

Annual Review 2019

Bangladesh Institute of Social Research (BISR) Trust

Hasina De Palace, Flat: 6B, House: 6/14, Block: A, Lalmatiya, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh

January 2020

Society, Culture and Sports

In 2019 many important events took place in Bangladesh. Out of that many issues were discussed among people of various strata. Amongst that the most important events have been discussed here.

In this year many important events took place where the politicians, sports organizers and other elected representatives were involved in ‘casino’ business and a systematic action of law enforcing agencies were there against that. Getting involved in such type of illegal game by the youth was a matter of surprise, protest and disappointment among the people. In addition to that against corruption and illegal activities government has launched a ‘clean movement’ which was a matter of attention of the general people. Some government officials and district officers’ unexpected activities were widely discussed.

In ICT sector Bangladesh has won many international awards, out of that mention may be made of the sector’s most prestigious award “World Summit on Information Society Award 2019” what has been achieved by eight projects. Besides, Bangladesh has become champion in three categories of “Apicta Award 2019” which is known as Oscar of ICT in Asia-Pacific area. In NASA International Space Apps Challenge-2019, Bangladesh won the championship for the first time by beating 1395 groups and in International Robot Olympiad it won 1 gold along with 10 other medals.

The number of beneficiaries from social safety net is increasing day by day. In the revised budget of 2018-2019 fiscal year, the amount of total allocation in this sector was BDT 64 thousand 404 corer which was raised to

The number of beneficiaries from social safety net is increasing day by day. In the revised budget of 2018-2019 fiscal year, the amount of total allocation in this sector was BDT 64 thousand 404 corer which was raised to BDT 74 thousand 367 corer in the last budget which was 14.21 percent of total budget. Bangladesh moved one step ahead in Human Development Index (HDI). In this index, the position of Bangladesh was 136 among 189 countries in 2018 which went up one spot ahead to 135 in 2019.

BDT 74 thousand 367 corer in the last budget which was 14.21 percent of total budget. Bangladesh moved one step ahead in Human Development Index (HDI). In this index, the position of Bangladesh was 136 among 189 countries in 2018 which went up one spot ahead to 135 in 2019. Rohingya perpetration was also the mostly discussed topic in the last year. Though the process was supposed to be started from 22 August, it has not. On the other hand, Gambia

filed a case with the International Court of Justice (ICJ) against Myanmar, alleging the murder, rape and Genocide against Rohingyas which was important news for the people of Bangladesh.

In the last year, the average life expectancy of the people of Bangladesh has increased. According to Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), in 2019, the average life expectancy was 72.3 years. Beside this, the quality of life has changed also. Currently, 98 percent people of the country are getting drinking water and 90.1 percent have access to electricity. But in 2019, Dengue outbreak crossed all previous records of 19 years. From 2000 to 2018, the number of total infected person was 50,148 which crossed 56,000 in 2019 only.

Although the rate of child marriage has dropped worldwide, the rate of child marriage in Bangladesh was 6 percent in the last year. The proposed new law to prevent child marriage has increased the duration and amount of punishment but at the same time reduced the minimum age limit for marriage in special case - 16 years for women and 18 years for men. Changes have also been noticed in case of divorce. In the first six months of 2018, the rate of divorce in Dhaka was 4578 which was raised to 6232 or 36.14% in the first six months of 2019.

The education sector was also full of phenomenon in the last year. Murder of Abrar Fahad, a talented student of Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology, caused a massive agitation among people across the country. Through this movement, the issue of banning politics in educational institution came to the front. Additionally, a massive protest has taken place against the corruption of the Vice-Chancellor of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Science and Technology University. Teachers and students of Jahangirnagar University protested against the vice-chancellor alleging corruption. The teachers of the primary school protested with the demand of upgrading their grade. After about 28 years, DUCSU election was held at University of Dhaka and after that various events took place throughout the year centering the elected members of DUCSU.

Question paper leak in MPO and public exams were reduced in the last year and the initiative of government in this regard was appreciated by the common people. Literacy rate in the country has increased by 73.9 percent compared to 72.9 percent in the previous year. However, question about the quality of secondary and higher education remains. Not even a single university of the country was ranked amongst 1000 in the World Ranking.

In the last year, the Bangla Academy also organized the Amar Ekushey Book Fair, where a total of 4,834 new books were published, which was 4591 in the previous book fair. The total book sale in 2018's fair was 70.5 crore, while the sales has reached the milestone of Tk. 80 crore in 2019. However, most of the readers were interested in the book of late novelist Humayun Ahmed.

In the last book fair, Bangla Academy considered 1151 books as quality books, the number was only 488 in 2018. Experts believe that a record amount of books has been sold due to the publication of quality books and maintaining a reader-friendly atmosphere. A total of 12 hundred members from various forces were deployed to protect the book fair. Besides the book fair, various creative books continued to be published at different times of the year.

Dhaka International Lit Fest was held for the 9th time in the year where writers and readers from different countries of the world participated. This year, Pulitzer Prize winners, historians and poets participated in the event. Young people were found interested in other associated events.

Although the trend in fashion and beauty has not changed much over the last year, people's interest in it continued. Besides the urban areas, village people were also interested in to go to beauty parlors and in urban areas men's interest in beauty salons and gents parlors continued. In addition, there has been a growing interest among the urban youths to present themselves, speak in English and nicely. The trend of marriage during study period has been noticed among some of the youths.

Last year, the Pahela Baishakh ceremony was celebrated gloriously without any threat. There was a strong security arrangement by the law enforcers surrounding the event. The New Year festival of the indigenous people of the hill tracts, Boishabi Utsab also celebrated well in the last year. There were no such incidents of communal conflict or terrorist attacks at any festival or religious event. Awareness among the general public about communal harmony has increased. The trend of shopping among the middle class continued for various festivals and social events. During these festivals and long holidays, the trend of spending vacation with friends and family in various tourist spots of the country remained unchanged which enriched internal tourism of the country. On the other hand, capable people were found to be traveling by air in time of need along with their housekeeper. However, according to the experts, tourism of Bangladesh could not attract too much attention in 2019, although global capacity of the country has elevated to 120th by increasing five steps.

The presence of people in different social media was on the increase. Youth's interest on modern and new technology was growing in the year. One of their major interests was the newly introduced smart phones with new features. Due to the increasing availability of internet, the number of internet users has increased in the village. In 2018, the total number of internet users in the country was 90.5 million, which increased by 8.24 percent and reached to 98.14 million in 2019. Competition was also noticed among the urban youths to buy the latest products from renowned tech companies. Safe internet usage have increased especially efforts were seen to pull the reins on pornography.

In the last year, a shadow of disappointment was remained in the film industry of Bangladesh. The number of films released has also been decreased. In 2018, a total of 56 films released including domestic, imported and joint productions, which was decreased by 17.9 percent in the last year and turned into 46. Among them only one film ('password') has received appreciation from the audience. Apart from this, some movies were in the limelight but they were not profitable.

Dhaka International Folk Fest was also held in the last year. This year's Folk Fest was dedicated to six recently passed legends - Subir Nandi, Bari Siddiqui, Shahnaz Rahmatullah, Ahmed Imtiaz Bulbul, Fakir Abdur Rab Shah and Ayub Bachchu.

There were no major arrangements for *Jatragan*, *Pala* songs or *Kawali* songs in the last year except some places in the rural areas. However, *Orosh* were arranged in various *Pir Dargahs* continued. But among the young generation the fusion of old popular *Baul* songs with modern music was quite popular. However, the popularity of the Baul song has increased.

The trend of YouTube and online based music videos, dramas and short films production has increased compared to the past. Additionally, the trend of watching TV programs on internet has increased among the young generation. TV sets that can be connected to internet have gained popularity. Along with the mainstream music, Islamic *Waz-Mahfil* and music tutorial programs have gained popularity on the Internet.

In the last year, some of the prominent lyricist, composer and music director passed away. Among them the name of Ahmed Imtiaz Bulbul, Subir Nandi, Shahnaz Ramatullah, and Tele Samad will be remembered especially. In the literary arena of the country, the shadow of mourning comes down through the death of poet Al Mahmud.

Different events in the sports sector of Bangladesh have attracted people's attention in the last year. It can be said that for sports, 2019 was the year of shock. In March, when the men's cricket team of Bangladesh was visiting New Zealand, a terrorist attack took place at a mosque in Christchurch just before the Friday prayer. Bangladesh team was just protected for a while. At that time Bangladeshi sports lovers became very anxious. In addition, a kind of silence remained in international sports.

One of the most significant events was the sudden movement of Bangladesh cricket team before their visit to India. Initially, the movement started with an eleven-point demand which later turned into thirteen-point. The movement emphasized on increasing the opportunities for cricketers, increasing the salary of women cricketers and the resignation of the general secretary of the Cricketers Welfare Association. After 1999, this was the first movement of cricketers.

The International Cricket Regulatory Agency ICC banned Bangladesh cricket star Shakib Al Hasan from all forms of cricket just after the end of the movement. He was banned for two years, with one year of that suspended for not informing the ICC about the approaches he received by a bookmaker. Shakib's two-year ban embarrassed all the cricketers to some extent. However, the personal success of Shakib Al Hasan in 2019 world cup was noteworthy.

In 2019, the sports of Bangladesh ended up with the South Asian Games where Bangladesh won a total of 19 gold medals. Despite the success in Archery, Weightlifting and Karate, Bangladesh ended up with 5th ranking among 7 countries. Roman Sana was the best athlete of Bangladesh in 2019, who qualified as the first Bangladeshi to play in the Olympics directly. He defeated two-time world champion Kim Wu-jin at Archery.

On the other hand, in football, though Bangladesh has secured place in the final qualifying round, it ended soon after the failure of Bangladesh team in the SA Games against Nepal and Bhutan in December. However, Joya Chakma brought good news for the sport lovers as she became the first Bangladeshi woman to be the FIFA referee.

Women and Children

In 2019, some major changes were observed in case of women and children. Like previous years, the participation of girls in the primary education was more than boys in the last year also. According to BANBEIS, the rate of participation in primary education is now 97.85 percent while the percentage was 97.85 for girls and 97.55 for boys. But the participation of women in the workforce has not changed significantly, though in rural areas the percentage of women was more than the urban areas, 37.6 and 30.8 percent respectively. This kind of unemployment existed in the urban areas where one of the major concerns of women was living in those areas.

The position of women increased in the higher ranks. At present 535 women are working in the higher ranks of the administration. Latest data provided by the Ministry of Public Administration shows that, among the 77 top ranked secretary and paralleled employees in the administration, 8 (10.4 %) of them are women. Changes have also been observed in the participation of women in challenging occupations. According to the calculation of the Police Headquarter, among the top ranked police officials 274 are women.

Around 60 percent of the women working in the rural areas were engaged in agriculture while 60.8 percent urban women were working in the readymade garments. For the last few years, the participation of women decreased in the garment sector which was continuing in the previous years. But the position of women increased in the higher ranks. At present 535 women are

working in the higher ranks of the administration. Latest data provided by the Ministry of Public Administration shows that, among the 77 top ranked secretary and paralleled employees in the administration, 8 (10.4 %) of them are women. Changes have also been observed in the participation of women in challenging occupations. According to the calculation of the Police Headquarter, among the top ranked police officials 274 are women.

Moreover, the number of women member in the 11th national parliament formed in the begging of the previous year was also significant. In the present parliament, there are 72 women among the 350 members and 4 ministers among the 48 ministers including Prime Minister. But women lagged behind in case of average income. As reported by the World Economic Forum, in the last year the average income of Bangladeshi men were Taka 3 lakh 18 thousand while the average income of women were Taka 1 lakh 66 thousand which was 52.20 percent of men's.

Like previous years, the migration of women workers continued in the last year though violence against migrant women abroad was a widely discussed issue throughout the year. Around 950 women workers returned to the country in the last year with alleged torture and serious abuse. Moreover, 119 women migrant workers' dead bodies were brought back in the country at the end of the year which decreases the migration of women to some extent. The incident of violence and torture against women and children within the country were also the concern of general people throughout the year. Especially the Nusrat murder case made all women anxious. Beside this, some rapes by the Imam of mosque and Madrasah teachers made the Islamic scholars of the society embarrassed. Women felt anxious about their security in all places including school, college and Madrasahs. The rate of child rape was more in the last year compare to the previous years. Around 496 children were raped in the first 6 months of the year which was 41 percent more than the previous year.

On the other hand, last year BBS has published a report on the average life expectancy of the people of Bangladesh where it shows that the average age of the women has increased by 3 years than men. At present the average life expectancy is 73.8 years for women and 70.8 years for men. Maternal and child mortality was also degenerating. As reported by a private development company, Bangladesh has reduced its child mortality rate by 63 percent until last year. The rate of maternal mortality was 172 which was 176 previously. The immunization activities of the government played a vital role in reducing child mortality. For this success, Global Alliance for Vaccination and Immunization has awarded Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina "Vaccine Hero" in 2019.

In order to continue the development of women and children, the amount of gender budget has increased in 2019-20 fiscal year. The amount of gender budget was Taka 1 lakh 61 thousand 287 core which was 30.82 percent of the total budget while it was 29.65 percent in the previous year. Moreover, the allocation for children has also increased in the budget. Around Taka 80 thousand 190 core was allocated for children which was 15.33 percent of the total budget. The amount was Taka 65 thousand 650 core (15.33%) in the previous budget.

Furthermore, personal achievements of some women were in the center of discussion throughout the year. Among those, the appointment of Dr. Dipu Moni as the first education minister of Bangladesh was noteworthy. Mahzabin Haque, the first Bangladeshi women has got the appointment as software engineer at the space research center NASA. Rubana Huq has been elected as the first female president of Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA). Joya Chakma has been recognized as the first female FIFA referee from Bangladesh. Women were also the front runner in other sports. At the SA games, female athletes won 6 gold medals from individual events while the male athletes won 5.

Additionally, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina was ranked 29th among the world's most 100 influential women in the Forbes 2019 list of 'World's 100 Most Powerful Women'. Also her recognition as 'Lifetime Contribution for Women Empowerment Award' by the Institute of South Asian Women was also notable. At the end of the year, High Court ordered to set up breastfeeding and baby care corners at all public and autonomous institutions, workplaces, hospitals, airports and other gathering places across the country in response to the writ petition filed by the nine-month-old child Umair Bin Sadi which would mitigate the problem of breast feeding in the public places.

Economy

According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the economy of Bangladesh is the third fastest growing major economy in the world and the second in South Asia capitalizing the average 6.5% GDP growth rate from the last decade. As per gross domestic product (GDP) Bangladesh is placed at number 39th (in nominal) and 29th (in PPP). According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS 2019), total amount of GDP is \$302.6 billion (nominal) which is 5.9% more than that of 2018. Besides, Bangladesh placed 2nd in jute production, 4th in rice production, 4th in vegetable production and 10th in tea production. GDP growth rate of Bangladesh has reached 8.15% in 2019 while in 2018 the growth rate was 7.86%. This 8.15% growth rate is the highest GDP growth rate of Bangladesh after the independence.

Like previous years, major contribution of growth has come from the service, industrial and agricultural sectors. The contributions of service, industry and agricultural sector on GDP in Bangladesh are 51.26%, 35.18% and 13.60% respectively in 2019 which were 52.11%, 33.66% and 14.23% respectively in 2018. According to BBS 2019, as a percentage of GDP, total investment is 31.56% (private sector 23.4% + government sector 8.17%) which was 31.23% in 2018. This year total amount of exports is about USD 40.53 billion which is 10.81% more than previous year and total amount of imports USD 55.44 billion which was 1.8% more than that of 2018 (BBS, 2019).

Along with GDP growth rate, per capita GDP also improved in fiscal year 2019-20. While in the last fiscal year (2018-19) per capita GDP was USD 1,752, in this fiscal year the GDP per capita

raised to USD 1909 (December, 2019) which is the highest GDP per capita after the independence.

The labour force survey (March, 2017) of Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) accords that 2.6 million university fresh graduates (4.18%) of the total 62.1 million labour force remained unemployed. However, according to the World Bank (December 2017), unemployment rate of Bangladesh is around 4.2% (male 3.1% and female 6.7%). Although unemployment is a major problem in Bangladesh for last 10 years, yet there is no significant plan to reduce unemployment in the 7th Five Year Plan.

According to BBS (December, 2019), the present poverty rate is 20.5% in Bangladesh which was 24.3% in 2017 where 1-1.5% can be decrease by 2020. The report also revealed that around 10.5% are below lower poverty line (extreme poor) where it was 12.9% in 2017. In aggregate, Bangladesh has achieved success in poverty reduction. However, income inequality has increased in recent years due to having the fastest growing rate of the rich people of Bangladesh in the world. First 10% top rich people earn 26.9% of the total income while bottom 10% earns 3.8% of the total income. Hence, top 10% rich people earn 8 times more than bottom 10%. Though total GDP and total national income have increased from the last decade, the poor and the needy hardly enjoy the benefit of that. Due to the imposition of taxes by the government, the citizens have been losing their interest to buy savings certificate in the current financial year. Government imposed taxes on savings certificate to relieve debt burden and reduce the excessive pressure on it.

The average inflation has been around 5.5 percent in this year which was 5.78 percent in the previous year. Though inflation rate is under control in the economy, the excessive price hike of essential commodities, especially onions was widely discussed. In this fiscal year more than 60 factories have been shut down having financial crisis making 29 to 594 workers become jobless. The jute and the leather industries are the most potential and vibrant industry after readymade garments industries in Bangladesh but there hardly notices the notable progress rather the workers of 22 government owned factories were protesting and having involved in the workers 'rights protecting movement throughout this fiscal year. The citizens had to sell raw leathers (cows and goats) with a negligible price especially at Eid al-Adha though the price was fixed by the government authority before that.

Like the previous years, in budget proposal, budget deficit continues in this fiscal year as well. In fiscal year 2019-20, the total budget is BDT 5,23,190 crore which was increased by 12.6% than the previous year and was 17.69% of total GDP, where development budget was BDT 2,02,721 crore which was 38.75% of the total budget and deficit budget was BDT 145,380 crore which was 27.78% of the total budget. However, the budgeting system has not been changed yet. It is better to follow the needs based budget rather than existing budgeting method as proposed by the BISR for the last couple of years. Misuses of money and money laundering have increased due

to having no practice of needs based budgetary system as often discussed by the citizens when this news get published in the newspapers.

High dependence on external sources (foreign assistance) has decreased in the recent years. According to Bangladesh Bank (November, 2019), foreign reserve of Bangladesh Bank has increased in 2019 than 2018 by 2.16%. The total amount of foreign reserve is USD 31,729 which was 31056 million in 2018 (BB, November 2019). Remittance is now considered as the life blood of accelerating economic growth in the country.

Total remittance inflow in Bangladesh was about USD 16.4 billion which was the highest inflow so far with increase of 14.68% (up to November, 2019) than 2018 and total migrant workers were 604060 (female workers 97,430 which was 101695 in 2018) went abroad for overseas employment from Bangladesh by 2019, which was 17.72% less than that of 2018 (BMET, 2019).

High dependence on external sources (foreign assistance) has decreased in the recent years. According to Bangladesh Bank (November, 2019), foreign reserve of Bangladesh Bank has increased in 2019 than 2018 by 2.16%. The total amount of foreign reserve is USD 31,729 which was 31056 million in 2018 (BB, November 2019).

Bangladesh now can finance around eight months of imports which is higher than the minimum three-month requirement. The proper use of this reserve in creating Income Generating Activities (IGAs) is now the growing concern for the government of Bangladesh. According to Blue Chip Index 2019, in this fiscal year, Dhaka Stock Exchange experienced the lowest transaction by points after 2013. According to Global Competitiveness Index (GCI, 2019) compiled by World Economic Forum (WEF), Bangladesh is losing the power to compete in foreign market for international business due to the stability of the macroeconomic performance, human capital depreciation in labor market, lack of utmost utilization of ICT opportunities and lack of adequate infrastructure and to secure the business environment, Bangladesh has placed 105th among 141 countries in the world which was 103 in the previous year.

Money laundering and non-performing loans are the growing concern for Bangladesh to sustain economic growth and to achieve SDGs by 2030. In June, 2019, more than 11% of the total outstanding loans were reported to be defaulted and the amount of default loan was BDT 131,666 crores in 2018 which is now BDT 220000 crores (+ 67.08%) in June 2019 (BB, 2019). To combat bad loans, no notable action has been seen though the government had committed to stop bad loans by hook or by crook. Most of the banks have tried to obscure their volume of default loan even though the central bank asked the commercial banks to reveal the actual loan

default amount. State owned banks had largest volume of default loan, however, some private banks also had remarkable default loan in 2019 as well. In 2019, the banking sector exposed further weaknesses. Especially increase on non-performing loans, capital inadequacy and poor governance in the sector has hampered not only the smooth operation of the banks but also the smooth economic performances of the country. To refund and to recover the loss of the government owned banks, Bangladesh government has to spend public fund which could discourage the taxpayers. According to Global Financial Integrity (GFI, 2019), the research institute of Washington, from the last ten years, there are about BDT 530,000 cores has been sent abroad illegally (money laundering), especially in 2015, about 50,000 cores was sent abroad illegally from Bangladesh. Besides the blind spots of the development of an emerging economy, Bangladesh steps fast advancing global digitization and technological development. For digital outsourcing, Bangladesh is now one of the pioneers in the world. According to UNCTAD's Digital Economic Report 2019, total amount of outsourcing inflow in Bangladesh is USD 10 cores in 2019 where there are more than half million youth freelancers are engaged in this potential sector.

Politics

At the outset of the year the most discussed issue was formation of cabinet by the 14 party alliances, after getting elected though the general election. With all surprise, dropping all members of the alliance along with dropping almost all senior leaders of the Awami League, the cabinet was formed. In Bangladesh politics it is a new example. From the alliance many big leaders of small parties were dropped from the cabinet and some of them expressed their sentiments.

No new big political party emerged in the last year. For the whole year the inner party struggle was continuing in the Jatio Party. Except that there was some splitting among the small parties. But people expected their unity rather than separation. They could not show any success in achieving that.

Although they talked about failure of main two-three political parties but they could not attract people towards them for which there was no new polarization among the political parties.

Although the whole year popularity of Awami League head Sheikh Hasina went up but at the end of the year due to price hike of onion, sault and rice destabilization of price even having enough stock, attempt to artificially increase the price of some other commodities, casino scandal of the party leaders, increase of bad loan, failure in recovery of bad loan, where some leaders got involved with these activities. All these have put the ruling party under question mark where their popularity has gone down.

Popularity of the two parties has not increased, rather reduced to some extent. Although the whole year popularity of Awami League head Sheikh Hasina went up but at the end of the year

due to price hike of onion, sault and rice destabilization of price even having enough stock, attempt to artificially increase the price of some other commodities, casino scandal of the party leaders, increase of bad loan, failure in recovery of bad loan, where some leaders got involved with these activities. All these have put the ruling party under question mark where their popularity has gone down. No strong system has been developed against the corruption where allegedly many powerful people and professional were involved who could not be brought to book. Although measures have been taken against the drug which was highly appreciated but that has become cheerless due to all these. Drive for clean image of the party has been appreciated but people have doubt about its seriousness.

For all these there was wide criticism among the people for which it was anticipated by many that the government may face some political crises. But before starting any storm the cloud moved away. At the end of the year a chaotic situation was created centering the list of Rajakar which created a big dissatisfaction among the leaders of the ruling party. This situation could not be utilized by the opposition (assertive, docile and soft-spoken opposition inside and outside the parliament) rather only they spent time for worm up. They spent time through discussion; could not go for movement. They could not present any alternative politics. Against the pressure politics of the ruling party they could not come up with any creative politics which could put the ruling party in counter trouble. The opposition passed their days in own trouble for their mistrust and crises.

About participation of MPs elected from Juktfront(united front) in parliament after several dramatic events they have attended it. But the Secretary General of BNP has not attended the Parliament and nor has given any explanation acceptable to all. Begum Zia fought equally with disease and in the court. Party leaders fought more for release of Begum Zia rather than the cause of the country. But common people did not respond much to the call for her release. Big leaders of small parties although were in discussion for the whole year but they could not show much achievement. One of their important leaders mentioned that although there was a big vacuum in opposition politics but they could not fill the gap. To him either they can't understand the people or people do not understand them.

Former military ruler Ershad, veteran NAP leader Prof. Muzaffar Ahmed, orator MP JSD leader Moinuddin Khan Badal amongst others important leaders passed away. In this year no important political leader was killed. No serious political conflict was taken place. But in Bhola district giving a fake post in a Facebook account after hacking, a communal conflict took place which claimed few lives.

In this year no amendment of the constitution was made. There was no reported tension among the executive, legislative and judiciary of the government. No law was enacted which can bring about any change in the politics. Although road transport act 2018 was enacted but full

implementation of the same was postponed or a slow implementation method has been adopted due to pressure of the transport workers. Although a part of the oppositions has asked for mid-term election but that could not become a strong demand. In the year there was no strong *Hartal* or blockade but in the whole year there were unrests in some universities.

Crime

In the last year to some extent there was a difference in case of crime compare to the previous year. The number of political conflict, terrorism and drug related crime was less than this year. Against this in the whole year rape, murder and Rohingya related crimes were much discussed. But the most important thing was that in the last year the patterns in technique of committing crime were different. In addition to that in the last year there was a positive change in the judiciary, for example, rapid judgment of some cases were given which brought some positive changes in the mind of the people. For various reasons murders were discussed more in last year. Although it was not for number but for sensational reason was discussed. As per statistical record the crime rate was less but the terrific murder has increased. Only in August in the whole country slaughtering of human being was more than hundred. The most discussed murder in the year was the Nusrat Zahan Rafi murder at Shonagazi of Feni district. After complaining against the sexual harassment by the principal of her Madrasha on 6th April Nusrat was taken to the terrace of the Madrasha building where they set fire in her body and on 10th April she died in the hospital. After Nusrat killing through setting fire it has increased in the whole country what has been called in criminology as ‘crime web’.

The second most sensational murder was the killing of BUET student Abrar. On 7th October AbrarFahad was killed by the students of his University through torture. That torture has drawn attention of all people of the country in all educational institution of the country this murder was protested. More over in the whole year due to tension and personal conflict murder taken place. Another issue was that in the last year social crime increase and murder due to tension personal reason murder was higher than from terrorist group. In Tangail just to blackmail the neighbor 1 person killed his son.

In the last year most discussed issue was rape. In the whole year through different public media and social media news of rape was circulated. As per report of different agencies in 2019 there were more rapes. As per data of Bangladesh Mohila Parishad in 2018 total 697 rapes were reported where in the last year in the first six months there were 731 incidences of rape. Out of that 113 were gang raped and 26 were killed after raped. Last year child rape also increased. As per data of Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum, in the first half of the year it was 496 child rape which was 41% higher than 2018.

Last year, side by side, a character Hercules of old tale was observed by the people against rape. In the beginning of the year that character has appeared who has taken the responsibility of punishing the rapist in his own hand. On 26 January in Jhalakathi district a dead body was found where in his neck it was

In the last year most discussed issue was rape. In the whole year through different public media and social media news of rape was circulated. As per report of different agencies in 2019 there were more rapes. As per data of Bangladesh Mohila Parishad, in 2018 total 697 rapes were reported where in the last year in the first six months there were 731 incidences of rape. Out of that 113 were ganged raped and 26 were killed after raped. Last year child rape also increased. As per data of Bangladesh Shishu Adhikar Forum, in the first half of the year it was 496 child rape which was 41% higher than 2018.

written, "I am Shojol, I am a rapist, it is my punishment". Such type of dead body was found in other districts. Opinion was passed for and against Hercules in media.

In 2017 influx of Rohingya was there in Bangladesh. In 2018 Rohingya refuge were involved in many crimes. In 2019 the same trend was observed in case of dacoity, drug-smuggling, abduction, extortion, murder, etc. Some of them organized criminal groups also. As per report of Cox's Bazar police in last two years 471 cases were lodged against Rohingya out of which only drug cases were 200 and the accused were 1888. In 2019 in the whole year 35 Rohingya were cross-fired and 43 Rohingya were killed due to internal feud.

In the last year some judgments of sensational cases were given. Out of that Holey Artisan case and Nusrat Zahan murder case were significant. Within the seven months of the case by 61 hearing days on 24 October Nusrat Zahan Rafi murder case judgment was given. Related to the same crime in another case against the OC of Sonagazi Mr. Moazzem Hossain has been punished for 8 years by cyber tribunal. On 27 November the judgment of Holey Artisan case was given which has increased image of the judiciary. In the year there was no other important progress made to expedite the judgment. Having a good model of quick delivery of judgment in the country there was no much initiative to take action in that line.

In the year many financial corruptions took place. Out of that pillow scam, curtain scam, book scam, were more discussed. In addition to that issue of financial embezzlement by the government officials was a recent trend. This type of news was published many times in the year.

Peasant and Labor

According to Agriculture Census 2019, the total number of household in Bangladesh is more than 3.5 corer, out of which more than 2.9 corer are living in rural areas and 59 lakh are in urban areas. Out of the total household, 46.6 percent are farming household which is gradually reducing. Among them, 11.33% does not have any land of their own which declined more in 2019. However, in the last year the share of agriculture sector in GDP was 13.31%.

One of the mostly discussed topics in the field of agriculture at the beginning of the 2019 was the fall of paddy price and agricultural labourer's wage. Farmers faced difficulties to cut paddy from the field as the price of paddy was so low that the farmers could not be able to pay the wage of the farm labours. In some areas of the country, farmers protested in

One of the mostly discussed topics in the field of agriculture at the beginning of the 2019 was the fall of paddy price and agricultural laborer's wage. Farmers faced difficulties to cut paddy from the field as the price of paddy was so low that the farmers could not be able to pay the wage of the farm labors. In some areas of the country, farmers protested in different ways focusing labor crisis. Later, various professional (students, politicians, government and non-government officials and employees) came out to help the farmers, which were criticized in social media through various discussions.

different ways focusing labour crisis. Later, various professional (students, politicians, government and non-government officials and employees) came out to help the farmers, which were criticized in social media through various discussions. There was extreme discontent among the farmers as the price of paddy was not up to their demand. Especially, the situation was miserable for those who did not have their own land, the tenant farmers. Moreover, government could buy a very small portion of paddy directly from the farmers. But at the beginning of the Aman season, the government announced to purchase 6 lakh tons of paddy directly from the farmer at a rate of Tk 26 kg. Though it was also announced that not more than two tons of paddy would be purchased from a farmer. Apart from this, price hike of some other consumer goods like onion, vegetable were also discussed throughout the years. A rumor-driven spiral in the price of salt after onion has caused panic buying of salt across the country. The price of salt increased several times in just a few hours.

Furthermore, cattle farmers has brought some problems into the front like, not getting the sufficient price of milk, unusual price hike of fodder, inadequacy of veterinary doctor and excessive price of medicine. Discontent was there among the farmers as they did not get enough price by selling milk and in some areas they protested by pouring milk on the streets. In addition, at the end of the year a number of cows died across the country due to a new disease which caused a huge damage to the farmers. Initially, nodules develop on the skin of the infected cow

and then it suffers from fever. Therefore, the affected cows become sick. Within two or three days the lumps burst. At this stage flesh started to decompose from the wounds and odor spread around. This virus is referred as Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD).

In 2019, exports of readymade garments decreased in Bangladesh. Some small-scale factories were closed and many workers lost their job. Increase of production cost, decrease of demand and no increase in the price of cloths were reported as the major issues behind this situation. According to BGME, till November 2019, 61 factories were closed and 31,600 workers lost their job. Moreover, factory workers blocked the road and staged demonstration several times on the claim of their due salary. On the other hand, the participation of women workers in readymade garments declined due to lack of technical and other skills and more interest of men in garment work due of salary increment. Moreover, unstable situation was also created among the jute workers. Workers of 22 state-run jute mills were in the movement around the year. In December 10, 2 workers died during the hunger strike in front of Khulna jute mill which created agitation among the people.

According to BBS statistics, the number of industries in 2019 increased to 46,291 from 42,792 in 2013. However, during this time, the number of large industry decreased. The number of factories decreased by 16.70%, from 3639 to 3031 compared to 2012. On the other hand, the number of small industries decreased by 50.37%, from 15666 to 23557. At the same time, the number of medium-size industry declined by 50.61%, from 6103 to 3014.

According to the 2018 Labor Force Survey, the total population of Bangladesh is 161.3 million where women are 81.3 million and men 81.4 million. The working population is 67.6% of the total population (109.1 million). However, only 58.2% of the working population is engaged in the labor market of which 80.5% are male and 36.3% female. Beside this, 41.8% are staying outside the labour market. Moreover, 29.8% people are neither in education or work or training. The informal sector accounts for 85.1% of the total workforce and only 14.9% are formal. In case of skilled labour, maximum 32.4% skilled labor are engaged in agriculture sector while sector-wise not more than 40.6% people are engaged in agriculture. But, more than one-quarter of people engaged in the workforce has no formal education.

The unemployment rate in Bangladesh is 4.2 percent and 2.7 million. The unemployment rate was the same in the previous year. Despite the unchanged unemployment rate, the total number of unemployed people is increasing by about one lakh every year. The male unemployment rate is 3.1 percent while for women it is 6.7 percent. However, according to the World Bank, Bangladesh's unemployment rate is currently 14.2 percent and every year, 13 lakh people are entering the labor market. Among them, only more than 5 lakh people can enter permanently. The rate of technical education is only 14 percent which the government of Bangladesh plans to increase to 20 percent by 2020.

The presence of women in various fields of employment is increasing in Bangladesh. The participation of women in the labor market increased to 36.3% which was higher than the average of South Asia (35%). At present, 27% of the government officials/employees are women. In the last year, promotion of women in several important positions was noticed in Bangladesh.

According to UN Women, only 10 percent of the country's entrepreneurs are women. The participation of women in online business has increased recently. One of the main reasons behind this is that, this sector requires less investment and it can be operated from home.

According to the latest data of Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (November 2019), in 2019 the number of immigrant was 604060 and the total earned remittances was \$16667.79 million.

Environment

In the last year, the rivers of Bangladesh were declared as living entity for the first time. It was a significant step to avoid river catastrophes. Provision was also there to compensate the people affected by the attack of wild animal. In the last year, the production of Hilsa was estimated to exceed all the previous records. As a result, the position of Bangladesh was upgraded into third from fifth in the list of top countries in the world producing freshwater fish. Furthermore, the forest department of Bangladesh has published the atlas of one of the indicator species of aquatic ecosystem, Dolphin (Gongiyo and Iraboti). It will help in the assessment of aquatic ecosystem in the future.

In the last few years, in order to protect the environment, some areas of Bangladesh were declared as ecological crisis area (ECA). The department of environment arranged different programs by targeting these areas which was continued in the previous year. Additionally, eviction drive continued in different areas of the country including Dhaka and Cox's Bazar. Moreover, important

The migration of people from rural to urban area especially in Dhaka city continued. On the other hand, in terms of livability the position of Dhaka city was noticeably downwards in the last year. Meanwhile beside Dhaka, new concern has been raised in some other cities about air pollution. At the end of the year, Dhaka was recognized as the most air polluted city in the world.

direction has come from the court on account of leasing the crisis areas, especially Cox's Bazar, Sundarban and riverine areas. Environmental catastrophe in the only coral island of the country Saint Martin as a result of unrestricted tourism and pollution has turned into a major concern in the last year. The species of coral, crab and fish in this island are facing the loss. In 2018 an

inter-ministerial committee was formed regarding this matter. The committee was decided to ban the presence of tourist in the island at night. Decision were also made on making the number of tourists limited through online registration as well reducing the number of ships operating on the island. But no significant progress was there in the implementation of these recommendations.

Another rising concern of the year was the environment of Cox's Bazar and its surroundings, another critical area of Bangladesh, because of the influx of Rohingya refugees. Sundarban was also in the discussion throughout the year. In the last November, the forest has saved the country in the face of a strong tornado. The high court has opined that, Sundarban is like the lungs of Bangladesh as Amazon is the worlds. So, the court has expressed the opinion that it's the responsibility of all to protect Sundarban. But in this year, IUCN advised UNESCO to declare three regions of the world as the endangered world heritage and one of them was Sundarban.

In the last year, some major challenges in environment management have come forward. Practically, economic development and environmental crises are intertwined with each other. One excellent example of this could be the increased enthusiasm and focus on the discussion centering blue economy. The Government also expressed interest in this matter. But it's a major challenge to maintain both the environmental balance and sustainable yielding of ocean resources at the same time. Urbanization is another major challenge like this. The migration of people from rural to urban area especially in Dhaka city continued. On the other hand, in terms of livability the position of Dhaka city was noticeably downwards in the last year. Meanwhile beside Dhaka, new concern has been raised in some other cities about air pollution. At the end of the year, Dhaka was recognized as the most air polluted city in the world.

There was a significant improvement in the air quality of Dhaka due to the implementation of measures taken to prevent lead contamination in 1999. But the recent pollution has faded the previous success. In the dry season the situation is degrading more. Though various initiatives for the development of air quality of Dhaka have been heard, but such significant programs are not present in other major cities of the country. But Rajshahi city has set a bright example in reducing dust emission.

Additionally, in 2019, one of the major challenges was the rising infection of Dengue in Dhaka city. In the last year, the infection spread outside the Dhaka city. However, the example that Bangladesh set by banning polythene bags in 2002 faded considerably by the start of using polythene bag again. However, after the invention of the technology to manufacture decomposed polymer bags from jute, some initiatives have been taken for its successful commercial production. If this program is successful, Bangladesh would be well-known for its important contribution to alleviating polythene anxiety.

Following the work of Greta Thunberg on climate change at the global level, Bangladeshi environment activists especially children has raised their voice in the year. But no significance progress has taken place in the world climate conference (COP25) held in Madrid recently.

Many people from Bangladesh participated in this conference but overall the conference did not yield significant promise from the developed countries. Many opined that Bangladesh needs to be more active in the proper use of the International Climate Fund (GCF). In addition, emphasis needs to be given on limiting carbon emissions within Bangladesh, which would help the country in bargaining in the international arena.

In the last year, under the Bangabandhu National Award Rule 2019 for conservation of wildlife and biodiversity, honorary award was given for the first time to four persons and organizations of Bangladesh. Also, Bangladeshi scientist Dr. Salimul Haque was placed in the list of 100 most influential people in the world for their contribution to climate policy.