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The EU conspiracy to establish the WB's authority on MDTF is a neo-colonial Make the role of the WB on MDTF Public

In the recent past Bangladesh Development Forum (BDF) meeting held in Dhaka, the government and development partners in Bangladesh worked out basically to mobilize finances for the implementation of PRS II (Poverty Reduction Strategy II). Beside formal consultation on the implementation of PRS II, both the parties, the government and the development partners, also discussed on the implantation modalities of the country's Multi Donor Trust Fund (MDTF), a bi-lateral funding mechanism of the Annex 1 countries in Bangladesh to support country's adaptation and mitigation efforts.

This is to mention that following the Smack of Category 4 Tropical Cyclone, Cyclone Sidr, in Bangladesh in 2007, the development partners in Bangladesh expressed their commitment for helping Bangladesh in mitigating climate change impacts and they proposed creation of a trust fund for the country "Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF)". Since the establishment of MDTF in September 2008, the major contributors to this fund the UK government, has been pushing the government to channel this fund through the World Bank. DFID is insisting, against the wishes of the NGO/CSOs in Bangladesh, that the World Bank manages the trust fund. In fact the rich countries want to steer the management of climate fund through establishing authority of their allied forces, the IFIs, in its management.

Meantime the Government of Bangladesh has prepared a 'Draft Concept Note' on the management and operation modalities of MDTF. As proposed in the 'Draft Concept Note' on the MDTF, the secretariat will be based in the World Bank office in Dhaka. In this relation, the Bank will be co-chairing the management committee; and it will be in charge of the day-to-day operating of the Fund. As host of the MDTF, the WB will administer, manage, supervise and monitor implementation of MDTF's projects/programme on behalf of the contributing development partners and, for this job, the Bank will charge a fee of US \$8 million to recover all direct and indirect administrative costs. Equity and Justice Working Group Bangladesh organized series of campaign, policy advocacy, demonstration, rally, human chain and other protests against Bank's involvement in MDTF management.

EquityBD and other rights organization in Bangladesh claimed that the Bank has a long history of imposing economic conditions on developing countries, fuelling unjust debts and promoting dirty development. In contrast, there are examples of funds being managed in Bangladesh in democratic and transparent ways, with active participation by civil society. Prior to the BDF meeting in Dhaka in February 2010, EquityBD organized a press conference in Dhaka and called the government to establish its sovereign and democratic ownership on the management of MDTF. They also termed the donor's domination and conditionality, especially of the UK and EU, on the MDTF management as neo-colonial as they have been consistently pushing Bangladesh to accept World Bank to manage the multi donor trust fund.

A number a British NGO namely World Development Movement, Christian Aid, Jubilee Debt Campaign, Friends of the Earth also expressed solidarity with the campaign events in Bangladesh. They also organized similar protest and demonstration in from the DFID office in London. They asked the British government not to channel climate funds through the WB.

Although the government of Bangladesh opposed such donors condition earlier but after the recently held 'Bangladesh Development Forum' meeting it seems that government is going to accept WB's role on MDTF in the name of Technical Assistance from the Bank. In a concluding press brief of BDF meeting on 16th February, the Finance Minister of the government of Bangladesh, AMA Muhith said that 'technical and fiduciary management' of the fund might be given to the WB. Bank will get 1% of the fund for its technical assistance. Such statement is just opposite to the government's previous position and, it presume that donors in the BDF meet make the country bound to accept the WB's role on the MDTF in any form. During this press brief, Mr Chris Austin, chief of DFID in Bangladesh, was also beside the minister.

On 18 February, EquityBD criticized the statement of the Finance Minister and raised the question on the necessity of technical assistance for the WB for such a small amount of trust fund while Bangladesh has proven experiences of managing huge volume country's development budget by its own. Accepting WB under such a ground is a lame excuse and this is just to satisfy donor's whim.

Given this context of CSOs activism and protest, a recent statement of Ambassador Stefan Frowein, head of delegation of the EU to Bangladesh, created new controversy on the management modalities of MDTF. On 9 March 2010 a high level EU delegation, led by Ambassador Stefan Frowein, met the State Minister for Environment and Forest. After this meeting Mr Frowein told the press that WB's involvement in the MDTF is temporary, which is contrary to the statement of the State Minister that says 'MDTF will be operated under the authority and leadership of Bangladesh'. Such contradictory statements from the government of Bangladesh and from its development partners are worrisome. Government should disclose the terms of reference of having technical assistance from the WB. It has been observed in the past that a lion-share of development assistance either sent back to its origin or to the IFIs by the name of technical assistance.

EquityBD and its alliance calls the development nations to pay back their carbon debt and ecological debt to the climate victim countries as the present climate crisis has resulted from the historical exploitation of global public goods excessively by the developed countries.

The rights groups are; Arpon, AMKS, Eso, Bangladesh Krishak Federation, CSRL, EquityBD, Kishani Shova, Lead Trust, On line knowledge center, Potikrit, La via campesina, MFTD, Prantik, Purbasha, RCASV, Swadin Bangla Garments Sromik Federation, Solidarity Workshop, Sirajgonj Flood Forum, Uddipan, Voice, EquityBD and World Development Movement -UK

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