



গণপ্রজাতন্ত্রী বাংলাদেশ সরকার  
অর্থনৈতিক সম্পর্ক বিভাগ  
শেবে বাংলা নগর, ঢাকা।  
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## Media Release

### Govt Willing to Set Up Separate Economic Zone for Fisheries

**Dhaka, 01 August 2023:** Hon'ble Minister of the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock Mr. S M Rezaul Karim, MP has said that the government is willing to set up a separate economic zone for the fisheries sector for furthering the growth of this industry.

The hon'ble Minister said this while speaking as the chief guest of a workshop on 'Fisheries Subsidies in the Context of LDC Graduation and Way Forward' held at the NEC Conference Room of the capital today. Support to Sustainable Graduation Project (SSGP) of the Economic Relations Division (ERD) organized the event.

Responding to a proposal coming from the relevant stakeholders for setting up an economic zone for fisheries processing-- hon'ble Minister ensured that the government would provide all kinds of necessary support including land acquisition support in setting up the zone. He also said the success of such economic zones depends on spontaneous investment from the private entrepreneurs.

The hon'ble Minister also informed that the government had initiated a project to encourage deep-sea fishing. He also informed that the government is taking strict measures to discourage overfishing.

Secretary of the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock Dr. Nahid Rashid, President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) Barrister Md. Sameer Sattar and President of Bangladesh Frozen Food Exporters Association Kazi Belayet Hossain were present as special guests of the workshop. ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan chaired the event.

It is notable that during the 12th Ministerial Conference (MC-12) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) held in June 2022, the WTO members adopted the Agreement of Fisheries Subsidies.

The disciplines adopted in the agreement is expected to have important and positive impacts on the sustainability of marine fish stocks and fisheries through curbing subsidies to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing; prohibiting subsidies to fishing on overfished stocks; and prohibiting subsidies to fishing on unregulated high seas.

Though Bangladesh does not provide substantial subsidies to marine fisheries, the facility of providing partial subsidies to this sector might be limited once Bangladesh becomes a non-LDC developing country.

In this context, the workshop was organized to identify the next course of actions for continuing fisheries subsidies in the aftermath of Bangladesh's LDC graduation against the backdrop of the aforementioned WTO Agreement of Fisheries Subsidies.



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Secretary of the Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock Dr. Nahid Rashid, in her speech, observed that there are huge untapped opportunities in the blue economy sector of the country. She also called for increased public and private investment for tapping such opportunities.

ERD Secretary Ms. Sharifa Khan, in her speech, recommended the formulation of a roadmap to tap the opportunities existing in the blue economy sector.

President of Dhaka Chamber of Commerce & Industry (DCCI) Barrister Md. Sameer Sattar, in his speech said that a comprehensive study needs to be carried out on the impact of withdrawing fishery subsidies in Bangladesh can actively participate in this negotiation and can raise this issue at the next Ministerial Conference of the WTO based on the findings of the study.

President of Bangladesh Frozen Food Exporters Association Kazi Belayet Hossain called for duty waiver on the import of fisheries instruments. He also called for further value addition and skill enhancement in this sector while emphasizing the need for providing bonded warehouse facilities for this sector.

Welcoming the participants to the seminar, Additional Secretary of ERD and Project Director of SSGP Mr. Farid Aziz informed that the government has taken various measures to ensure a smooth and sustainable transition from LDC status.

Member of Bangladesh Competition Commission Mr. Md. Hafizur Rahman delivered the keynote presentation of the event. Mr. Rahman, in his presentation, highlighted the key features of the WTO Agreement of Fisheries Subsidies.

He called for gradual elimination of cash incentives by 2026. Mr. Rahman also recommended developing a reporting system of catch in a systematic way. Mr. Rahman also recommended exploring options for using innovative non-actionable subsidies to fisheries sector.

Director General of the Department of Fisheries Kh. Mahbulul Haque, Chairman of Bangladesh Fisheries Development Corporation Sayeed Mahmood Belal Haider and Director of Bangladesh Fisheries Research Institute Dr. Md. Zulfikar Ali spoke during the event as panelists.

Noting that Bangladesh is yet to fully explore the potentials of marine fishery resources-- speakers at the workshop called for enhancing the domestic capacity in this regard.

Senior officials from government ministries, agencies and research institutions, representatives from relevant trade associations and think tanks attended the workshop.

**End**

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