

Cox's Bazar Municipality Showcases Regional Progress on Local Economic Development and Sustainable Tourism

Cox's Bazar:: Saturday, 22 November, 2025 Cox's Bazar Municipality hosted a high-level regional campaign and training program titled "Local Economic Development and Sustainable Tourism Growth," aimed at strengthening the local economy, promoting sustainable tourism, and fostering stronger public-private collaboration.

The event was inaugurated by Md. Rezaul Maqsud Jahedi, Secretary, Local Government Division (LGD), Ministry of Local Government, Rural Development and Cooperatives, as Chief Guest. More than 200 participants attended, including representatives from Cox's Bazar Municipality and neighboring municipalities—Maheshkhali, Teknaf, and Chakaria—along with private-sector leaders, women entrepreneurs, youth, and media representatives.

The program was presided over by Shamim Al Imran, Administrator of Cox's Bazar Municipality and Deputy Director, LGD. Distinguished Special guests included: Mahmudul Hasan, Director General, Monitoring, Inspection and Evaluation Wing, LGD; A B M Shawkat Iqbal Shaheen, Director General (Additional Secretary), Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED); Dr. Monira Begum, Additional Secretary, General Economics Division (GED), Planning Commission; Dr. Rokhsana Tarannum, Joint Secretary, Economic Relations Division; Helal Hussain, Country Director, Swisscontact Bangladesh

The welcome remarks were delivered by Parvez Mohammad Asheque, Team Leader of PRABRIDDHI, followed by an in-depth presentation of the LED model and achievements of PRABRIDDHI by Wahedur Rahman, Project Director and Joint Secretary, LGD.

Administrator Shamim Al Imran presented PRABRIDDHI's progress in Cox's Bazar Municipality, highlighting improvements in digital services, tourism facilitation, and municipal management. Private-sector partners—Turtle Venture, AIT, and DIPTI—shared their experiences and results from collaborating with PRABRIDDHI, especially in strengthening digital ecosystems and entrepreneurship. The session also featured a documentary screening and thematic discussions on the LED framework, sustainability, and local-level innovation.

In his address, Secretary Md. Rezaul Maqsood Jahedi emphasized the strategic importance of Local Economic Development in the current national context. He noted:

“Local Economic Development deserves greater priority for mobilizing local resources, enhancing business competitiveness, and accelerating local growth. Based on its proven impact, this initiative will be expanded to district-level municipalities,” he said. He further added, “The 37% increase in revenue in Bogura Municipality during the current phase can serve as a model to be replicated nationwide.”

Highlighting the role of the Municipal Capacity Index (MCI) in improving municipal performance, he noted: “MCI indicators will guide performance-based resource allocation and foster healthy competition among participating municipalities. Stronger local economies will ultimately reinforce national economic progress.”

Special guests acknowledged PRABRIDDHI's transformative contributions across seven municipalities and recommended integrating climate-responsive strategies, improved waste management models, and long-term sustainability measures.

Administrator Shamim Al Imran stated: “Our aim is to establish a sustainable municipal business model that communities can operate independently, ensuring long-term continuity beyond the project period.”

Swisscontact Country Director Helal Hossain added: “Swisscontact works in over 40 countries to advance sustainable economic development. Through PRABRIDDHI, we have strengthened municipal leadership, promoted entrepreneurship,

and enhanced local governance. With continued efforts, achieving inclusive growth in Bangladesh is within reach.”

An exhibition was arranged alongside the seminar, featuring Cox’s Bazar Municipality’s development initiatives, PRABRIDDI’s achievements in different municipalities, and contributions from partner organizations. Attendees also received hands-on demonstrations at the municipality’s One-Stop Service Booth, where they learned about streamlined processes for trade license renewal, holding tax payment, and access to various citizen services.

Following the seminar, a two-day LED training program began, engaging municipal officials and private-sector representatives in practical sessions on identifying local challenges, mapping economic opportunities, and designing Local Economic Development plans. Participants worked in groups to analyze their respective municipal contexts, strengthening their capacity to develop actionable strategies for local growth.

The regional campaign concluded with reaffirmed commitments from municipal leaders, government institutions, and development partners to scale successful LED models, deepen public-private collaboration, and promote sustainable economic development across Bangladesh.