



## Unemployment Remains a Major Challenge Since July Uprising, Says Youth Affairs Adviser



Labour, Employment and Youth Affairs Adviser Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan: collected picture

Asif Mahmud Sajib Bhuiyan, Adviser on Labour, Employment and Youth Affairs, has acknowledged that unemployment remains one of the major unresolved issues that contributed to last year's July uprising.

Speaking on Thursday morning at a workshop jointly organized by the Bangladesh Investment Development Authority (BIDA) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the adviser emphasized the need for urgent and coordinated action to create employment opportunities for the country's youth.

"Eradicating unemployment remains our biggest challenge," said Bhuiyan. "The Ministry of Youth and Sports is working actively to address this issue. However, after Bangladesh's graduation from the LDC category, the challenges will only intensify."

At the event, it was disclosed that discussions are underway with the Bangladesh Bank to establish a BDT 1 billion (approx. USD 10 million) fund to support startups. In addition, another USD 30 million may be mobilized from private sector sources. Officials believe that proper utilization of these funds could help bring forward innovative business ideas and support aspiring entrepreneurs.

BIDA Chairman Chowdhury Ashiq Mahmud Bin Harun noted that Bangladesh has traditionally focused on attracting large-scale foreign direct investment (FDI), often sidelining smaller local entrepreneurs.

"To change this, we are working to improve coordination across all government departments," he said, indicating a shift in strategy to support small and medium enterprises (SMEs) more effectively.

The workshop aimed to equip young entrepreneurs with tools and guidance to launch sustainable businesses, addressing not only economic challenges but also the broader issue of youth discontent that has echoed since the July movement.