



Dev partners, govt agree corruption eats up a portion of aid

FE Report

The donors and the government have agreed that a portion of the development assistance is being wasted through corruption while a significant amount never reaches the target people.

The donors and the government came to the conclusion at a session of the Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF) meeting Monday. Planning Secretary M Fazlur Rahman was

the keynote speaker during the session on aid governance and implementation of development programmes.

The government has taken a move to amalgamate Project Profile (PP), Project Concept Paper (PCP) and Technical Assistance Project Paper (TAPP) into a Development Project Proforma (DPP) to simplify project documentation in the country.

The donors agreed that they were also to blame for some of the unnecessary delays in project implementation. They, however, committed to further harmonising their aid procedures so that the government can utilise the money without hassles.

The donors and the government also stressed the need for efficient and speedy utilisation of aid to spur development and curb corruption in the government's development programmes.

"Some of the development partners have acknowledged that the Development Assistance they give to the government often were subject to corrupt practices, Martin Dinham of the DFID told the reporters after the BDF meeting.

Dinham said to better utilise the aid, some of the donors have already started utilising the local expertise and at the same time

they also have taken steps to harmonise their aid procedures.

Talking to the reporters after the session, Finance and Planning Minister M Saifur Rahman said the government has taken a number of measures to simplify project documentation.

He said more measures will be under way so that a project can be profiled easily and the line ministry can utilise the aid without hassles and the project can be completed speedily.

The minister said not only the government, but also the donors were sometimes responsible for delays in the implementation process.

"Sometimes they became very concerned about the appointment of foreign consultants rather than the project itself," Saifur said.

The minister added that sometimes the foreign countries allowed the corrupt officials to deposit their illegal money with their banks.

If they stopped this scope for siphoning off money by these Marcoses, there would have been less corruption in government jobs.

A lot of things determine the quality of expenditure and different line ministries have different problems, he added.

The minister also said the government also took some steps to simplify project approval, tender approval and evaluation of tender, which reduced a lot of complications relating to the development programme.

With the assistance of Asian Development Bank, the government has taken measures to implement the suggestions made by the Expenditure Review Commission, he added.

A committee has been formed, which will look into the matter.

Speaking on behalf of the donors, Martin Dinham appreciated the government's initiatives to simply project documenta-

tions. But he said more needs to be done to make prudent use of aid in the country.