



RMMRU Obhishon o Shonar Manush Shommilon 2018

Obhishon o Shonar Manush Shommilon Aims and Objectives

With four decades of active participation in the global market, international labour migration has become a key social, political and economic discourse in Bangladesh. Migration is not only an avenue of employment for a section of those who join the labour force each year, and a source of foreign exchange for the country, it also contributes immensely for attaining various social and economic development targets of Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDGs). The net foreign exchange earnings from migration sector is 3 times more than ready-made garments. The remittances sent by migrants is 12 times more than Foreign Direct Investment and 7 times more than foreign aid. Migrant who therefore are the golden sons and daughters of Bangladesh. It is our responsibility to ensure better services to them, honour them and honour those who ensure the rights of the migrants.

The Government of Bangladesh is deeply committed to good governance of migration. It has framed new law and policy, decentralized some of the functions of migration processes up to district level and provided space to civil society organizations to innovate new methods of extending services including information campaign to local level mediation for ensuring justice to the migrants. Since 1995 the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) has been working in different national and international arenas with the government. It has more than 60 basic researches on migration. Through a sustained campaign and by facilitating the visit of UN Committee Chair on Migrant Workers' Convention to Bangladesh, RMMRU gave the last push to the government to ratify the 1990 UN Convention on Migrant Workers. At the request of the government RMMRU drafted the first Overseas Employment Policy 2006 and upon request from Law Commission it prepared the initial civil society draft law of Migration and Overseas Employment Act 2013. RMMRU is organising the third Obhishon o Shonar Manush Shommilon at the "Hall of Fame" of the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre (BICC), Dhaka in 25 January 2018.

Through festivity of the Shommilon, RMMRU aims to connect the aspirant, current as well as returnee migrant workers with all types of organizations that work for migrants' rights and provide services.

In this Shommilon RMMRU highlights the need for adoption of Migration Vision 2030. One of the key features of the Vision is to declare a decade of migration. Through this festival as well RMMRU urges the Chief Guest, Mr. Nurul Islam, BSc, MP, and the Hon'ble Minister for EWOE to convince the Hon'ble Prime Minister to declare 2020-2029 as the decade of migration.

Reflecting our rich cultural heritage, Obhishon o Shonar Manush Shommilon 2018 will feature popular music, puthi paath, migrants' life in dance performance etc. A dialogue will be held to bring the key policy issue in the public domain.

Shonar Manush Sheba Award: District Employment and Manpower Office (DEMO)



Amena Parvin, Assistant Director
DEMO, Rangpur

DEMO, Rangpur is a good example of teamwork to provide services to beneficiaries. In order to promote safe migration and to increase socio-economic development of the society it has organized seven Briefing Sessions in the year 2017. To create awareness it has published three advertisements and telecast five interviews related to overseas employment. Most importantly in coordination of Rangpur, Nilphamari, Kurigram and Lalmonirhat Technical Training centers (TTCs) Rangpur DEMO has provided information to the female migrants about the do's and don'ts of migration, welfare services, procedure of filing complaint etc. to the aspirant migrants. It also scrupulously adhered to the rules before providing compensation to the family members of the deceased migrants. For her contribution Ms. Amena Parvin of Rangpur DEMO has been awarded with Shonar Manush Sheba Award.



Rahinure Islam, Assistant Director
DEMO Jessore

Rahinure Islam, is working as Assistant Director of DEMO Jessore Office. He has helped registering 36,585 aspirant migrant workers online in the year 2017. In addition to bringing back bodies of deceased migrants Mr. Islam has made arrangements for 61 family members of the deceased migrant workers to get a total of Taka 1,79,30,000 as compensation and helped 11 migrant workers injured at work, to secure compensation of a Taka 52,77,122. The Shonar Manush Sheba Shommanon Award has been bestowed upon Mr. Rahinure Islam for his contribution towards the development of migration sector in Jessore for introducing technology based solutions to problems. with Shonar Manush Sheba Award.

Shonar Manush Award



Md. Emdadul Haque (Shonar Manush)

Md. Emdadul Haque a resident of Chathati, Paikora Islam is responsible to take care of his entire family including parents and five other siblings. To support his family financially he migrated to Saudi Arabia in 1992 and started working in a water pumping station. As he took training before migration, from the very beginning he received decent salary including overtime. After residing abroad for 11 years he returned to Bangladesh and bought 1.5 acre of land and 50 engine driven machine for handloom business. At present he has 55 powerlooms, 56 handlooms, paint factory, yarn factory and bobbin factory. He produces large volumes of cloth and sell those in the local markets. He proudly states that his cloths used to be bought by various big markets on wholesale and retail basis. Currently he employs about 300 workers in his factory.

RMMRU Proposal for Migration Vision 2030

We have gathered here to celebrate the contributions of short term international contract migrants of Bangladesh to their families, communities, national economy and also to their respective destination countries. Since 2009 intermittently RMMRU has been holding Shonar Manush Utshob. In the past through these festivals RMMRU honoured migrants' and their service providers – government organisations, recruiting agencies and banks. The festivals also contributed in achieving some of the long term policy goals of RMMRU and played an important role in shaping the discourse of remittance transfer and utilization. The festivals also in an indirect way helped bring about good governance in migration.

In this year's Shommilon RMMRU proposes framing of Migration Vision 2030. Studies conducted globally have demonstrated that migration will play a significant role in achieving many of the Sustainable Development Goals, 2030. The role of migration in reducing poverty in a large number of countries is well established. Evidences are replete that migration contributes to improved educational opportunities of children as well as health and well being of left behind elderly members of migrant families. Remittances have contributed to enterprise development, particularly facilitating agricultural innovation in different parts of the world.

Despite all these positive outcomes of migration, international migrant workers are the most vulnerable section of the global labour force. In many countries of destination migrants are socially excluded. They experience all forms of discrimination including racism, xenophobia and intolerance. The rights based 1990 UN Convention on the Rights of Migrants and Members of their Families remained largely ineffective due to the conservative mindset manifested in non-ratification of the Convention by the powerful countries. The UN attempt to frame an international migration regime accommodating the concerns of those states through the Global Compact on Migration in all likelihood would end up with a nicely framed declaration that will not address the most pressing issues and demands posed by the migrant community. The withdrawal of the US is a clear signal in this regard. Under such difficult international circumstances Bangladesh needs to be well prepared if it wishes to participate in the global labour market through ensuring protection of rights and dignity of its nationals.

It is in this context a long-term vision on migration is necessary. The Migration Vision 2030 needs to be target-oriented, time bound and resource rich. In order to achieve this, RMMRU proposes declaration of

2020-2029 as the decade of migration. Such a declaration will help government to take short, mid and long term actions to establish good governance in migration sector and ensure that migration benefits all migrants and no one is pauperized in pursuing their migration dream.

Issues for Consideration for Migration Vision 2030

The overwhelming dominance of informality in the recruitment of workers since early 1970s has to be addressed. In popular perception dalals are demons and source of all misfortunes that migrants face. RMMRU 2017 study supported by Prokash convincingly finds that dalals are obhishon ashol showdagor (real merchants of migration). They are the only service providers that migrants can access at the grassroots. They provide information on jobs, bring in job contracts, facilitate receipt of air tickets and act as conduits of financial transactions. They are the ones who help migrants navigate through the complex official migration process by accompanying them to BMET for registration as well as for collection of Smart Cards, face interviews of recruiting agencies, locate stipulated diagnostics centres for medical check-ups, and to airport. In many instances migrants, especially women migrants are dependent on dalals for processing of passports. Dalals enjoy trust of migrants. Contrary to popular belief in most cases dalals are locals and many are involved in the trade for a long period of time. It is for this reason when migrants face problems in destination countries they call upon the dalals for help. Instead of accommodating the role of dalals in the formal system, the government has tried unsuccessfully to abolish the system. Informality of the system provides errant dalals the opportunity to commit fraud and get away with them. Migration Vision 2030 requires innovative thinking. It is in this context RMMRU suggests regularization of dalal system and bringing them under the purview of the Migration and Overseas Employment Act, 2013.

In 2016, 12% of the total migrants were women. In most instances they are the main bread earners of their families. In this era of feminization the right of women to participate in the global labour force has to be respected. At the same time, protecting particularly those who are involved in domestic work from physical and sexual abuse require major involvement of the government in multilateral forums. Along with that, long term planning is required to equip women to access skilled and professional jobs.

Death, servitude and slave like condition of the Bangladeshis who migrated through irregular maritime route of Bay of Bengal is a hard lesson in policy making.



Alhaji Md. Shahjahan (Shonar Manush)

Alhaji Md. Shahjahan was a child of a middle-class family of Keraniganj Upazila. Having struggled to support his two children, he went to Saudi Arabia in 1979 by selling his father's 6 decimal of land to change his fortune. There he worked hard at a Five Star Hotel and he saved small amounts of his income and sent the rest to the country. Within a few days, due to the good relations with the Saudi Kafil, he was able to set up a showroom of garments, which gradually became three. After returning home, he established a mini garment factory with 25 workers in Rahitpur Bazar. Currently, 1500 to 1700 workers are working in his garments factory. As a successful migrant, he has not only done his own development but also worked for the development of society. He is a golden man of Bangladesh.

Shera Remittance Baboharkari Poribar



Feroza Khanom

Feroza Khanom's husband Md. Rafiqul Islam lives in Kuwait for the last 17 years. Through his hard earned money, she not only manages her family educating their children in a good school but also investing in the different productive sectors every year. She purchased 3 acres of land for the production of agricultural crops, 1 shallow machine for irrigating her land, where 3-4 people work, has an acre of pond where she farms fish engaging two people. She employed another two persons to look after the poultry farm of 1500 chicken and 10 turkey. She also has two cows. In the town of Sakhipur, she built two houses of which one is rented out and she uses the other one for living. She sent 2 of her brothers to Saudi Arabia spending Taka 9 lakh and Malaysia Tk 2.40 lakh. Their economic position has marked a major increase. She makes contribution to her savings account from the money sent by her husband.

Shonar Manush Sheba Award: Middleman



Nikhil Chandra Pal lives in Tangail. Over

the last 36 years he has been engaged in sending people abroad. He is considered as an expert or 'Guru' of this business as he is the oldest and the most experienced in this sector. He claims that so far he sent about 60,000 people. He has a good reputation in Tangail district. Through this business he encouraged the local unemployed youth to go abroad. He claims '99% of people who have migrated abroad through me are doing good. The local people largely validate his claim. For his contributions to the field of migration, RMMRU will honour him with 'Shonar Manush Sheba Award'.



Sanwar Hossain has been sending people abroad for the last 19 years. He claims that so far he has helped 30,000 people to migrate to abroad. His livelihood is not dependent on this business only he has his own printing press.

At an early stage of life he spent 2 years in Saudi Arabia. He generally sent people to middle-eastern countries and Malaysia. Many of those who migrated through Sanwar Hossain are now living a successful and better life. RMMRU believes that his contribution in migration sector is undeniable and this year he is a deserving candidate for the 'Shonar Manush Sheba Award'.



Rajeda Akhter from Tangail district

sending people abroad but for not too long. She has been involved in this business since 2013. However, her significant point is that almost she has facilitated migration of 70-80 female workers and each of them are doing well in the countries of destination. By making home visits to some of her clients RMMRU is satisfied on the veracity of her claim. Along this business, she is also engaged in garments business. Also, she owns commercial building in her village. Considering her contribution in the field of migration, RMMRU will honour her with 'Shonar Manush Sheba Award'.

Shonar Manush Bishesh Sheba Award :

Director General, Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET)

Since 1976 the Bureau Manpower Employment and Training has been working as the line agency first under the Ministry of Labour and subsequently under the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment. The BMET is the regulating authority that provides clearance for recruitment, issue license to the recruiting agencies, administer the TTCs and DEMOs and extend services to the migrant workers under the purview of Migration and Overseas Employment Act of 2013. A major governance challenge in migration area was that most of the services for migration were based at BMET in Dhaka, whereas migrants principally originated from different parts of the country. Over the last couple of years the BMET has undertaken path-breaking decision to decentralize many of its functions that include registration, finger printing and issuance of Smart cards. This has significantly reduced hardships that migrants of the concerned areas used to face earlier. As appreciation to this effort RMMRU honours the BMET as an institution and its leadership with Shonar Manush Bishesh Sheba Award

Shonar Manush Sheba Award: TTC



Md. Nazrul Islam
Principal
BKTTTC Chittagong

Md. Nazrul Islam is the Principal of Bangladesh-Korea Technical Training Center (BKTTTC), Chittagong and since his joining he has been able to bring many positive changes in the way the TTC operates. He has commenced 35 trade/occupation related training in his TTC. Under his management the BKTTTC Chittagong offers a wide range of technical and professional programmes for school leavers, TVET trainer, technicians and those seeking new career paths. For his innovative steps towards providing potential training and contribution in his sector Md. Nazrul Islam has been awarded with Shonar Manush Sheba Award as a representative of BKTTTC, Chittagong.



Md. Neaus Sharif, TTC, Jessore

Md. Neaus Sharif is working as the senior instructor at TTC Jessore. He has taken many innovative steps in order to elevate the service in the migration sector. One of which is an awareness photo gallery for the migrant workers established by him. He is also taking steps in order to institute a resource centre and a training facility for using the modern technology used in developed countries. There are nationally recognized and accredited courses in his TTC as well. For his modern and innovative approach towards the migration sector, RMMRU is awarding Mr. Md. Neaus Sharif with the Shonar Manush Sheba Award.

Shonar Manush Sheba Award: Recruiting Agency



Nac International
Managing Partner:
Ali Haider Chowdhury

Nac International has been a part of the human resource sector since 1985. Since its inception has always been concerned for the wellbeing of migrant workers. Ethical trade practice should be the core objective of this industry. With this vision in mind, this agency strived to contribute to this industry. Ali Haider Chowdhury was elected as the Secretary General of BAIRA four consecutive times and during his 8 year tenure, was blessed with the privilege of being able to interact with various government bodies and members of both national and international civil society members regarding ethical trade practices. He was also granted the honor of being elected as the senior vice president of BAIRA. Till this day, this agency tries and ensures ethical trade practices while managing the overall business.



Sadia International
Proprietor: Shameem Ahmed
Chowdhury Noman

The mission behind the establishment of this company, which is- apart from ensuring earnings for existence and continuing efforts at developing the potentials of the less fortunate, looking out for suitable employment opportunities for them. For training according to individual aptitude and fitness, this agency has arrangement for vocational training at various centers across the country almost free of any fees. It ensures that they are not dislocated from their places till suitable jobs are arranged for them. Moreover people from different trades and professions register names with this agency to avail future opportunities to work in wider fields. This is a recruiting house with a difference, which has given a special respectability in the minds of the people.