

Poverty Research Network

International, cross-institutional, interdisciplinary studies of poverty, inequality and injustice

Report prepared and written by: Afsana Aziz Nitol and Shaila Akter Sathee (Undergraduate students, Department of English and Humanities, BRAC University)

**'Women, Migration and Poverty'
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Organized by: University of Warwick, and the Department of English and Humanities (ENH) and Department of Economics and Social Sciences (ESS) BRAC University, Dhaka

Welcoming Session

Professor Firdous Azim: The conference starts with the welcoming remarks of Professor Firdous Azim, Chairperson ENH, BRAC University. She says that the inter-disciplinary nature within the university is well reflected through the conference.

The conference has brought in researchers from other organizations too. Everyone introduces themselves in the beginning of the conference before the Vice Chancellor of BRAC University, Professor Syed Saad Andaleeb, provides his welcoming address.



University for initiating an international collaborative work. He says he believes the focus on poverty and migration is very important in our circumstances. He appreciates the work of the Poverty Research Network and is hopeful of more such collaborative works. Professor Syed Saad Andaleeb says he always wanted his colleagues to focus on three things. The first thing is collaboration with each other. The second thing is the need to innovate, and the last is to look for some kind of social impact of the work. He ends his remarks by saying that he is glad to be a part of it, and wishes the conference a success.



Professor Ann Stewart: Professor Ann Stewart states that the workshop is part of a broader project, entitled 'Beyond Development: Local Visions of Global Poverty.' This workshop is one of the five workshops that are going to be held around the world, addressing different themes relating to poverty. She hopes this will in a way allow them to have more complex understanding of how poverty is caused and managed. Poverty is one of the most systematic problems that we faced. Although we understand the metrics more, we do not necessarily understand poverty anymore. Poverty is often seen as uniform. There is a flattening of understandings of poverty.

Despite billions of investments in the development industry, the problem of local poverty and the gap between rich and the poor is getting worse, not better. We need to have a multidimensional understanding of poverty, and the Poverty Research Network would like to go beyond economic discourses and challenge some of the assumptions underlying economic narratives and approaches.



Dr Andrew Jones: talks about the Poverty Research Network and its objectives. One of the key objectives is that we want to have a deeper understanding of poverty, and specifically a more historically informed understanding of poverty. In doing so they want to move beyond the mainstream discourse of what poverty actually means. The network promotes an overtly interdisciplinary approach, with a particular emphasis on the marriage of arts, humanities, history and legal perspectives. One ambitious question that we wish to unravel is: is there a global concept of poverty? He hopes this conference will lay the groundwork for future collaborations.



First Session

Moderator: Professor ATM Nurul Amin (BRAC University)

Professor Firdous Azim (BRAC University), 'The Words that Govern Us: The Discourse around Women, Poverty and Migration'

The paper cogitates the power of words and the discursive spaces they form. This is especially true in the case of women, whose spaces are defined by constant references to their sexuality.

She starts her paper by looking at feminists' efforts to change the terms that are used to define women. The specific arena that she looks at is sex-work. Then, she moves to the terrain of female labour migration, to debate on the words such as trafficking and migration that define this arena. She ends her paper with fictional representation.

The paper mentions that the close relation between women and sexual positioning becomes a reality and when the dimension of poverty is added to it, the juxtaposition becomes even clearer. She begins by mentioning the work of NariPokkho, a feminist organization of which she is a member. She says it is worthwhile to explore the reasons that NariPokkho has constantly emphasized on the terms and phrases, that are applied to women and the changes in nomenclature that they feel are important parts, for struggle for women's rights. Examples include — thinking of survivors, rather than victims of violence and insisting that rape being not talked about or looked at as a loss of women's honour. Hence, the notion of women's honour needs to be reconsidered. There are two main aspects in which feminists took on the issue of nomenclature.

The first is regarding sex-worker. The media in Bangladesh now uses the word 'sex-workers'. While NariPokkho feels that this change does give women more space to fight for their rights as citizens and workers, others argue that it is not changing their situation.

The second aspect is regarding the naming of rape survivors of the Liberation War of 1971. The term 'Birangona' recognizes the victims of war rapes as war heroines. However, few have insisted to change the term to 'Muktijoddha'. Within NariPokkho, they want to continue the term 'Birangona', as they felt that the term 'Birangona' had been bestowed to women as a badge of honour. Other words have not echoed the honour that was meant to be inherited in that title. The changing of the term of 'Birangona' to 'Muktijoddha' puts a veil over the fact of rape and not really acknowledges what was happening.

The vocabulary seems to be hovering around two words — migration and trafficking. Professor Azim refers a book that in many way discuss women's migration. The book is titled *Coolie Women: The Odyssey of Indenture* and written by Gaiutra Bahadur, published in 2013. With the banning of the slavery trade, the plantation economy in European colonies has to be kept going, and this time round indentures labour has replaced the import of African slave labour. The focus has shifted from Africa to the Indian sub-continent and coolies are imported from India to the West Indies. These labour movements followed a colonial economic network. But, the result in admixture of races and culture is what the book follows. It draws readers' attention to the racial admixture. The difference between slavery and indenture is seen to be based on words such as voluntary and forced.

Then she talks about today's migration from Bangladesh's context and, the terms and words that are diploid to talk about women migration. Women's bodies are being trafficked and no form of agency is associated in the part of women.

She also says that the main effort of putting this conference together is to hear women's voices and to look for those voices in unexpected ways, which is explained in the second half of the conference.

She ends with talking about fictional representation. One of the books that she refers is *The Bones of Grace* by Tahmina Anam. The story followed here is of Anwar, who goes to Dubai and search for his long lost love Meghna. Long after her death, traces of her body are found in a brothel. The difference of male and female destiny that the novel presents, reflects the way in which male and female migration is talked about. Moreover, the paper reflects how words matter and occupy real spaces.



Dr Wasiqur Rahman (BRAC University), 'An Exploration of Gender Dimension of Migration and Remittances with a Focus on Bangladesh'

Professor Wasiqur Rahman begins by stating that migration research itself is not new. It has been going on for a good thirty years now. But, up until the 1970s, the focus has been almost exclusively on men. Women are presumed to play passive roles as companions of migrating men. However, that view does not match with the reality on the ground. Women travel across the boundaries in the same rate as men. This observation has subsequently been verified. In fact, 50% of world's migrants are female. If we look at Asia, migration has predominantly been rated as an Asian phenomenon.

The 'Feminisation of labour' has become a phenomenon and it has received scholarly attention. Since the 1970s, Bangladesh has been a major exporter of the labour. What is often not realized is that big part of our migrant workforce includes women. Given the conservative nature of this Muslim majority country, this has been a surprising outcome.

Professor Rahman then, shows a chart of remittances to Bangladesh from 1990. Since about the year 2000 the increase in remittances has been very stiff. It has been on the decline in the last couple of years. Remittances are expected to recover by the end of this fiscal year. Malaysia, Singapore are the main destination for migrant women from Bangladesh. Compared to Bangladesh, countries such as Indonesia, Philippines and Srilanka — they have been much bigger sources of female migration and their experiences have been better documented and studied. The rate of female immigration has increased steadily since 1980s and remittances sent by female migrants to developing countries are increased since 1990s. The term 'feminisation of labour' has been coined in the 1980s.

Then a graph is shown. The graph shows that the immigration rate of female in the developing countries has steadily increased. But, noticeably, remittances to developing countries from these females have been increased at a very steeped rate since the 2000, which shows the increase in importance of female workers.

There is a difference in the way remittances are being used in the household of female workers. There is also a difference in the preferences of sending remittances. Women prefer sister to their husbands. Women also show more interest in saving than men and invest in human capital. A sociological study of Bangladeshi immigrants to Malaysia, raises important points. It talks about Gender transitional space. This transnational space excludes women. Male migrants are not comfortable about female migrants who went to Malaysia to work. As a result, this transnational network which would have facilitated the migration of women is never established.

Female migrants from Philippines and Indonesia, vastly outnumber those from Bangladesh. Malaysia and Singapore do not want Bangladeshi female workers. They explicitly banned them.

To improve this scenario, he says that there should be greater official recognition of the existing Bangladeshi females who migrate to work. There should be establishment of pro active support network that facilitates Bangladesh female migration which should end in documentation, finance and legal support. There should also be training provided to women to make them more skilled migrants. BRAC with their school of nursing is currently aiming this as well to make the remittances of income easier and safer for female migrants. Adequate data should also be collected.



Md. Mahbubur Rahman (Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit, RMMRU), 'A Story on Women's Poverty, Migration and Policy: Reflections in the Context of Bangladesh'

Mahbubur Rahman goes straight to the story of Zarina and Rahima, who are female migrants. Although their faces are stricken by poverty, their eyes are sparkling with aspiration. He first meet them at the Technical Training Centre in Tangail district, when he was facilitating an awareness raising workshop for the female migrants in the Middle East. Their life stories have drawn his attention and enabled him to observe and analyse their life experiences in the context of Bangladesh.

The girls live in three separate slums. He has been to their places several times, in order to gain an in-depth idea of women's poverty and migration and to see to what extent the current migration policy of Bangladesh benefits the female migrants. He notices that approximately 70% of the population of these slums is women and children. He further observes that a good number of women in those slums were the bread-earners. Poverty, along with natural disaster is the reason they end up in slum. They are victims of multiple displacements. Before settling in the slums, they had to settle in other places too. They were forced to live these places. They even face sexual exploitation.

He also talks about policy issues. Poverty is one of the main rivals of female migration in Bangladesh, migration can stimulate the social development of women in the country. But, for that appropriate policies are needed. However, even though there is a contribution by the female migrants through remittances, there are very few policies for the welfare of Bangladeshi female migrant.



Q/A Session

Dr. Saira Rahman Khan (BRAC University) asks Dr Wasiqur Rahman whether the situations of women in other South Asian countries are any better or worse. Dr. Wasiqur Rahman thinks that South Asian women face pretty much the same challenges as the Bnagladeshi women. The major difference in countries like India and Srilanka is the level of official support. However, in terms of difficulties of migrant workers in general, also face the same situation.

Dr Shahidur Rahman (BRAC university) shares his research experience. His research is basically looking into the changes in Garment Factory after Rana Plaza disaster. In the last 6 ot 8 months, women participation in garment industry is declining.

Professor Rashid asks Dr Andrew Jones, what is the basic linkage between history and politics? Is there any new hypothesis that you are developing? He also asks Azim how prostitution is related to poverty?

Professor Azim says that the conference is also about women. The aspect of women brings in the issue of sex-worker. These issues and policies that have been discussed circulate around women's bodies and then the issue of exploitation of women bodies comes in. It is the figure of the poor women that are most vulnerable. It is the poverty that drives people into sex-work.

Dr Andrew Jones says that their network is trying to consider not just historical but arts and humanities perspective. They are particularly interested in colonial legacies. While it is too early in the project cycle to talk of a new hypothesis of poverty, they are working towards advancing a more complex and multi dimensional understanding of poverty, which goes beyond the tired narratives of the mainstream development industry.

Second Session

Session Moderator: Professor Saira Rahman Khan, School of Law, BRAC University

Professor Ann Stewart (University of Warwick), 'Mitigating Adverse Incorporation in Global Care Chains – Can the UK Modern Slavery Act 2014 continue?'

Ann Stewart starts with introducing UK Modern Slavery Act. Within UK, the migration from Bangladesh happens through marriage. Smaller number of women comes as workers. The context that she looks at is the one in which she looks at the wider demographic changes that are happening around the world. She also talks about the relationship between care and migrant workers.

UK Modern Slavery Act is the first type of act of its nature in Europe. The innovative aspect of this act is the product of advocacy. What it requires is a national anti-slavery plan. 11M pounds of fund are provided by the Government. The definition of slavery is politically controversial. The nature and definition of slavery move towards the exercise of power and practices. Recognition of practice as something called slavery gives rise to obligations to the state. She also says that definitions matter. It is a battle over narrative. She talks about two approaches towards Modern Slavery.

The challenge she thinks is to challenge the way we see women in global value change. Migration is not necessarily an answer. She says, "In a way we have to think about how we will cope with the consequences of incorporating care into an economy."

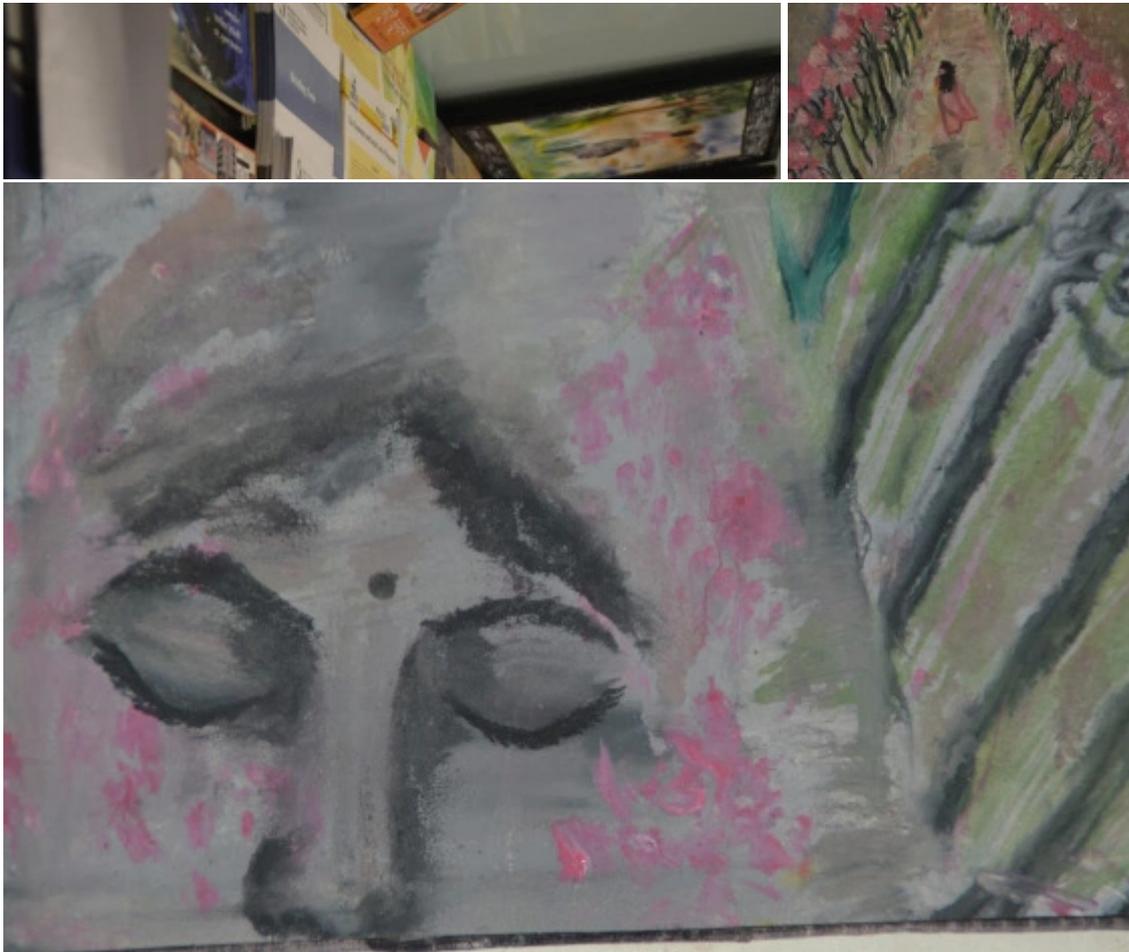
Within the Act itself, it contains all the different approaches. It primarily works on the individual vulnerability and focuses on the criminal interventions. Human trafficking is included in this Act. There are new measures which involve compensation.

A lot of elderly people in the UK end up in institutional care. However, she says it does not mean people in the UK do not love their parents. Sometimes people's needs can be too great in order to be fulfilled within the family structure, particularly those suffering from dementia. Women are expected to work full time. They expect the state to provide support.

The sort of care that is needed, the state is not ready to provide and individual cannot afford to pay the cost. Profiting from caring is difficult to achieve. Therefore it is inefficient as an industry.

There is an economic imperative to have unskilled migrant workers. The political reality states that they want no unskilled migrant workers. Therefore, she thinks UK needs a labour process analysis and a gendered analysis. The idea of making soft law has limited values when it comes to tackling issues of modern slavery.





Dr Hosna J. Shewly (Vrije Universiteit), 'Female Sex-Worker's Negotiations for Socio-economic Survival in Dhaka's Urban Spaces'

Dr Hosna J. Shewly starts with Rubina's story, a 22 year old girl. She is the eldest of five siblings. After she moves to Dhaka, she is sold to a ghorwali, who buy women for sex-works. Rubina escapes her ghorwali's house and starts living alone. While she continues her sex-work, she has had to change her home thrice within the last six months, because of her business. She is followed by police and informers.

Dr Shewly says the story explains a lot. It explains the tragic stories of migration. It also says that the desired livelihood ends up in a different lifestyle. Then she provides a background of the number of sex-workers. She believes the estimated numbers do not really represent the actual numbers. Nearly there are 100,000 sex workers in the country according to different reports. But, some women do not want others to find out about their professions. Hence, the number stays unclear.

She also talks about women's migration and their expectation. 90% of the girls, who travel to Dhaka for the first time, come to work. 20% come with no formal education. However, most of them are forced to be sex-workers. She shares another story of a girl, whose boss raped her after she started working at a factory. Then he fires her on the ground of stealing. She brings the issue of inferiority of the body. These stories bring out the issues of expectations and reality.

After sex-workers reach 40 they start getting fewer clients and then they become ghorwalis. Young sex-workers are exposed to violence. They are violently raped and end up getting sexually transmitted diseases. People do not consider them humans and hence, they do not receive medical facilities. The children of these sex-workers suffer too. They are considered bastards.

Then she talks about migration adaptation approach. Initially, it is not taken seriously. However, over the years, it has been considered positive because of the remittances. Most of the girls she met, send their moneys home. But, she says we hardly consider the challenges and the gendered violence. These girls are moving from one trapped situation to another trapper one. Moreover, her paper represents the day-to-day negotiations that women have to go through to survive in Dhaka.



Dr Andrew Jones (University of Warwick), 'International NGOs, Development and Women in post-independence Bangladesh'

Dr Jones says Bangladesh is known as the 'land of NGOs'. There are over 20,000 NGOs in the development sector alone. At least 1000 of these receive foreign support and funding. Empowerment of women is a vital objective and function of these NGOs. Then he talks about historical origins and long tradition of voluntary work, rooted in social, religious, and economic conditions.

He also says that central issue for many NGOs has been and remains the empowerment of women. NGOs have used 'credit' as strategy for economic and social development which targets women as beneficiaries above all else. Grameen Bank is upheld as model for economic empowerment of women. Women traditionally have had less access to ordinary credit lines and incomes. Inequitable share of power. Evidence is mixed for benefits of microfinance programs. One study suggested only 5% of loans given by Grameen Bank result in loanee escaping poverty.

Dr Jones also talks about BRAC, which was established in 1972 by Sir Fazle Hasan Abed, as small-scale relief/rehabilitation project to help returning war refugees. It now employs over 100,000 people, approx. 70% are women and reaches more than 126 million people with its services. It is partly self-funded through social enterprises, retail stores, etc. BRAC is present in all 64 districts of Bangladesh as well as 13 other countries in Asia, Africa, Americas.

Development NGOs emerge and grow in tandem with larger global shifts in development thought, policy, practice. There are many advantages and benefits and also serious questions over accountability, participation, effectiveness.

Migrant women workers are not usually the main constituency or advocacy target of NGOs. Most civil society organisations could do much more to speak out on migration issues. Jones says that they need co-ordinated global action with human rights advocates, NGOs, business, government, etc.



Sheikh Rubaiya Sultana (BRAC University), 'Physical Mapping of the Social Life of Women'

Professor Sheikh Rubaiya Sultana provides a set of questions regarding these women. For example, who are these women? Are these women sexually harassed? Is there any female friendly toilet in their workplace? How do they pay their house rents? etc.

Then she presents a map of a female worker. Her movements, including where she works, buys her medicines from and where she goes for recreation, are shown in the map. She comes from Barisal and has been living in Dhaka for 1.5 years.

Then she shows Shahina's movements. It takes her 40 minutes to go to her workplace from home. She comes from Comilla, the eastern part of Bangladesh. She has a seven year old kid. Rubaiya Sultana also interviews some other workers who come from various parts of Bangladesh.

Her paper looks at the physical movements only. She hopes that, if her research can be done properly, she will be able to answer the questions mentioned in the beginning.

Q/A session

Dr Wasiqur Rahman asks that the first slavery act was enacted in 1820s. Then, why is there a compelling need of Modern Slavery Act? Professor Stewart says, as a result of the changing understanding of what slavery is, signified by the 1820s act, we will be moving away the idea of chattel slavery into extreme form of exploitation. Then undoubtedly there are substantial amount of slavery types. It is highlighting in the shift of the definition of what slavery is, away from traditional understanding. The problem is not small. Hence there is a need of new law enactments.

She also says that, people do see unskilled labour as win-win solution. Because, economic hits the political, people end up in situations that are producing inequality.

Also, in this session the issue of the companies of having turn over of 34 M pound to profit from the slavery, has been brought it and it is stated that the figure is high. This means they are undermining other

companies that fall below the figure. Professor Stewart says that the target is on the big companies. Many companies find it quite challenging.



Final Session

Session Moderator: Arup Rahee, Poet, General Secretary, Centre for Bangladesh Studies (CBS)

Dr Rifat Mahbub, 'Poverty, Migration and The Pen: Voices of Bangladeshi Migrants from below'

Dr Rifat Mahbub looks at the examples of Bangladeshi labour migrant narratives in different forms and styles. In doing so, she comments on the usage of traditional oral narrative as well as new methods such

as digitisation to preserve migrant history, and the ways in which contemporary labour migrants are carving their own niche within the widening and shifting terrain of migrant literature.

She focuses on Bangladeshis in Britain and some examples of digital preservation of oral history. She talks about Sylheti-Bangladeshi mass migration in Britain that took place in the 1950s and 1960s. This history is closely tied to this region's previous history of lascars (seamen) who worked in the British East India Company Ships during the colonial periods.

She also talks about the lost history of Ayahs. Ayahs are Indian nannies – hundreds came over with British colonial-era families returning from India, and quite a few ended up abandoned, or homeless as they sought new employment. She refers Andrew Whitehead, who writes "An ayahs' home seems to have been set up in Aldgate from the 1820s or a little later. The home had moved to a large house at 26 King Edward's Road by 1891, when it came under the management of the London City Mission." Women or the 'left behind wives' from rural Sylhet started to go to Britain in the 1970s to settle down as families

Her paper also discuss the alternative methods that are now used to record 'people's' history. There is a usage of alternative ways such as digital presentation to represent migrants' tales cross the academic boundaries of literature and history. She says we need to have similar kinds of efforts to represent the voices of Bangladeshi migrants who may not use their own pens to write their life experiences, but their experiences need greater recognition and empathetic engagement. This kind of effort has already started.

She then talks about the new meaning of migration and refers a book *Untold Stories of Migrants: Dreams and Realities* (2016) edited by Tasneem Siddique, published by Refugees and Migratory Movements Research Unit. The stories are collected by the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) over a period of 20 years.

Literature by Bangladeshi Migrants from 'below' In 2016 is also talked about. She says she saw a news clip on the 'Daily Prothom Alo' online English portal with a headline, 'Bangladeshi worker in Singapore turns into [a] poet.' The Singaporean migrant worker, Mohammad Mukul Hossine, 'started scribbling poetry on the bags of cement he was carrying in 2014'.

Rifat Mahub further says, "I read a piece of news in the Daily Star, titled 'Coming Back to Life' that featured the extraordinary life and work of Ayesha Siddiqua, who unfortunately, in May, 2015, while travelling to India alone, fell into the hands of traffickers. Ayesha is not a migrant labour worker in its principal sense; however, the trauma and brutality she went through after she was trafficked to Kerala has resonance with the stories and tales of many Bangladeshi women who face severe forms of sexual violence either at home or abroad."

Ayesha's poems are based on her identity and experience as a woman. In the ten poems, four poems are titled with 'I' and 'my' such as 'Injured I', 'Ashamed I', 'My family', 'My Good Mother'. Ayesha, like many artists, is a keen observer of life. The details of life excite her, and she looks at other people's life with deep empathy.

Moreover, she concludes by taking a simultaneous look at Mukul Hossine's and Ayesha Siddiqua's poems on the common theme: Eid. Mukul's poem, 'Eid Abroad' and Ayesha's poem, 'Eid' both touch at the core of our cultural life.



Professor Firdous Azim, In Conversation with Md Mukul Hossine, author of *Me Migrant*, and Ayesha Siddiqua, author of *Ahoto Ami (Wounded Me)*

Ayesha Siddiqua lives in Jessore, Rajshahi and she has travelled with her paintings to Dhaka. She is also an artist. She first begins her story in this session. She, for the purpose of visiting a doctor, steps into a train. She also has fought with her husband that day. In the train, a man sitting right beside her, lights up his cigarettes. As soon as the smoke reaches to her, Ayesha fainted. After a few days, she wakes up in India.

Not having enough opportunities to continue her study, as her parents married her off very young, she always has had the urge to study and write. She says she used to write her feelings down and then burn them off. Gradually, she starts writing poems.

Jessore's Public Library has published her works. She has had encouragement from the people of Jessore. She says she did not have any idea about meter, structure and grammar of poems. But, her fellow mates in the reading circle of Jessore Public Library have encouraged her. In this way, her journey of writing poems started.

She says that when her luggage was stolen in the train, she lost her passport, visa and everything. When her husband is informed, he is told that he needed to go to India within a month to get his wife back. However, he has gotten his visa after 5 months. When he reaches India, he still does not take Ayesha back to her homeland, stating that she is not mentally stable. This is also one of the reasons Ayesha had a fight with her husband. She claims he always used to treat her as a mental patient. Then she stays at an Asram for a while.

Ayesha Siddiqua sketches and does oil paintings. She paints using her fingers. Although nowadays, she uses brush to paint critical things, for example, eyelashes, eyes, etc. She has had exhibition in Jessore and American Centre. She makes sculptures as well. She has never gotten any training for the things that she has done.



Md Mukul Hossine then speaks. He is from Rangpur. He moves to Singapore to work at the age of 19. He has wanted to become a singer from a very young age but, his father does not approve of it. Even then, he has participated in different singing reality shows and at night he has also heard his parents fighting over it. He has always gotten his mother's support though.

After he finishes his secondary school, he had a fight with his father over his career choices. His father wants him to choose a solid career path. His brother, then, offers him that he can go to Singapore to earn money. This is how he moves to Singapore to earn money and fulfill his dream.

He continues writing in Singapore. Initially, he used to write in cement bags and carry them with him. He has had collected 400 cement bags. In Singapore National University, he has even recited one of his poems. Some of the writers in Singapore have appreciated his work. He has attended different conferences and events.

This is the first time in Singapore that a migrant worker is going to publish his books. He says that it is quite a big challenge for him. He also says that as a construction worker, he feels very proud. He feels proud to represent his own country.



In the end of the session, both of them sing a song. Then, two faculty members of ENH, **Nawshaba Ahmed** and **Anika Saba**, recite two of the poems by Ayesha Siddiqua and Md Mukul Hossine.



Open Discussion

Ayesha Siddiqua recites her poem '*Bangla Amar Priyo*' in this session. Professor Azim says that, the poem is about Bangladesh. In this poem she expresses how she realizes the depth of her love towards Bangla after she moves to a foreign land. Then Md Mukul Hossine recites one of his poems.

Professor Ann Stewarts thanks everyone and, Ayesha and Mukul. Then, she shares an anecdote. She says when she was in Birmingham, she got very politically involved. In one of the political meetings, they wanted local communities/people to get involved in politics. In the meeting, one of the speakers spoke in Urdu. The voiceless became argumentative and talkative because of the way in which these voices were facilitated. She says it felt amazing to hear them.

She also says that she does want it to end here. She wants to think about ways collectively to take things further. She feels that the papers and discussions of the day, have brought together an economic understanding of the governance issues. We have understood through geographical mapping, the reality of workers in Dhaka. We also heard the voices coming from different understanding.

Anika Saba (BRAC University) says, we need to pay attention to the middlemen, who exploit the poor people. We really need to do something about these people and make people aware of these men. In our country, we call them Dalaal.

Arup Rahee, Poet, General Secretary, Centre for Bangladesh Studies (CBS), says, how we define poverty, development and empowerment from a colonial perspective of development— these are tricky questions. We need to deepen the questions and challenge the normative arguments regarding social change. We need to address tricky political debates.

Andrew Jones (University of Warwick) says that empowerment and citizenship have been two major themes of the day, and going beyond cliched narratives of empowerment is one way in which to move 'beyond development'.

Dr. Rifat Mahbub ends the conference with thanking everyone. She says the conference has brought out good questions and the conversations will continue outside of the venue.

