

## 96,000 diploma students getting WB stipends

UNB, Dhaka

Around 96,000 diploma students from 43 public, 50 private polytechnic institutes have been receiving stipends under the Skills and Training Enhancement Project (STEP) financed by the World Bank.

The number of the students receiving stipend have already surpassed the project target, says a WB media release.

The project also promotes women's skills training and employability through technical and vocational education. The stipend programme initiated a universal coverage scheme for all the female diploma students in 2012.

The female beneficiary share has increased from 10 percent to 15 percent, while the female trainees in supported courses reached 30 percent against the target of 20 percent.

The government has hired 1,141 contractual teachers in 49 public polytechnics, filling up 98 percent of the vacancies in these institutions. The newly recruited teachers are receiving pedagogical and subject training at home and abroad.

The project has signed a partnership agreement with Nanyang Polytechnic International, Singapore and for teachers' training. About 65 percent of the polytechnics established industrial partnerships for internships and job placement and provided job counselling to all students.

The project is also assisting 33 polytechnics to implement their development plans and supporting 64 short-course training providers.

The WB approved US \$79 million STEP project in June 2010 and Canada approved grants equivalent to US \$20 million in March 2013.

The government of Bangladesh has requested the World Bank for additional financing to increase the development gains further in the sector.