

Bangladesh Teacher-Student Development Bank: Some Concepts And Proposals

Dr. Md. Abdur Rahman

A major portion of total population of Bangladesh is related with education. Among them some are teachers and some are students, some are officers and some others are staffs. We should think and discuss the future of these teachers and students in the light of social reality and the present situation of the country. We believe that we have not yet paid due respect to the teacher community though teachership is regarded as a noble profession in Bangladesh. If teachers are not duly honoured and respected, as a builder of man they will be in problems to fulfill their promise to impart the noble duty in educating the future generation with ideal education. Moreover those who come to teachership completing higher education specially in non-government schools and colleges do not get mentionable financial benefits at the time of retirement after completing their job. They have to pass the rest of the life through great difficulties and worries with their children and they live in abyss of despair. On the other hand, the facilities of education for the student between the cities and villages are not balanced or equitable. At present for financial insolvency the student of the villages are deprived of education at various levels specially in the higher education. A great proportion of students do not get higher education for the limitation of seats in the public universities in spite of having required qualifications. The learners of lower class and middle class do not get opportunities in the private universities for financial insolvency of the respective families. For this reason the disparity among the students of the cities and the villages and lower and middle classes in education is increasing day by day which is not acceptable. This is against the fundamental rights depicted in our constitution. We should mitigate the problem immediately with the concerted efforts of all concerned. It is imperative to remove the prevailing discrimination in the sector of higher education. It is noted that the students aged from 18 to 23 get the opportunity to be admitted in the universities 11.9% in India, 29.3% in Malaysia, 37.3% in Thailand and 82.3% in America. But 4% to 6% eligible student in Bangladesh get the opportunity to enter in the universities which is not desirable for our nation. But it is under consideration of the inclusion of 40% of total students in professional higher education in poverty alleviation strategic plan in Bangladesh.

Moreover, if we evaluate the economy of Bangladesh in the light of the history last 36 years, there will be a crystal scenario about rate of growth of the national savings and investments which is not encouraging compared to neighboring countries and other developing countries. In the fiscal year 2005-06 the rate of the national savings and internal savings are GDP 20.26% and 26.8%. In the fiscal year 2005-06 the rate of national investment is 24.97% and the contributions of government and private sector are estimated respectively GDP 6.30% and 18.67%. This rate of investment is not desirable like a developing country i.e. Bangladesh. We all concerned should be more active in the activities of promoting saving and investment.

We could not think profoundly as before about this vital issue necessary for the country in the past. We could not also be able to use properly all the available systems or opportunities of our country to increase savings. But the matter of teaching of savings to the new generation i.e. the students at grassroots level should be brought under consideration nationally and it is urgent need of business to think who can perform this type of duty. I think if the teacher community is engaged in this work, much advancement is possible than that of present condition. Inspite of the continuous efforts of the government and the non-government organizations to promote this saving and investment, we could not achieve our national target or the millennium development goal. It is hoped that remarkable advancement can be achieved if our teachers & students and all concerned of the society are more conscious in saving or habituated in it i.e. are taught of saving money.

We know that 'Education is the backbone of a nation' and the teacher community of Bangladesh as the focal bearer of the education, play a vital role in this respect. Our teacher community performs a lot of responsibilities for the sake of our national interest. Even in many countries of the 3rd World, as a harbinger they enkindle the spirit to root out the national crisis in a mastery manner. The western nations of the World are proud of delighted

and expedited contribution of their teacher community and of their developed education system. Though the teaching is the noblest and the oldest profession we could not able to pay due respect to them and are unable to introduce any sort of active initiative or any substantial program for the welfare of the teachers especially in mitigating poverty and financial insolvency during the past three decades. It needs not to say that teachers community are not duly respected and honoured or they might be in dis-owned by the local or national authority for their policy contribution but will have to come out from the burden of failure at the national level and have to pay attention to increase the national savings in which the role of the teachers is inevitable. Because only the teachers can teach future generation about savings, inspire them to save regularly and advertise for savings.

We think if the teachers & students work unitedly in performing this noble national task for the progress of the country, the national savings and investment will noticeably be increased and thereby our government will get a great opportunity of investing this resource with joint venture for employment generation through industrialization.

A specialized bank for the teachers & students like agriculture bank namely Bangladesh Teacher-Student Development Bank can be set up to proceed the future generation in maintenance of human resource through proper planning. If such a bank is set up, what the frame work of it would be and it is necessary to take the opinions of people from all sectors about its objectives. To ensure economic stability of the teachers & students in Bangladesh and to materialize it in a planned way, the following proposals and prospects are given below:

1. Through setting up such a specialized bank for the teachers & students, the teacher community can be involved in the greater development process of the nation and it will be possible to make them effective in this process because they themselves will save and inspire the students and their guardians for savings.

According to the information of BANBAISE of education ministry in 2006, at present there are 82864 primary schools, 19766 secondary and higher secondary schools, 1302 colleges, 9051 madrasahs, 117 polytechnic institutes, 64 vocational institutes, 22 public universities and 54 private universities in the country. From the statistics of 2006, the total number of the students for primary education is about 15245114 (2004) and that of junior and high school is about 8081956. The number of college students is 100241 & that of madrasah is about 2945824 i.e.

According to the statistics of 2006, the total educational institutions of all levels in the country is about 91719, total number of teachers is about 552977, the total student is about 26335368 and total number of teachers & students are about 26888345.

If each teacher & student is taken under the proposed bank account and they deposit 100 taka per month the total savings amount will be 26888345001 and thereby annual amount will be 32266014000 which will be increased at geometric rate per year. If this large amount can be invested in the industries, the GDP of the country will be increased. On other hand, the income of the account holder will also be increased as they are saving's account holder and share holder of the proposed bank.

2. It will not be so difficult to deposit a huge capital if we set up such a teacher-student development bank in Bangladesh, where the shares of this bank are to be open to share market specially for the teachers, students of all levels and the staffs of all categories of the education department, all educational institutions, and the staffs of these institutions are given preference. Besides, the entrepreneurs of home and abroad can come forward with investment in this bank. Moreover, savings deposited from the teachers and students will be increased every year in geometrical rate. For this, the creation of employment will be possible in great extent every year through the investment in industrialization if this saving would increase in a disciplined way.

3. Every parent want to ensure the future safety for their children and the guardians must save money monthly for their children induced with motivation. In this way a huge amount of money can be deposited in the saving accounts if an account is opened for every child as soon as he/she gets admitted into the schools and the guardians save money for maximum 20 years i.e. up to the age of twenty three or five

years on monthly basis. The students of any level of education will get encouragement to be self-reliant by getting this type of facility or credit given from this bank at the end of student life. Or on the other hand, they can have an opportunity of higher education from this money he/she deposited after the end of student life. Moreover, the students will be able to implement the self-employment projects in any phase of student life and will be able to find a way to be established avoiding the risk of life through this process. For this opening a saving account in the bank for every student can be made mandatory as soon as he/she enters into the schools.

4. The government will have to provide some facilities to establish such a bank e.g. the exemption of VAT for 15 to 20 years and tax holiday to operate a savings account.

5. In Britain the state provides all necessary facilities for normal and healthy life at a cheaper rate to the people of any age. For this child benefit at childhood, unemployment allowance at youth, a handsome pension at old age, widow benefit for the widows are provided. As a child benefit 16.5 pounds for first child, 11.5 pounds for second child are deposited in every week in the accounts of mothers and government provides this amount of money for the children upto 18 years.

The government can provide such benefit to the accounts issued for the poor disadvantaged families of the villages and towns if teacher and student bank would be established. Moreover, the adult benefit or special allowance for the widows and handicaps which has been started, can also be brought under this bank.

6. If this bank is established it will be possible to include all the educational institutions of Bangladesh i.e. all primary and secondary schools, government or non-government educational institutions of all levels and all types of universities. Moreover, the staffs of all educational institutions and the department of education can also be merged with this main stream.

7. To bring transparency in the financial management of the educational institutions of Bangladesh, this bank at one stage can materialize the implementation of various service-oriented programs such as financial management, audit services or others with appointing appropriate manpower for every institution.

8. If such a bank is established in the ownership of the students and the teachers, the staffs and the teachers of education sector/educational institutions of Bangladesh will be inspired and will come forward to deposit money for future saving and guarding of the students will also be shared with this program.

9. The Government, the investors the entrepreneurs of home and abroad, NGO's and bankers can come forward to establish such a bank. This will be a milestone for the nation.

10. A data bank under this bank can be set up for detail information of all teachers and students and staffs related to education of Bangladesh. As a result in light of collected information, it will be easy to start any welfare project with the money received from the government or donor organizations.

11. If proposed bank is established, it will be possible to build up export-oriented industries according to the economic demand suited for local resources in every district of Bangladesh with the financing of such bank or in joint venture with the investors, the entrepreneurs of home and abroad. As a result, scope and opportunities for unemployed people will be created. Thereby enhancement of industrialization with employment generation would be achieved in a greater extent and part time jobs for the poor students would be ensured like developed countries.

12. If the proposed bank is established, it would be possible to give full and half scholarships to the students of the poor or disadvantaged from the income earned from the industries financed by such bank. Besides, if donor organizations of home and abroad and kind and wealthy persons of the country can come forward for a large number of the students, different kinds of scholarships could easily be channeled. It is mentionable that in the public universities, there is no scope of identification of poor students and students' financial capabilities are not taken into account at the time of scholarships given. On the other hand, in private universities, the poor students are identified and scholarship or financial assistance for them are to be considered and at present 54 private universities of the country spend about 100

crore taka every year in this sector. Moreover, some renowned banks of Banks of Bangladesh like, Grammen Bank, Dutch Bangla Bank, Islami Bank Bangladesh Ltd. and NOG like ASA, BRAC and other NGO's provide scholarships to the poor students through their different programs for getting higher education. If it is possible to identify the students of poor families and to ensure to give financial benefits, the benefited students who are eager for higher education will be increased every year. It is mentionable that the occurrence of the student drop out which about 5 lacs from class nine or class ten in the year 2006 is a great havoc for our educational system.

13. A long term scheme for manpower export program can be taken through the proposed bank specially for skilled technician/labour, Doctor, agriculturist, engineer, management expert, financial expert etc. can be exported to the foreign countries with financial support from this bank. Even this bank for this manpower export can finance for their higher education with contract system and thereby scope of educated human resource management would be achieved for the country and that would be an opportunity for increased remittance.

14. Through the proposed bank easier steps can be adopted for the present system of salary, allowances of the teachers received from the government:

15. Under the ownership of such bank a 24 hours TV channel can be started so that the students of the country can get subject-based knowledge easily, special programmes can also be arranged emphasizing on health-education, agro-based-education and different kinds of vocational education. Through these programmes common people along with the students will be specially benefited and motivated.

16. It should have to be ensured to have eligible teachers' representative from primary schools to universities to the "Board of Governors" of the said bank.

17. If such a bank is established in the ownership of the teachers & students, setting up of specialized hospital for them in different district would be possible from where the teachers & students can afford medical service from these hospitals at lower cost or without cost. Besides this, in the time to come free medical service could be available for the aged teachers of Bangladesh.

18. There are 54 non-government universities in Bangladesh there are also some universities under the process of permission or recognition from the government. If all the entrepreneurs of these universities and the teachers of the public universities come together, it will be possible to set up such a bank and they can play a great role in the partnership of the bank by taking the advantage of buying the shares of such a bank.

It is a great necessity to build up human resource in a developing country like Bangladesh. For this, necessary reforms and development of the existing education system can not be denied. It is necessary to consider the increasing of investment in education sector and the creation of the opportunity of self employment and the mobility of labour, necessary evaluation or assessment of human capital. There is a relationship between the growth rate of expenditure and income in education sector of the country in a fixed period. The contribution of education is not less to increase national income. So, emphasis will have to be given on the development of health education with proper education system to formulate human capital for economic development. About this the renowned Professor T.W. Schultz said as his realization from the findings of his research: 'It is as if we had a map of resources which did not include a mighty river and its tributaries. The particular river is fed by schooling, learning on the job, advances in health, and the growing stock of information of the economy.'

If such a bank is established, through the consensus and active initiative of the entrepreneurs, investor, bankers, teachers, students and sharing with others concerned in our society in forming human capital which will turn the future generation into skillful human resource and the nation will go far ahead in the field of economic development as we believe.

(The author is a Deputy Secretary and Principal, Dhaka Mohanagar Mohila College, Luxembazar, Dhaka.)