthy life expectancy will be a major achievement for the country.

During the time of Corona, there was a ban on large gatherings for 2 years, but in 2022, as the ban was not strict, various social, national, and personal events were crowded with people. For example - Amar Ekushey Book Fair organized by Bangla Academy, Victory Day celebrations, Bangla New Year or Mangal Shobhayatra of Pahela Boishakh, Dhaka Lit Fest, etc. But Dhaka International Folk Fest, the biggest folk festival in South Asia, was not held even in 2022. Due to the Corona situation in the country, this event was suspended for two years, but the sixth season was not organized last year even though the situation was normal.

A particularly notable event of social issues in 2022 was the movement for women's freedom of dress. On May 18 last year, a female university student was molested by a stranger at the Narsingdi railway station for wearing 'indecent clothes'. After this incident, the mastermind of the incident was arrested from Narsingdi on May 29. The High Court spoke on the matter while hearing the bail plea of the arrested accused and a judge made a comment. On August 25, some students of Dhaka University formed a human chain in support, and applause for the comment made by the judge in the High Court during the bail hearing of the detained woman. After this, various universities including North South, Jagannath University, and Kushtia Islami University applauded the comments of the High Court and formed human chains. They also demanded legal action against importers of Western 'counterculture' in the name of clothing. On the other hand, some students of Dhaka University have counter-move against this same issue. Amidst the tension over the program against women's freedom of dress, they held a sit-in program welcoming the diversity of clothing. A few students of private BRAC University and Vikarunnisa Noon School also participated in it. They participate in the program by wearing their clothes, hence the name of the event is 'Wear as you like'. The organizers say that this event is to highlight the diversity of Bangladesh. On the afternoon of September 1, in front of the university's Raju sculpture, the participants of the program carried placards with various texts demanding freedom of dress. The placards of the movement read 'Diversity is natural,

Diversity is Bangladesh', 'Culture is not belonging to anyone's father', 'Choosing questionable freedom over peaceful slavery' etc. The movement on two sides of the same issue got a lot of responses on social media in 2022.

The infrastructural development of a country plays a significant role in social development as well as financial development. Last year in 2022, several infrastructural development plans were implemented and some other development activities were ongoing. Mega projects like Padma Bridge and Metrorail have been implemented in 2022 with Bangladesh's funding. Within 52 years of the liberation war in 1971, the war-torn country is now a role model of development to the world. Padma Bridge was inaugurated on June 25, 2022. One-third of Bangladesh, i.e. 21 districts of the southwestern region, is directly connected to the capital Dhaka by road through this Padma Bridge.

As a result of this Padma Bridge, along with financial development, social development is also taking place. Besides, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina inaugurated Bangladesh's first Metrorail (Diabari to Agargaon, part of MRT Line-6) on December 28, 2022. Metrorail was planned following the Strategic Transport Plan-2013 to ease the movement of densely populated metropolis of Dhaka. In the first phase, the construction of MRT Line-6 started, which is 20.1 km from Uttara to Motijheel, subsequently rejoining Uttara to Kamalapur. This metro rail connectivity will reduce traffic congestion in Dhaka metropolis and reduce public time and energy consumption, thereby accelerating social development. Padma Bridge and Metrorail have improved the living standard of the people of the society in many ways which are already visible.

According to the report published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Bangladesh has progressed in the Human Development Index. Bangladesh is ranked 129th in the "Human Development Report 2021-2022" index published by UNDP on 8 September 2022. Before this, according to the latest published report in 2020, Bangladesh was ranked 133 out

of 189 countries in the world. According to UNDP and Bangladeshi economists, this progress of Bangladesh is promising because, the report revealed, the global Human Development Index has declined, falling behind by 6 years. This UNDP Human Development Report is based on data from the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic. The indicators are determined based on the overall quality of life, including the economy affected by the pandemic, employment, food and nutrition, health, and education conditions. All three indicators of human development- public health, education, and income, have been severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Bangladesh has progressed even after this.

Culture

The year 2022 was quite discussed in the cultural arena. In the year after Corona, there was an attempt to turn around again in the television drama and cinema arena. Many events of this year have been headlined by the media, and widely discussed by the people.

One of the notable events of the last year in the cinema arena was the election of Shilpi Samiti. Ilyas Kanchan was elected as the president and actor Zayed Khan was the general secretary. After that, the discussion started about the election of the Bangladesh Film Artists Association. Until January 28, the election day, the FDC premises were quite eventful. During the election campaign, accusations and counter-accusations beyond the FDC caught the attention of people across the country. In this election, 11 members of the Misha Saudagar-Zayed Khan panel were elected and Zayed Khan became the general secretary for the third time in succession, and on the other hand, 10 members of the Elias Kanchan-Nipun Akter panel were elected but actress Nipun lost. Nipun was unwilling to accept it and after various incidents, the matter was at the top of the discussion. Particularly, 184 people were disenfranchised in the election, even though it reached the court, they could not vote in the end. Also, there was a lot of discussion and

criticism about actor Riaz's crying about distressed artists in the media. Moreover, in 2022, the achievement in the cultural arena was notable, for example, music artists Nasheed Kamal and Amreen Musa were nominated for Grami Award, the biggest music award winning for the first time from Bangladesh. On the other hand, the National Film Award 2020 was lately announced on February 2022 due to the Corona situation. Gazi Rakayet's film "**Gore**" won the highest award in 11 categories this year. Actress Anwara and actor Raisul Islam Asad received lifetime honors. Before the release of the movie '**Hawa**', on July 7, the song '**Sada Sada, Kala Kala**' went viral. Later on July 29, the movie 'Hawa' was released.

Last year, 48 films were released in theatres. Not only in film numbers but also the crowd of visitors in the theatre this year broke the record of the recent past!

According to film experts, the year 2022 has tried to make up for the losses of two years during the corona. A total of 48 movies were released till December 23, 2022, which was enough to overcome the pandemic period! Although the number of movies is more than last few years, questions remain about the quality and business of most of the movies! According to the producers, movie halls, OTT platforms, overseas releases, TV rights, most of the films have not returned the invested money. But everyone thinks that the blockbuster hits of 'Paran' and 'Hawa' are important for the industry. However, apart from these two films, some other films have won the appreciation of the audience this year, including Gunin, Golui, Hridita, Beauty Circus, Mukhos, Operation Sundarban, Damal, Deshantar, and Pappunya.

Also, Agamikal, Bikkhov, Talash, Omanush, Shan, Biddrohi, Rohingya, Bhangon, Made in Chittagong, Joy Bangla, Payer Chap, Kagaj, Chitmahal, Shimu (Made in Bangladesh), Badda

Valobashi, Din- The Day, Psycho, Carnish, Ashirbad, Live, Biratva, Isha Khan, O My Love, Shashurbari Zindabad-2, Mafia-1, Jao Pakhi Bholo Tare, Ragi, Jeeban Pakhi, Lockdown Love Story, And Basant Bikkal movies have been the subject of discussion among film experts, where they feel that Bangladeshi films are developing and there is a possibility of such continuity in the future. That is, now they are becoming quite optimistic about Bangladeshi films.

Once there were as many as 1435 cinema halls in the country. According to the latest information available at the end of 2021, the number of cinema halls has decreased to 60. Many of these are also opened at different festivals of the year. According to the hall owners, the lack of good movies is the main reason behind the closure of the halls but Corona has hit the worst and several big cinema halls have also been closed.

Directed by director Debashish Biswas, the film Shashurbari Zindabad-2 made a lot of audiences. Several closed cinemas halls were opened with this film. Then with Galui, Shaan, and Din the Day - the audience flow increased; Raihan Rafi's 'Paran' and Mezbaur Rahman Sumon's 'Hawa' accelerated it several times. Especially in the current year, cinema watchers increased by 'Paran' and 'Hawa'.

OTT platform has become quite popular as an alternative to theatre. OTT is taking a vital place in entertainment in Bangladesh. In 2022, the competition to give gifts in all fields is seen, whether it is strong Bengali content, be it movies, dramas, or web series. Among the popular web content this year, 'Shatikap', 'Petkata Sha', 'Karagar', 'Syndicate', 'Kaizer', and 'Maya Shalik' have attained appreciation from viewers. OTT content was booming in 2022 even though TV dramas were not expected level.

Many famous Bangladeshi artists and virtuous passed away in 2022. Composer, lyricist, film director, and producer Gazi Mazharul Anwar passed away on September 4 at 6:30 am. He received Bangladesh Ekushey Padak in 2002 and Independence Award in 2021. He composed more than 20 thousand songs. There are three songs written by him in the list of twenty greatest Bengali songs of all time identified by BBC Bangla. On the morning of July 8, Dhakai drama and film actress Sharmili Ahmed died while undergoing treatment in the hospital. This actress, who is popular on stage, in TV dramas and films, has acted in about four hundred plays and one hundred fifty films. Saifuddahar Shaheed, engineer and technologist, pioneer of Bengali circulation in computer, and creator of "Shaheed Lipi" passed away on January 9, 2022. On January 11, painter and former Director General of Bangladesh National Museum, Mahmudul Haque passed away. On January 19, 2022, Kazi Anwar Hossain, writer and translator, creator of the Masood Rana character passed away. Popular lyricist and astrologer Kawsar Ahmed Chowdhury breathed his last on February 22, 2022. Ekushey Medalist actor, and playwright Masum Aziz breathed his last on October 17 afternoon. Azizur Rahman, film director passed away on March 14, 2022. Legendary Bengali music composer and music director Alam Khan passed away on July 8. He has been awarded the National Film Award six times. Songwriter and journalist KG Mustafa breathed his last on the night of May 8. Since the 1960s, many of his songs have been featured in films, radio, and television. Singer Akbar breathed his last on November 13 afternoon after suffering from diabetes and kidney complications for a long time.

The year 2022 was very eventful in the sports arena as well. The 22nd Football World Cup and the victory of the Bangladesh women's team in the SAFF Football were particularly noteworthy. Also, the T20 World Cup, Asia Cup, Mbappe's hat-trick in the Football World Cup, Messi's last World Cup, and Argentina's championship events kept the sports arena and sports lovers of Bangladesh enthralled throughout the year.

The SAFF Women's Championship was held from 6 September to 19 September 2022 in Kathmandu, Nepal. The sixth SAFF Women's Championship was held in 2022, in which national teams belonging to the South Asian Football Federation competed. Bangladesh and Nepal met in the final of the competition on 19 September 2022, in which the Bangladesh national women's football team defeated Nepal 3–1 to win their first title and become champions of the 2022 SAFF Women's Championship.

As always, the excitement of the football World Cup 2022 in Bangladesh was at its peak and continued to increase until the final. After 36 years long, Argentina won the World Cup title and it is their third World Cup victory. However, the celebration of their victory was not less among the people of Bangladesh. Lionel Messi has been named the best player of this year's World Cup, and top scorer Kylian Mbappe (8 goals) made a hat-trick in history in the World Cup final after 56 years. On the other hand, millions of people in Bangladesh had become fans of football, and the Brazilian football team, the magical player of that era, the only footballer in the world who won the World Cup three times, passed away after the World Cup. Pele, the best footballer of all time, died on December 30, 2022. And so the people of Bangladesh are also saddened by the death of footballer Pele.

Bangladesh beat Kyrgyzstan 3-2 in the final of the Bangabandhu Asian Central Zone Under-23 Men's International Volleyball Championship held at the Shaheed Suhrawardy National Indoor Stadium in Mirpur on December 19 and became the champion among four countries. The 2022 Women's T 20 Tournament, the eighth edition of the Women's Asia Cup was held in October in Bangladesh. Bangladesh was the winner of the previous (2018) edition of this

tournament. This time, India won their seventh Asia Cup title by defeating Sri Lanka. All matches of the Women's Asia Cup 2022 were officiated by women and all matches of the tournament had female referees.

In the year 2022, the advancement and development of Bangladesh were evident in all fields of society, culture, and sports, despite many ups and downs. Especially, the participation and contribution of women have made it more noticeable. According to researchers from different parts of the world as well as various organizations that monitor economic trends, Bangladesh has accelerated its development within half a century of its birth. In the last two decades, Bangladesh's progress in any indicator- economic growth or social development, has been unprecedented. In all aspects of Social security, economic development, infrastructural development, poverty reduction, and increase in per capita income, Bangladesh is now a wonder in the world.



Women & Children

The impact of the Corona pandemic of the past 2020 was intact even at the beginning of 2022. As such, the year 2022 was one of the times to overcome the corona pandemic and move forward. However, the impact of the Ukraine-Russia war that started suddenly was not limited to Ukraine, but the impact of this war has affected all the women and men of different countries including our country.

According to the country's first digital census and Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) data, the country's population has increased by more than 2 crore in the last decade. But a decade ago there were more men than women in the country. A decade later, women outnumbered men. Currently, there are about 99 males against every 100 females. However, the position of women in society is still unchanged. Rape and other abuses against women have increased more than last year. In the year 2022, there have been several negative events on the question of women's rights that will affect the struggle for women's freedom. According to the statistics of Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), 936 women and children were raped in Bangladesh from January to December 2022. Of these 936 people, 60 were children below 6 years of age, 102 children aged 7 to 12 years. Although the number of violence against children decreased slightly this year, according to statistics from the Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), 1,088 children were victims of various forms of violence from January to December 2022 (1,426 victims in 2021), out of which 110 were children under 6 years of age.

In mid-2022, as the country's economic situation somewhat normalized, women's participation in the workplace increased to 38 percent this year, although most of these women are working class. According to the data of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), 26 percent of women were employed in medium industries formed with 100-250 workers. The remaining 74 percent were men working in this sector. And 55 percent of women were working in large industries formed with more than 250 workers. In large industries, women workers outnumber men- i.e. 55 percent. However, women were getting fewer job opportunities in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the country. Only 19 percent of women workers work in micro-scale industries formed with 10 to 24 workers. This means, 81 percent of the workers working in micro-scale industries were men. Only 20 percent of workers in small-scale industries formed with 25 to 99 workers being women. The remaining 80 percent of this industry were male workers.

In the administration, police, and judicial departments of Bangladesh, the position of women in getting government jobs was becoming stronger. Women were engaged at all levels of the organization from the field level to the top. Out of 495 Upazilas in Bangladesh, women were now Upazila Nirbahi Officer (UNO) in 149 Upazilas. That is, 30% UNO were women. At the same period ten women hold the post of Deputy Commissioner and ten women hold the post of Secretary or equivalent. As of March 2022, there were 10 women out of 77 senior secretaries and secretaries, 83 women out of 511 additional secretaries, and 81 women officers out of 636 joint secretaries. And 349 out of 1,695 were women deputy secretaries, 454 women out of 1,549 were senior assistant secretaries, and 472 women out of 1,528 women were assistant secretaries.

To promote this trend of women's development in all areas, the proposed budget has allocated Tk 30 thousand 897 crores more than last financial year for women's development. In the proposed budget for the financial year 2022-23, a gender budget of Tk 2 lakh 29 thousand 484

crores has been presented. In the total budget of the fiscal year 2022-23, the percentage of the gender-related budget was 33.84, which was 5.16 percent of the GDP. The gender budget has been divided into three thematic areas and allocated. It shows that the maximum allocation of 52 percent has been given to the sector 'Enhance women's access to government services'. After this, importance has been given to the 'Women's Empowerment and Social Status Enhancement' sector, 41 percent has been allocated to the women's development sector, 7 percent has been allocated for the sector of 'production, labor market and greater participation of women in income-generating activities'. The third part of the Gender Budget focuses on increasing women's access to government services. It proposes a gender budget for 12 ministries and 9 departments.

On the other hand, under the Ministry of Women and Child Affairs, the IGA project is being implemented from 2017 to 2022 at a cost of Tk. 591 crore. The project aims to provide income-enhancing training to more than 381 thousand underprivileged women so that they can earn. But unfortunately, only 11 percent of women were earning after training from the project till now. That is, the remaining 89 percent of women were not able to earn money by using the project's training, which was hindering the successive progress of the country.

The government has taken several steps to ensure the safety of women and children in all parts of the country, among which the service desks for women, children, elderly and disabled persons have been launched in all (659) police stations across the country which was implemented in April 2022. Eleven ministries led by the Ministry of Women and Children Affairs provide integrated services to prevent violence against women and children. In the current financial year (2022-23), an allocation of Tk. 11 crore has been made to this scheme which is expected to play a leading role in the safety of women and children. Besides, CCTV cameras have been installed in 100 public transports in the capital in October 2022 to ensure the safe and free movement of women. These cameras have been installed under the

development program of women's safe travel management in public transport by the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs.

Women have had several notable achievements at the national and international levels in the past year. Among them, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is ranked 42nd in the list of 100 powerful women in the world by the American magazine Forbes this year. Rabab Fatima, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, has been unanimously elected as the President of the UN Women Executive Board for the year 2022. This year, the list of 100 inspiring and influential women in the world was published by the BBC, in which Sanjida Islam of Mymensingh, who is working to prevent child marriage, has been placed in the category of advocacy and activism. The achievements of Bangladeshi women in cricket and football were also worth mentioning. Bangladesh women's football team won the SAFF championship trophy on 19th September 2022. For the first time, the Tigress of Bangladesh won the South Asian football title. Archery player Diya Siddiqui has received the Teer-Prothom Alo Female Sportsperson of the Year award in 2022.

For the fiscal year 2021-22, a total of 141 individuals and organizations including journalists were awarded, among which Shahnaz Rahman was selected as the best taxpayer in the country in the women category. It should be noted that apart from Shahnaz Rahman, there are four other women on the list of best taxpayers. Moreover, a new era in Bangladesh's public transport began at the end of 2022 with the inauguration of the Metrorail. Maryam Afiza, who is currently a role model for women in Bangladesh, played the role of the first Metrorail driver in the inauguration of the Metrorail.

Economy

The Ukraine-Russia war following the Covid-19 pandemic has hampered the global economic recovery. The energy crisis in Bangladesh, the deficit in foreign exchange, the decrease in foreign exchange reserves, climate change, disruption in the supply chain of fertilizers and agricultural products, currency depreciation, inflation, price hike of consumer goods in the international market, and shortage of dollars in banks, money laundering, defaulted loans, etc. was at the top of the discussion throughout the year 2022.

According to the data of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in 2022, Bangladesh ranked second in jute production in the world but first in export, third in rice production, sixth in vegetable production, third in fish production, seventh in potato production, second in jackfruit production, eighth in guava production. It ranked second and fourth respectively in goat milk and meat production, twelfth in livestock rearing, third in freshwater fish production, seventh in mango production, ninth in tea production, ninth in cauliflower and onion production, fourteenth in papaya production, and climate (flood, drought, and salt) tolerant rice cultivation at the top. The most noteworthy point is that 86 percent of the world's total Hilsa is produced in Bangladesh.

According to the latest World Bank data, Bangladesh has become one of the fastest-growing economies in the world and the second largest in South Asia. Bangladesh has maintained an average growth rate of 6.5 percent of GDP over the past decade. According to the World Economic League Table (2022), Bangladesh ranks 34th (nominal) in the world based on Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to the latest data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (2022), the total GDP of Bangladesh is USD 465 billion, which is 13.13 percent higher than the previous fiscal year.

According to the data of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS 2022), the GDP growth rate of Bangladesh reached 7.25 percent in the fiscal year 2021-22, which was 6.94 percent in the previous fiscal year. As the GDP growth rate in the fiscal year was higher than the previous fiscal year, the per capita income of the people of the country improved. The per capita income in the last fiscal year (2020-21) was US\$ 2591, which has increased to US\$ 2824 in the fiscal year 2021-22. As in the previous fiscal years, mainly agriculture, industry, and service sectors contributed to the growth and progress of the gross domestic product by 11.50 percent, 37.07 percent, and 51.44 percent respectively, which was 12.07 percent, 36.01 percent, and 51.92 percent respectively in the previous fiscal year.

According to the latest data of the Ministry of Finance, the percentage of consumption-expenditure in the country as a percentage of GDP in the fiscal year 2021-22 is now 78.44 percent which was 74.66 percent in

the previous fiscal year and the amount of total national savings is 25.45 percent which was 30.79 percent in the previous fiscal year. In the fiscal year 2021-22, the percentage of investment to GDP in the country was 31.68 percent (private sector 24.06 percent and public sector 7.62 percent) which was 31.02 percent (private sector 23.70 percent and public sector 7.32 percent) in the previous fiscal year. The percentage of revenue collection to GDP is 9.79 percent (tax 8.70 percent and non-tax 1.09 percent) which was 9.31 percent (tax 7.64 percent and non-tax 1.67 percent) in the previous fiscal year.

According to the data of Bangladesh Bank, in the financial year 2021-22, the amount of total foreign investment increased by 35.22 percent to 3.40 billion US dollars, which is 0.21 percent of the total foreign investment in the world. Notably, the total population of Bangladesh is 2.13 percent of the world. ***BISR believes that Bangladesh is potential for more foreign investment if a more investment-friendly business environment can be ensured.***

In FY 2021-22, total exports stood at a record USD 52.08 billion, up 24.85 percent over the previous fiscal year, and total imports at a record USD 92.23 billion (as LCs opened), up 50.06 percent over the previous fiscal year.

According to the latest data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics Labor Force Survey (March 2017), there are 2.7 million unemployed among the total labor force of 63.5 million (male 43.5 million and female 20 million) in Bangladesh, which is about 4.25 percent of the total labor force. According to the International Labor Organization (2022), 10.6 percent of the total youth in the country are unemployed. The unemployment rate in Bangladesh is around 5.40 percent, which was 5.30 percent in the previous financial year. Although unemployment, especially youth unemployment (currently 47% of university graduates are unemployed) has been a major problem in Bangladesh since independence, the Eighth Five-Year Plan contains no significant plans to reduce unemployment. ***BISR suggests that creative planning and implementable strategies can be considered to achieve Vision 2041 to make Bangladesh a developed country.*** A large number of people (about 1.64 million) have become newly poor due to Covid-19. According to the Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) and the University of Bath, the poverty rate in Bangladesh was 25.87 percent in 2020, while the country's poverty rate rose to 29.5 percent as of June 2020, according to the estimation of the General Economic Division of Ministry of Planning.

Covid-19 added 18.54 percent of the “new poor” due to stagflation (a condition of slow economic growth when high unemployment and inflation are observed) and a slower-than-

expected economic recovery (PPRC and BIGD 2022). According to the latest data released by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, the poverty rate in Bangladesh is 20.5 percent which was 48.09 percent in 2000. That is, the poverty rate in Bangladesh has decreased by an average of 1.62 percent every year since the pre-Covid-19 fiscal year 2000-2001.

Bangladesh's poverty rate has risen significantly during and after Covid-19, yet the country is placed at the top of the world's fastest-growing affluent class. With more than 17,000 new millionaires added during the Covid-19 pandemic, despite progress in socio-economic sectors, income disparity in the country has widened. According to the "World Inequality Report 2022" published by Harvard University Press, the poorest 40 percent earn only 21 percent of the country's total income, the top 10 percent earn 27 percent of the country's total income, and the top 1 percent earn 16.3 percent of the country's total income. Although the total GDP and per capita income of the country's people have increased over the past decade, the poor and marginalized communities have not reaped the benefits proportionately. According to UNDP's 2020 Human Development Report, Bangladesh's Gini Index score is 0.48. A country with a score of 0.50 is considered highly unequal.

In the fiscal year 2021-22, the average inflation was 6.15 percent, which was 5.56 percent in the previous fiscal year. Although the inflation rate in the economy appears to be under control, excessive price hikes of essential commodities, especially edible oil, rice, fuel oil, pulses, sugar, flour, medicines, and health care products were widely discussed. According to BBS 2022, the inflation rate in August and September was 9.52 percent and 9.10 percent respectively, the highest in 135 months. In October and November, the inflation rate was marginally lower at 8.91 percent and 8.85 percent respectively.

After the garment industry, leather and jute are one of the most promising industries in Bangladesh. Since the financial year 2019-20, no progress has been observed in the two industries, instead, the government has announced the closure of 25 state-owned jute mills and has continued the process of sending nearly 25 thousand workers to retirement. This

announcement essentially ended the era of state-owned jute mills. In FY 2021-22, no significant progress was observed in the jute industry as well as the leather industry. As in previous fiscal years, the price of skins of sacrificial animals has been fixed by the government before the holy Eid-ul-Azha, but the general public has been forced to sell most of the skins at nominal prices.

In the fiscal year 2022-23, the total budget amount is estimated at 6 lakh 78 thousand 64 crores, which is 12.44 percent more than the previous fiscal year (2021-22) and 14.58 percent of the total GDP (at the current value of US dollars). The development budget is Tk. 2 lakh 46 thousand 66 crore, which is 36.29 percent of the total budget and 3.82 percent more than the previous financial year (2021-22). As in the previous fiscal years, the budget proposal for the current fiscal year has a budget deficit as usual. In the fiscal year 2022-23, the total budget deficit is Tk. 2 lakh 45 thousand 64 crore, which is 36.14 percent of the total budget and 14.51 percent more than the previous fiscal year (2021-22).

BISR Trust believes that needs-based budgeting will play a leading role in preventing wastage or underutilization of budget allocation, hence the institution has been proposing needs-based budgeting for a long time. As always, no change has been made in the budget preparation process, although due to the non-formulation of needs-based budget, there is a possibility for money to be wasted or unused. In this regard, the government needs to be more innovative in budget allocation and implementation.

According to data from Bangladesh Bank (June 2022), as in the previous fiscal year, the 2021-22 fiscal year has seen a decline in people's interest in savings bonds due to the rising cost of living, reduced saving capacity of people, and additional taxation by the government. Money laundering (actually foreign currency laundering) and defaulted loans are among the growing

concerns for Bangladesh to sustain its economic progress and become an upper middle-income economy for attaining LDC graduation by 2026, SDG targets by 2030, and Vision 2041.

In the year 2022, the total amount of defaulted loans was 1 lakh 34 thousand 396 crores which was 24.74 percent more than the previous year. According to the annual report of Global Financial Integrity, a research institute based in Washington, every year, about 8.27 billion US dollars are illegally smuggled abroad from Bangladesh, especially in 2015, more than 11 billion US dollars of foreign currency were smuggled. In the last year, Hundi traders have used mobile banking or mobile financial services such as brash, and Rocket to launder about 7.8 billion US dollars equivalent to about Tk. 75 thousand crore abroad. Through "over-invoicing" on imports and "under-invoicing" on exports, about 18% of the total trade from Bangladesh is somehow smuggled every year, according to various reports.

In emerging economies like Bangladesh, remittances are currently considered one of the key drivers of economic growth. According to the data of Bangladesh Bank (June 2022), the total remittance flow in the financial year 2021-22 was 21.03 billion US dollars, which is about 14.77 percent less than the financial year 2020-21. According to the latest World Bank report, Bangladesh is likely to become the seventh-highest recipient of global remittances this year.

According to the data of the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (up to November, 2022), a total of 10 lakh 29 thousand 54 workers (99 thousand 684 female workers) went abroad for employment from Bangladesh, which was 6 lakh 17 thousand 209 in the previous financial year (80 thousand 143 women workers).

According to the 2021-22 report of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Bangladesh's position on the Human Development Index has moved up four places to 129th among 191 countries. Among eight South Asian countries, Maldives (90th) is at the top, Bhutan 2nd (127th), Bangladesh 3rd (5th last year), and India 4th (131st). Overall, Bangladesh's position on the Human Development Index has improved compared to previous years.

According to Bangladesh Ministry of Finance 2022 data, Bangladesh's dependence on foreign Aid has decreased in recent times. As the country's economy has strengthened, foreign aid/grants have declined to 3 to 5 percent, from a peak of about 84 to 86 percent in the 1971-72 fiscal year.

According to the report of the Bangladesh Competition Commission, the e-commerce business market in the country is increasing by more than Tk. 150 billion every year from the fiscal year 2019-20, which was only Tk. 5.70 billion in the fiscal year 2015-16. In the last six years, the country's e-commerce business has grown almost 26 times.

Online shopping and e-commerce businesses are becoming popular day by day, especially during and after Covid-19 but fraud allegations against several e-commerce companies including Evaly, Qcoom, e-Orange, Dhamaka Shopping, and Ring-ID have been widely discussed throughout the year. People are losing faith in online shopping to a certain extent. The Ministry of Commerce needs to take swift action by adopting a separate industry policy to prevent future disruption of the e-commerce industry.

According to the World Economic Forum, the country is now one of the world's pioneers in digital outsourcing due to digitization. Bangladesh (16 percent) is now the world's second-largest source of freelancing after India (24 percent). More than 650,000 youth are working regularly as freelancers in Bangladesh in this promising technology-based outsourcing sector. According to the Oxford Internet Institute (OII) report, since 2019, Bangladesh has been earning more than USD 1 billion annually in outsourcing.

Despite many limitations as an emerging economy, the country has taken rapid steps towards global digitalization and technological development. As a result, Bangladesh exported information and communication technology (ICT) products worth about US\$ 1.4 billion in the

fiscal year 2021-22 and has set a target of US\$ 5 billion by 2025, but considering the fourth industrial revolution, this is not enough. However, more than 1.3 million youth are regularly employed in this promising technology-driven ICT sector.

In November 2021, Bangladesh received the final recommendation from the United Nations Economic and Social Council's Committee for Development Policy (CDP) to successfully transform from a least developed country to a developing country by 2026. Sustaining the country's growing progress in per capita income, human resources, and economic and environmental fragility indicators is now the biggest challenge.

In the fiscal year 2021-22, the economic progress of Bangladesh is not only positive, but also the country has achieved significant growth after facing the negative impact of the Ukraine-Russia war, floods in 19 districts, more than 10 tropical cyclones including Sitrang, and various natural disasters. To continue this trend and ensure food security for all, we must continue to work hard and relentlessly for sustainable economic development through the agricultural revolution.

Political Situation

In the past year, there were some agitations at the grassroots level in Bangladesh. Towards the end of the year, the country's main opposition party BNP tried to activate the political arena of the country with various programs at different levels such as district and division levels. On December 10, 6 members of their parliament decided to resign from the national parliament. According to that decision, they resigned from the parliament after a few days. The Election Commission decided to hold re-elections in all those parliamentary constituencies. Apart from this, due to the vacancy of several other parliamentary seats, the Election Commission held new elections in all those seats. The resignation of 6 BNP MPs from Parliament seems

premature or immature. At the stage of the movement, it did not seem right to take such a decision. Towards the end of the year, they put forward the first 10-point and later 27-point demands, but the ruling party did not seem to have much support for them. The main opposition party has made various attempts to seek the help of foreign diplomats, but at the end, nothing fruitful has happened, although some promising words have been heard at times.

Changes have been observed in some political parties in the country. A coalition of 12 parties has been formed by breaking the 20-party alliance. Some like-minded leftist parties formed another alliance called the Democracy Manch. Ahead of the upcoming elections, some small parties continuously trying to come closer to the power. The Jamaat-e-Islami party, which has remained silent in the country, held open rallies again on December 30 and clashed with the police. Some people were injured on both sides, including police and party activists.

There has been an attempt to bring some innovation to the field of politics. In particular, the opposition BNP has proposed to form an all-party government if it comes to power through fair elections. Consequently, some very small groups have responded. However, their organizational strength appears to be very weak. One of the political leaders of the country, Begum Khaleda Zia, who was convicted by the court, got the opportunity to stay at her house for the whole year. Several of this party's leaders were arrested at the end of the year but were not granted bail.

No amendment was brought to the Constitution during the year. Although there were some tensions in the political field, it did not create any major crisis. By the end of the year, the politics of opposition parties including the BNP could not reach any clear destination. Even though the government was in a bit of trouble due to various reasons including commodity price rising and power crisis, it could not bring down the government.

At least 10 people have been killed in the country while protesting. Controversy continued throughout the year between the leaders of the ruling party and the ones of the opposition.

However, it cannot be said that any side has had a victory. The government and the main opposition parties in the country have tried to dominate the political arena throughout the year. Another year has passed in politics through various disputes.

Crime

Throughout the year (2022), various crimes made headlines, while some crimes were out of the news. Even in this post-corona turnaround year, various crimes have disrupted the socioeconomic progress and stability of the country. As with traditional crimes, new techniques and different dimensions were also observed in case of committing crimes.

A review of the data shows that murder, suicide, rape, theft-robbery, terrorism, extortion, fraud, land grabbing, money laundering, drug trafficking, human trafficking, bribery, corruption, communal attacks, cybercrime, juvenile gang culture, and other criminal activities are on the rise.

Even in 2022, the situation of women abuse and rape was seen unchanged. However, the family violence or abuse (shadow pandemic) against women during the corona period has reduced to a large extent. According to the data of Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK), 936 women have been victims of rape and gang rape across the country this year. Among them, 47 (5%) women were killed after rape. Seven women committed suicide after rape. However, the overall picture of violence against women and girls is more frightening. According to the National Emergency Service 999, the number of complaints of violence against women and children was on the rise. As of July 2022, 11 thousand 959 phone calls have been received alleging abuse of women and children. According to the report, 64 percent of the violence against women and children was related to rape. 'Subarnachar' village in Noakhali has been in the headlines for several years due to repeated rape news. This year too, several news of rape and gang rape in Subarnachar were published.

In 2022, almost three times more reports of infanticide were published in the country's newspapers than in 2021. According to UNICEF data, child marriage increased by 10 percent

in 2021 during the Covid outbreak, which decreased significantly in 2022 and continues to decline. Child marriage rates fell by 94 percent in 2022 compared to 2021; one such startling information has been given by the non-governmental organization Manusher Jonno Foundation (MJF).



Cybercrime is a threat to the digital security and online communication of any progressive society. Women are the biggest victims of cybercrime. According to the data provided by Police Cyber Support for Women

(PCSW), 8 thousand 715 women have complained of a fake ID, ID hack, blackmailing, online harassment, cyberbullying, spreading offensive content, etc. from January to November 2022. Online and app-based cybercrime was on the rise in Bangladesh. Financial scams, gambling, pornography, and human trafficking were not excluded in these cases. The biggest concern was that teenagers were getting involved in multi-dimensional crimes. Teenager gang craziness raises new concerns. At least 500 juvenile gangs were active in 64 districts, Upazilas, and metropolitan areas of the country in the list of law enforcement agencies. Some 50 youth gangs were active only in the capital city Dhaka. The number of juvenile gangs across the country estimated to be 5,000 to 6,000. At least 40 people have been killed across the country by this gang in the last three years.

This year the ugly incident of communal attack happened in Narail. The violence started in July over a comment on a Facebook post. During that time, the houses of Sanatan religious people, and hundreds of shops were vandalized and 5 temples were attacked. According to the statistics of the ASK Data Protection Unit, there were 12 incidents of vandalism and arson at

Hindu places of worship, houses, businesses, and temples in different parts of the country during the year.

No major terrorist attacks have occurred this year, however, their activities continued. In the first half of the year, the disappearance of more than a hundred youths to perform 'Hijrat' created a sensation. In November, people were taken aback by the snatching of two militants (accused of murdering Dipan) from the court gates of Old Dhaka. In that incident, the role of law enforcement agencies was questioned.

According to the 'Ain o Salish Kendra' (ASK) report on political violence, a total of 479 incidents of political conflict and violence have occurred where 70 people were killed and around 6914 were injured. Towards the end of the year, the political scene became somewhat restless in December mainly because of a political gathering called by a major opposition party. Incidents of conflict and violence took place in the capital centering on this political gathering and rally. Due to this incident, several political workers lost their lives in different parts of the country. Besides, law enforcement agencies also claimed that several of their members were injured in the incident.

The government and the opposition have given different views on the human rights situation. The crossfire stopped after the US imposed sanctions on RAB. According to the statistics of the ASK Data Protection Unit, 19 people have been victims of extrajudicial killings this year. Besides, 4 people were killed in crossfire, gun-battle, and exchange of shots. Some 15 people were killed in the custody of law enforcement agencies. In 2022, there was an incident of alleged crossfire, gun-battle or exchange of shots that occurred only with RAB.

Human trafficking was a growing concern for Bangladesh. According to a USAID report, 580 cases of sex trafficking and 6,378 cases of labor trafficking occurred in Bangladesh during the

period 2021-2022. In the past decade, two terms that have been widely discussed in money laundering are “**Canada's Begumpara**” and “**Malaysia's Second Home**”. According to Transparency International Bangladesh, 1000 to 1500 million dollars were smuggled abroad every year from Bangladesh. The amount of money deposited by Bangladeshis in Swiss banks is increasing day by day. According to the information available in the annual report of the Central Bank of Switzerland, the amount of money deposited by the citizens of Bangladesh in the Swiss Bank has increased by about three thousand crore Tk in the last year. Various financial crimes such as financial scams, bribery, corruption, fraud in online business, etc. were also committed this year.

Rohingya camps have not yet been fully secured. Murders, secret killings, the fire are frequent occurrences in the refugee camps of Ukhia and Teknaf in Cox's Bazar. According to Bangladesh Police, murder, kidnapping, rape, robbery, human trafficking, and drug trade have increased in Rohingya camps. According to the data provided by Cox's Bazar police, 31 people were killed in 2022, which was the highest in the last five years. Rohingyas complain that the members of “ARSA” were involved in various crimes including human and drug trafficking in the camps of Cox's Bazar.

Farmers & Labor

As always, the government has allocated a lot this year for the modernization and research of agriculture. In the budget for the financial year 2022-23, Tk. 33 thousand 698 crores have been allocated to the agricultural sector (agriculture, food, fisheries and livestock). In the last financial year, the allocation for this sector was Tk. 24 thousand 345 crores, that is, in this budget, the allocation for this sector has increased by Tk. 9 thousand 353 (38.42%) crores. In the 2022-23 budget speech, the finance minister said that a project titled agricultural mechanization has been taken up through integrated management for the period 2020-2025 at

a cost of Tk. 3,200 crore, under which 51,300 agricultural machinery will be distributed in 12 categories. To ensure the benefits of agricultural mechanization, the system of integrated farming (synchronized cultivation) has been introduced to prepare, plant, and harvest rice seedlings together. Following Vision 2041, the 8th Five Year Plan, National Agriculture Policy 2018, Sustainable Development Goals, Delta Plan 2100, and other plans, the government's efforts are continuing for the overall development of the agriculture sector.

According to the “Agricultural Diary-2022” of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), the total amount of households is 35,533,180; Out of which 16,562,974 (46.61%) are agricultural farms. Analyzing the report, it is seen that agricultural household is decreasing day by day. Total cultivable land is 88.29 lakh hectares, and total irrigated land is 78.78 (89.22%) lakh hectares. Manpower engaged in agriculture is 24.69 percent.

According to Bangladesh Economic Survey 2022, Tk. 19,530.25 crore has been disbursed up to February 2022 against a total target of Tk. 28,391 crore in the financial year 2021-22, which is about 68.79 percent of the target. Taking into account the increase in domestic agricultural production, an allocation of Tk. 9,500 crore has been earmarked in the budget of the financial year 2021-22 for subsidy on fertilizers and other agricultural activities and Tk. 150 crore for seed production activities.

A total of 46.21 lakh metric tons of fish has been produced from inland water bodies and marine sources in FY 2021-21, with a target of 46.64 MT in FY 2021-22. According to BBS provisional estimates, the contribution of agriculture to the total domestic production in the fiscal year 2021-22 is about 11.50 percent. During this time, Bangladesh rose from the fourth place in the world in rice production to the third place, as a result, the food security in the country has been strengthened.

In addition to the expansion of improved varieties of indigenous crops, the cultivation of exotic fruits suitable for cultivation in the country such as Tin, Dragon, Avocado, Arabic date,

Rambutan, and Persimmon has increased. Initiatives have been taken to expand cashew nut, and coffee cultivation in hilly areas.

7.2 million people in nine districts of the northeastern part of the country have been affected by the floods in June this year. According to the estimations of the United Nations Bangladesh Office with the support of the Government's Ministry of Disaster Management and Relief, a total of 55 people have died. And 6 lakh 63 thousand livestock and crops of 2 lakh 54 thousand hectares of land were damaged.

Complaints received from the farmers are non-delivery of fertilizer on time, low price of agricultural products, increase in diesel price, oppression by middlemen, complications in the transportation of goods, extortion, etc. In some places of the country including Comilla, and Rangpur, farmers protested and blocked roads demanding fertilizer. Earlier in the year in March, two farmers from the “Santal” community of Godagari in Rajshahi district committed suicide due to a lack of irrigation water, sparking debate across the country.

Under the government's paddy collection project, paddy is collected directly from farmers in 256 upazilas of 64 districts through 'Krishak Apps'. This year, the government plans to buy 18 lakh tons of paddy and rice from the domestic market during the “Boro season”. As a result, the oppression of middlemen has been reduced. This step of the government has been appreciated by all.

According to the data of the Bangladesh Institute of Labor Studies (BILS), 1 thousand 34 workers were killed and 1 thousand 37 workers were injured in 2022 due to workplace accidents in the country. Apart from this, 135 workers were killed and 155 injured due to torture at work. There were 196 labor unrest incidents in various sectors, out of which 115 labor unrest

occurred in the garment sector. According to the sector, the highest number of 499 (48 percent) workers died in the transport sector. The construction sector had the second highest number of deaths of 118 workers (11 percent). The third highest number of 112 (11 percent) workers died in the agriculture sector.

Road accidents, electrocution, lightning, fire, trawler sinking by a sea storm, injury from a falling object, falling object on the head, poisonous gas, ship accident, collapse of wall or roof, cylinder explosion, etc. are some of the causes of accidents at work.

After the continuous strikes, protests, blockades, and agitations of the tea workers, the issue of low wages has come into the limelight. The daily wage has been slightly increased through government intervention. The government has fixed the daily wage of tea workers at Tk. 170, Although the demand of the workers was 300 Tk. Earlier, the workers were getting a daily wage of Tk. 120. BISR observes that one of the major obstacles in increasing the wages of tea workers in Bangladesh is the managerial weakness of the tea estates here. As a result, production is low, income is low, profits are low, and workers' wages are low. According to the Bangladesh Tea Board, there are 167 registered tea gardens in the country. And there are 140,000 workers in these gardens.

The Department of Labor deals with matters related to workers' organization, arbitration proceedings, and training. Claims related to workers' rights are ensured through seven Labor Courts spread across the country and a Labor Appellate Tribunal, ensuring legal redress to aggrieved workers. The Minimum Wages Board is playing an important role in protecting labor rights by making recommendations to the government to fix wages in various institutional sectors. According to the data of the Ministry of Labor and Employment, still, 1.7 lakh children are involved in child labor in the country. Out of this, more than 12 lakh children are engaged

in hazardous work. To achieve the SDGs, all forms of child labor must be eliminated in the country by 2025. The transport sector has many child laborers, which is extremely vulnerable to child labor.

So far 25 state-owned jute mills have been declared closed, and production of 6 sugar mills has been stopped. Experts have advised modernizing these jute and sugar mills. Besides, according to BKMEA data, 30-35 knitting factories were closed in the last six months of the year. Many workers have lost their jobs in this sector.

The Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA) has expressed concern that the export of the garment sector will decrease by 20 percent in the future due to gas and electricity shortages in industrial factories and reduced demand for garments products in Europe. The apparel industry has turned around time and again through government incentives and branding Bangladesh to the world. Now half of the world's top 100 green industrial units are in Bangladesh. Of the green factories that are in operation, all but four are garment sector factories.

This year there was also several fire incident in the industrial factory. According to the CPD report, one fire accident occurs every two days in industrial factories, housing, and various service organizations. In June, 49 people lost their lives in a fire at the BM Container Depot in Sitakunda, Chittagong. 10 of them are fire service personnel.

According to the latest labor force survey conducted by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) for 2022, there are 2.63 million unemployed across the country. Currently, there are 7 crore 34 lakh 10 thousand people in the labor force. 1 crore 2 crore people have been employed in the industrial sector and 2 crore 83 lakh people have been employed in the service sector.

Women's participation in the labor force has increased. In 2022, the labor force participation rate of women in Bangladesh rose to 42.68 percent, the second highest in South Asia.

Even though expatriate workers are increasing day by day, their remittances are not increasing. At the end of the year, the total amount of remittances sent by foreign workers stood at 21.29 billion dollars. Bangladesh Bank says foreign currency earnings have declined slightly this year due to increased transactions through the hundi and global economic slowdown and exchange rate mismatch.

The death of Bangladeshi workers abroad is increasing day by day. From 2008 to June 2022, a total of 45,301 dead bodies were brought to the country. And some dead bodies are not brought to the country, especially when they die in Saudi. 12,930 dead workers were brought from Saudi Arabia alone. Apart from this, 5,123 dead bodies were brought from the United Arab Emirates, 3,776 from Oman, 2,724 from Kuwait, 1,011 from Bahrain, and 1,562 from Qatar. Thus it is seen that 63% of expatriates died in only 6 Middle Eastern countries.

According to the data from Dhaka's Shahjalal International Airport, an average of 8-10 dead bodies arrive every day. The main cause of their death is called brain stroke; Apart from heart disease, illness, accident at work, road accident, suicide, or murder are also mentionable reasons.

Environment & Climate Change

The environmental journey of this year begins with the post-Covid-19 return to normalcy and preparations for the aftermath. The Bangladesh government has finalized the 'Multisectoral Action Plan for Sustainable Plastic Management' to control pollution. The National Action Plan for Sustainable Plastics Management emphasizes the circular use of plastics, based on the three-R (Reduce, Reuse and Recycle) strategy. Eighth Five Year Plan also emphasized on improving solid waste management. An innovative '**Plastic Exchange Store**' has been established at Cox's Bazar's coral island St. Martin to prevent environmental pollution as a joint initiative of the district administration and private voluntary organization Bidyananda Foundation and with the cooperation of the Tourist Police. As a result, people are able to sell their accumulated plastic waste there and regularly buy daily necessities according to their needs. As well as to ensure proper hospital waste management, some NGOs and voluntary organizations have taken initiatives across the country to move away from the traditional mixed waste management and adopt segregated waste management everywhere. To control air pollution, the government has published the '**Air Pollution Control Acts 2022**' in the form of a gazette notification. The 'Environmental Protection Act 2022' has been formulated to make the 'Environmental Protection Act 1997' more up-to-date. Apart from this, nature based projects are being implemented.

The Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN), an international environmental organization, recently released a list of the 14 best environment-friendly projects in South Asia. Three projects of Bangladesh have been placed in it. Initiatives for the decontamination of Hatirjheel in the capital, Karupalli in Rangpur, and Rohingya shelter Madhurchhra in Cox's Bazar have been included in CDKN's list. A report published last November titled 'Climate Resilient and Nature-Based Solutions in South Asian Cities' praised four other initiatives in Bangladesh. Apart from this, Chittagong's Korean Export Processing Zone (KEPZ), Cox's

Bazar's Qutubdia, a seaweed and oyster-lined embankment on the island's coast, and Dhaka's rooftop gardens have met several conditions of environment-friendly infrastructure. Already, the roof garden has gained great popularity in Dhaka city.

Bangladesh participated along with 190 countries in the COP-27 conference held in Egypt on November 6-20 to combat climate change. Bangladesh ranks 7th among climate-affected countries in the world. Bangladesh needs about \$230 billion in financing by 2030 to implement various climate action plans to combat climate change. Although the negative impact of climate change will increase over time, there is hope that Bangladesh's contribution to combating climate change through reducing the rate of damage and the number of dead in disasters is quite positive. To reduce damage caused by cyclones and floods in the coastal areas of Bangladesh, afforestation activities are underway to create coastal green belts and stabilize new pastures in the sea and river estuaries. The amount of gardens created in the financial year 2021-2022 is 30075 hectares and 2098 seedling km. Also, the 'Forest Conservation Act 2022' has been sent to the Law Ministry for approval. To encourage people "Prime Minister's National Award" has been introduced to plant trees and to show special achievements.

The use of surgical masks has increased several times during the ongoing Covid outbreak since the beginning of last year. Before the start of the corona infection, where an average of 15,000 masks were produced per day by the company, now it has increased to 2.5 lakh. The widespread use and disposal of these masks have added a new dimension to environmental pollution. If not disposed of properly, these plastic surgical masks end up in the ocean. But when a large amount of plastic is floating in the oceans around the world, it is disrupting the production processes of marine plants. As a result, the first step of food supply to marine animals is being blocked. Also, these plastics are later divided into micro plastics and are entering the human body

through fish and other means in the human food chain. Due to this, the human health risk is increasing gradually.

In this year plagued by natural disasters, the incidence of floods and cyclones was quite noticeable. The flood situation in three phases in April, May, and June in Sunamganj and Sylhet became frightening. The severity of the June floods exceeded the level despite having advance warnings and preparations. In Sylhet district, suitable agricultural lands are submerged in water. This includes 1421 hectares of “**Aush**” paddy land, 1704 hectares of “**Boro**” cropland, and 1338 hectares of vegetable land. Some 640 educational institutions of Sylhet closed teaching activities due to floods. In total 55 Unions of Sylhet district were completely inundated and 15 Unions were partially inundated. Researchers have mainly identified the rains of more than 3000 mm continuously for four consecutive days in Meghalaya's Cherrapunji region. A 72-hour forecast is given for floods in Bangladesh. On the other hand, Cyclone Sitrang, having possibilities of severe cyclonic development and inundation, did not cause much damage as was anticipated. The main reason was that the tidal effect was not seen as the cyclone started crossing the coast at low tide. However, the amount of damage was not very small. The information shows that 10,000 houses have been damaged in 419 Unions of the country due to Cyclone Sitrang. Some 6,000 hectares of cropland been partially or fully damaged and 1,000 fishery farms have been damaged due to the cyclone. A total of 9 people died. Among them, 8 people died when trees fell on their houses. Also, due to Cyclone Sitrang, 8 million people were without electricity in the southern districts for several days, according to the published news.

A review of the Air Quality Index report by US-based international air quality monitoring organization, Air Visual found that Dhaka has been at the top (AQI score 202-327) among the world's most polluted cities for some time. Also, according to the report published by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) last March, Dhaka is the world's top city in

noise pollution. While the permissible noise level for residential areas is 55 dB (decibels) and 70 dB for commercial areas, the noise level in Dhaka was found to be 119 dB. After some improvement in environmental protection, Bangladesh's position has gone down again. Bangladesh ranks 177th out of 180 countries according to the 'World Environment Protection Index' published every year, which has fallen behind compared with 2020 and 2021.

One of the two units of the much talked about and controversial coal-based Rampal thermal power plant has started supplying power to the national grid on an experimental basis. 260 MW of generated electricity is being supplied to Khulna region and the remaining 400 MW to Dhaka through the newly started Aminbazar Gopalganj transmission line. If the project starts in full swing or produces a total of 1320 MWs, an average of 15 thousand tons of coal may need to be burned daily, the project officials said. No studies have yet been conducted on whether it has any environmental impact.

Due to climate change salinity in water is increasing. The rivers of Shyamnagar, Asashuni, and Kaliganj Upazilas of Satkhira district are notable. It has been reported that the salinity level of 10 ppt is prevailing in these areas. According to the data of Soil Resources Research Institute (SRDI), the report shows that among the total land affected by salt in the country, 1 lakh 90 thousand hectares of mild salinity, 2 lakh 50 thousand hectares of medium level, 4 lakh 20 thousand hectares of severe level and 2 lakh hectares of very severe level of salinity in land. Due to salinity, the production of food grains in the coastal districts is decreasing by about 3 million 27 thousand tons. BISR has been conducting regular research on water quality and its impact, one of which was published last year. Whereas the water quality of the Jadukata River has been tested and it has been found that the quality of freshwater is within the standard.

Since 2010, the 'Bangabandhu Award for Wildlife Conservation medal' has been awarded to honor individuals or organizations dedicated to the conservation of nature and wildlife nationally and to inspire future generations. This policy has been revised in 2021. Dr. Md. Anisuzzaman Khan (deceased), wildlife researcher, and Govt Azizul Haque College, Bogura have been nominated for contributing to wildlife conservation in 2022. Also, regular seminars, workshops, discussions, rallies, etc. are encouraging common people to follow other environmental etiquette more than ever.

The World Bank has approved a loan of \$250 million for Bangladesh to increase and strengthen people's awareness about environmental pollution, reduce environmental pollution, and encourage the participation of the non-industrial sector in environmentally friendly investments. Bangladesh will have 30 years with a five-year grace period to repay the loan under the World Bank's International Development Association Programme. Under the 'Bangladesh Environmental Sustainability and Transformation' project, the government will use the funds to reduce pollution and increase administrative and technical capacity to enforce environmental laws. Also, it is believed that at least 2 crore 10 lakh people in Dhaka and surrounding areas will be benefited if the money from this loan can be used by creating an environment-friendly credit guarantee scheme. Under this project, a network of round-the-clock water quality testing stations will be established for the first time at 22 points of different rivers in Dhaka. Apart from this, it is planned to build a monitoring center to treat the waste according to the rules.

The Tiger census has started to count tigers in Sundarbans. Two cameras of four ranges will be installed at 665 points in Sundarbans. According to the information received from the Forest Department, the Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change has approved the Sundarbans Tiger Conservation Project at a cost of Tk. 35 crore 93 lakh 80 thousand for the collection of updated information on tigers and conservation of tigers. The duration of the

project is till March 2025. Besides, the “**Tiger Action Plan**” (2018-2027) has been formulated for tiger conservation. Regrettably, 19 elephants have died in Cox's Bazar forest area in the last two years. Due to habitat destruction, deforestation, and poaching, number of elephants are gradually decreasing in Bangladesh. Hence the Asian elephant is included in the endangered species list. The forest department decided to implement a new project "Bangladesh Elephant Conservation Action Plan" (2018-2027) last year for elephant conservation as the death rate of elephants has increased in recent years. Also, an Atlas of elephant movement routes and corridors within the country has been prepared and transboundary corridors have been identified. Monitoring are going on of poaching and killing of tiger, deer and other wildlife using the SMART (Special Monitoring and Reporting Tool) patrol system. Along with the existing six dolphin sanctuaries in Bangladesh, three new sanctuaries have been announced to identify dolphin hotspots in the Sundarbans for dolphin conservation. In addition, four other planning documents have been approved. Among the migratory wild ducks in Bangladesh, the highest number of migratory was the *Netta rufina* diving duck (Red Crested Pochard) 7332, followed by the *Aythya nyroca* (Ferruginous Pochard) 7205. Due to the increase in environmental awareness, the rate of hunting of other birds, including migratory birds, has decreased significantly. Six areas of Bangladesh have been declared as 'East Asian Australian Flyway Sites' to conserve coastal birds including migratory birds. Also, as a joint initiative, Bangladesh Forest Department and IUCN have conducted bird census and taken initiatives of bird ringing and GPS satellite tags at the country's second Ramsar site, Tanguar Haor.

It has been alleged that the environment and biodiversity in Sonadia are being damaged due to excessive plastic waste. Due to the destruction of the natural environment of the beach, the rate of turtle egg-laying has also decreased. Other marine animals and birds are also disappearing. Until 2020, different species of turtles used to lay more than 10,000 eggs a year on this island, which has now reached 1,000. Mother turtles running from the deep sea are losing their nesting environment due to plastic waste lying all over the beach. There are about 300 spoon-billed sandpipers in the world, a significant part of which can be seen in Sonadia's Paraban. The movement of spoonbills and other birds has been greatly reduced due to the destruction of parabans and the construction of shrimp enclosures.