



UNITED NATIONS

MEDIA RELEASE

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UN in Bangladesh makes 'Tiger' its mascot to localize the MDGs

Dhaka: Not only to boost the morale of the Bangladeshi cricketers in the 2007 Cricket World Cup, but to inspire the whole nation to work for achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, the United Nations Country Team in Bangladesh has made a teenage 'Tiger' its mascot to localize the MDGs. The teenage 'Tiger' has been named as '**Bagha**' in Bengali.

'**Bagha**' came into life during the production process of an animation (cartoon) series on the MDGs in 2005. The cartoon series, which is aimed at advancing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) attainment for the country through using this infotainment device, uses the roaring royal Bengal Tiger as the MDG mascot for Bangladesh.

The United Nations in Bangladesh, in cooperation with the British High Commission and DFID Bangladesh produced the eight animation segments to promote the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Bangladesh, especially among youth. Each segment introduces the relevant MDG, the challenges and achievements associated with Bangladesh, and what the viewer can do to help the nation meet the MDGs and to help harness the interest and the energy of the people of Bangladesh to fight poverty.

Eminent cultural personality Mr. Mustafa Monwar, appreciating the creative initiative, said, "National culture, symbol and icons should not be confined to museums. Those should rather be employed innovatively to achieve the developmental goals for moving ahead with the changing time."

"The fundamental beauty of these films is that they take the MDGs and other concepts that are often buried in the development jargons and turn them into something real, tangible and understandable, particularly for young people," Mr. Monwar added.

Meanwhile, UNICEF Representative in Bangladesh Mr. Louis-Georges Arsenault said: "Six of the eight MDGs relate directly to children. So what better way to reach kids than to make fun and informative cartoons?"

This is what the MDGs are all about – thinking of new, creative and innovative ways to reach people. We know in Bangladesh that animation can be a powerful tool and is a great method of communication, he said, referring to the success of the Meena initiative that has created waves as everyone in Bangladesh knows her.



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The Millennium Development Goals are a set of internationally agreed targets for reducing poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, combating HIV/AIDS and discrimination against women by 2015.

The MDGs represent a simple, but powerful idea. By setting basic targets for a number of critically important development outcomes, they provide guidance and direction towards the achievement of eight key goals, beginning with decisive reduction of poverty.

If the world achieves the MDGs, more than 500 million people will be lifted out of poverty. A further 250 million will no longer suffer from hunger. 30 million children and two million mothers who might reasonably have been expected to die will be saved.

With a view to fulfill the commitments, Bangladesh has made significant progress in achieving universal primary education (goal 2), which is just 17% below than the target set for 2015 and in promoting gender equality and women empowerment (goal 3) which is very close to fulfill its target set for 2015. Also, Bangladesh has strong initiative to reduce child mortality (goal 4) as presently the number of deaths per thousand stands 82 for children under the age of five while the target for 2015 is to bring that figure to 50 deaths per thousand.

But, challenges remain in other fields like eradication of extreme poverty and hunger (goal 1), improving maternal health (goal 5) and to ensure environmental sustainability (goal 7). In terms of combating HIV/AIDS, Bangladesh needs stronger advocacy and awareness building among the people.

Also, to develop a global partnership for development with the developed countries, Bangladesh needs strong advocacy policy to assure cooperation from the donors.

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For further information please contact: Mr. Sakil Faizullah, Communications Officer via email: sakil.faizullah@undp.org phone: 8118600 ext 24 98, mobile: 01713 0 49900