

Webinar to commemorate the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons 2021

Date: Wednesday 28 July 2021

Time: 11.00h – 12.45h (Bangladesh time)

Background:

It is well documented that Bangladesh is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and child victims of human trafficking. The COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown imposed by the Government of Bangladesh in April 2020 has had diverse impacts on people's vulnerability to human trafficking, including migrants in and from Bangladesh. Whilst there is no published research on the impact of COVID-19 on human trafficking in Bangladesh, the Counter-Trafficking in Persons Technical Working Group (CTIP-TWG) has continued to work since the onset of the pandemic and based on firsthand experience reviewed how the pandemic is affecting the counter-trafficking landscape.

Loss of employment, reductions in income, limited means of securing livelihood and nationwide school closures have created conditions that amplify the risks of trafficking. In addition to root causes of human trafficking reportedly intensifying, it is feared that Bangladesh has experienced an increase in forms of abuse and exploitation, with traffickers rapidly adjusting to the changing landscape. Recent observed trends and media headlines suggests that the traffickers are using the online platform like TikTok, WhatsApp etc. to lure the potential victims of human trafficking.

Despite the impact of the pandemic, Bangladesh remains on Tier Two in the US TIP Report 2021. However, the following recommendations were listed: a. need multi-sectoral partnership in implementation of the National Plan of Action (2018-2022) to Combat Human Trafficking (NPA); b. prosecute human traffickers and deliver justice; c. make the National Anti-Human-Trafficking Authority functional; d. promote safe migration regardless of migration status; e. activate Counter-Trafficking Committees (CTCs) and local elected bodies at the grassroots level; f. Enhance focus on opportunities and obligations under international human rights, criminal justice and labor rights standards; and g. ensure the Protection for migrants including victims of trafficking (identification, referral and service provision).

This year's theme of the World Day against Trafficking in Persons **"Victims' Voices Lead the Way"** puts victims of human trafficking at the centre of the campaign and highlights the importance of listening to and learning from survivors of human trafficking. The webinar will share the key messages from the survivors of the human trafficking.

Objective of the webinar: The purpose of the webinar is to observe the World Day against Trafficking in Persons and also to explore recent trends and COVID-19 impact in Bangladesh on Trafficking in Persons (TIP), including the way forward.

Note: This webinar is being organized by the Counter Trafficking in Persons Technical Working Group (CTIPTWG) under the BDUNNM. To promote the webinar, the Daily Star has been engaged with the financial support from the project titled "Global Action against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants - Bangladesh (GLO.ACT-Bangladesh)" funded by the European Union and jointly implemented by UNODC and IOM.



Draft Agenda

Time	Item
Wednesday, 28 July 2021 Dhaka, Bangladesh	
10:45 – 11:00	Technical Trial and Troubleshooting
	For any registration or connection issues contact: Mr. Hasibul Haq (UNODC) M. +8801738526666, mohammad.haq@un.org
Message from the UN and Civil Society	
11:00 – 11:10	Welcome remarks from Ms. Mia Seppo , UN Resident Coordinator in Bangladesh Remarks from Mr. Shahidul Haque , Former Foreign Secretary, IOM's Policy Advisor
11:10 – 11:15	Showing a short video message on voice of the Survivors' of Human Trafficking facilitated by Ms. Dipta Rakshit , Team Leader, Ashshash, Winrock International
11:20 – 11:30	Expert presentation on trend analysis of human trafficking during COVID and key recommendations Mr. AKM Masud Ali , Executive Director, INCIDIN Bangladesh Prof. Ishrat Shamim , President, Centre for Women and Children Studies (CWCS)
Key Guest Speakers	
11:30 – 11:50	Ms. Siobhan Mullally , UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children
	H. E. Ms. JoAnne Wagner , Deputy US Ambassador to Bangladesh
Presentation from Government Ministries	
11:50 – 12:10	Mr. A. K. M Shahidullah , Joint Secretary (Institution), Ministry of Social Welfare Mr. A. H. M. Habibur Rahman Bhuiyan , Joint Secretary (Administration-2), Law and Justice Division, Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Mr. MD. Zainal Abedin Mollah , Additional Secretary, Enforcement Wing, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment. Mr. G S M Jafarullah , Additional Secretary (Political and ICT), Public Security Division, Ministry of Home Affairs.
Question and Answer Session	
12.10 – 12.35	Moderated by Advocate Salma Ali , President, Bangladesh National Woman Lawyers' Association (BNWLA)
Remarks from the Foreign Secretary	
12:35 – 14:40	Mr. Masud Bin Momen , Foreign Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Closing Remarks	
12.40-12.45	Mr. Giorgi Gigauri , Network Coordinator of Bangladesh UN Network on Migration (BDUNNM) and IOM Chief of Mission in Bangladesh.