

High Commission for the People's
Republic of Bangladesh
57 Culgoa Circuit, O'Malley,
ACT 2006, Canberra, Australia.



Tel-61-2-6290-0511/0522/0533
Fax-61-2-6290-0544
Email: hoc@bhcanberra.com
Web: www.bhcanberra.com

Press Release

(18 December 2016)

International Migrants Day observed at Bangladesh High Commission

The Bangladesh High Commission observed International Migrants Day on 18 December 2016. A Roundtable discussion under this year's theme "Unnayoner Moha Sharoke – Obhibashi ra Shobar Aagay" was held to mark the day. Distinguished members of expatriate Bangladesh community from Canberra and Sydney including academics, legal practitioners and migration experts participated at the event. Bangladesh High Commissioner to Australia His Excellency Kazi Imtiaz Hossain chaired the session.

This is the first time that an event has been organised at High Commission to observe the International Migration Day. It may be mentioned that 18 December was proclaimed as International Migration Day by the United Nations in 2000. On that day in 1990, the UN General Assembly had adopted the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. Bangladesh is a signatory to the Convention and had ratified it in 2011.

In his opening remarks, the High Commissioner conveyed the nation's gratitude to all Bangladeshi migrants and expatriates serving abroad for their outstanding contribution to the national economy and development. He noted that foreign remittance is second largest source of foreign currency for Bangladesh. Highlighting various measures taken by the government for the welfare of the migrant workers, he noted that that Migration has been declared as a "thrust sector" by the Government. He also touched upon the numerous migrant focus initiatives of the government, notably the digitization of migration management, setting up of Wage Earner's Welfare Bank which extends soft loans to without collateral to migrants; income tax exemption for migrant workers on interest earned on Wage Earners Bond, skill development programs, expansion of labour market and so on. Referring to the Bangladesh expatriate community in Australia as being professionally skilled and talented people, he urged them to be robustly engaged in the development process of Bangladesh through "knowledge remittance". He also requested community members to use formal channel to send remittances home, and using it for as productive investment in Bangladesh economy.

The High Commissioner also read out the messages from the Hon'ble President, the Hon'ble Prime Minister, and the Hon'ble Minister of Finance, Foreign Affairs and Expatriate

Welfare and Overseas Employment conveying their greetings and recognizing the contribution of the migrant workers in the national economy.

The participants at the discussion conveyed their appreciation to the government for its migration friendly policies and expressed their keen interest in taking part in nation building efforts. They suggested that an institutional mechanism should be developed to engage our expatriates in the national development process. In this context, it was proposed to form a think tank/knowledge bank for knowledge transfer. The participants also suggested to undertaking targeted skill development programs such as nursing/care giving considering the demand in the global market. It was also suggested that Bangladesh might also consider extending student loan for skill development abroad. During the course of discussion migration challenges faced by Bangladesh such as irregular migration/human trafficking, high migration cost, climate change at national and international were also touched upon.

A documentary titled ‘The Work Heroes of Bangladesh’ was projected followed by a power point presentation on government policies on migration governance and the measures and initiatives taken for ensuring safe and dignified migration, ensuring expatriates’ welfare.



