



Staff Reporter

Bangladesh will not be able to achieve some of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including ensuring 100 percent employment and zero dropouts in primary school, within the 2015 target date, says a progress report.

The other targets that Bangladesh are unlikely to meet are to ensure 100 percent adult literacy, 20 percent of lands covered by forest, 50 percent share of women in wage employment and improved sanitation facilities for all by 2015.

The report titled, 'Millennium Development Goals: Bangladesh Progress Report 2013', prepared by the General Economic Division (GED) of the Planning Commission was launched on Sunday at a function held at the National Economic Council (NEC) auditorium in the city's Agargaon area.

"The targets will not be fulfilled with only less than 500 days (2015) left despite having remarkable progress in achieving many other targets," the progress report said.

Bangladesh will try to incorporate the unachievable targets in the Post-2015 Development Agenda, it said.

Planning Minister AHM Mustafa Kamal addressed the function as the chief guest while Finance Minister AMA Muhith, Prime Minister's Economic Adviser Dr Mashiur Rahman and State Minister for Planning and Finance MA Mannan spoke as guests of honor.

GED member Prof Dr Shamsul Alam chaired the function and presented the report.

According to the report, the poverty rate came down to 26.2 percent in 2013 from 56.7 percent in the base year of 1990-1991, but the target set in the MDGs is to gain 29 percent by 2015.

The rate of hungry people came down to 16.8 percent in 2012 from 34.6 percent in 1990.

The grim picture of the employment was reflected in the report that said currently the success rate is 59.3 percent against the target of gaining 100 percent by 2015.

According to the report, the high unemployment rate is noticed among the young generation (15-24 years).

The net enrolment ratio in primary education increased to 97.3 percent in 2013 from 60.5 percent in 1990-1991.

Some 20 percent of primary students drop out in the country as 80.5 percent of pupils starting

grade-1 reach grade-5 (class-V).

The adult literacy rate of 15+ years old population went up to 58.8 percent in 2011 from 37.2 percent in the base year. But the target is 100 percent.

The share of women in wage employment was 19.87 percent in 2010 against target of 50 percent.

The rate of women MPs in Parliament is 20 percent now, but the target is 33 percent.

Bangladesh is on the right track to achieve the targets relating to child mortality rate and maternal health, combating HIV/AIDs, malaria and other diseases and improving drinking water sources.

The rate of under-five child mortality was 44/1000 in 2011, while that of the infant (0-1 year) mortality 35/1000. But the targets are 48 percent and 31 percent respectively.

Maternal mortality ratio was 194/1000 live births in 2010, but the target is 143/1000 births.

People using improved sanitation facilities were 55.9 percent in 2013 against the target of 100 percent.

The land area covered by forest was raised to 13.2 percent against the target of 20 percent by 2015.

Speaking on the occasion, Finance Minister AMA Muhith said Bangladesh will come out of the list of LDCs within the next three to four years.

Terming poverty a 'curse', he said, "I strongly believe that hunger will be removed from Bangladesh by 2030."

Planning Minister Mustafa Kamal said Bangladesh did better in many areas of the MDGs, adding that now 24.5 percent of people live under the poverty line in the country.

He demanded that the developed nations impose high taxes on companies that emit carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), responsible for climate change.