



Virtual Launch of Bdeshaatra: the self-sustainable online support platform for migrants

Background:

Over the period 1976 to 2020, Bangladesh has sent more than 13 million employees as labour migrants through formal channels while approximately around half of them are estimated to have migrated in the recent decade (2010 to 2019)¹. Even during the COVID19 pandemic, the country sent around 180,000 labour migrants and received nearly 7 million USD in remittances². However, the country still faces challenges of irregular migration. Limited or lack of access to information services often makes it difficult for migrants to obtain the necessary information during all stages of the migration cycle including pre-decision, pre-departure, transit, destination and return. Potential labour migrants are mostly dependent on family and friends to get information, instead of valid sources (i.e. govt offices, television etc.)³. Thus, awareness raising through information campaign is crucial to harness the benefit of labour migration. It is important to ensure safe and orderly migration, through promotion of better dissemination of information on safe migration, financial and remittance management and their sustainable reintegration.

The current COVID 19 pandemic and restrictions in movement, has had a hampering impact on mobility and labour migration worldwide. The World Bank projected the fall of Bangladesh's remittances by around 22 per cent in 2020 owing to the global crisis caused by the pandemic⁴. Due to restriction in mobility, massive return of migrants to Bangladesh and unavoidable lockdown processes, accessing has become more relevant and a sought-after source for information. Therefore, the access to the correct information related to labour migration is a necessary and useful step for migrants not only during the pandemic period, but also in post-pandemic period to ensure safe and orderly migration.

¹ Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training 2020, (accessed on 27 September 2020)

² Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training 2020, (accessed on 27 September 2020)

³ Mid-term review of Prottasha Project 2019, IOM Bangladesh.

⁴ The Financial Express, 24 April 2020. Available at: <https://thefinancialexpress.com.bd/economy/world-bank-projects-22pc-fall-in-remittances-1587708687> (accessed on 28 September 2020)



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In relation to this, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has established a self-sustainable digital information platform named as “Bdeshjaatra” (<https://bdeshjaatra.com/>) engaging the private company “Bdjobs.com Ltd.” The platform provides necessary information to potential migrants and families to influence behaviour to navigate ways for regular migration and to returning migrants to sustainably reintegrate into the society.

The platform can be accessed through both web and mobile based applications, even remotely with minimum internet connectivity. This initiative is carried out under the European Union (EU) funded project titled “Bangladesh: Sustainable Reintegration and Migration Governance in Bangladesh” known as “Prottasha”, implemented by IOM in partnership with BRAC and led by Government of People’s Republic of Bangladesh. The project is expected to contribute to the progressive achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 10.7 to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through the implementation of planned and well-managed policies in Bangladesh. The activity contributes to the awareness raising component within the Prottasha project aimed at enhancing the knowledge, attitude, and practices (KAP) of returnees, potential migrants, families and communities to adopt regular, safe and orderly migration and better manage remittances.

To this end, IOM plans to organize a “Virtual Launch of Bdeshjaatra platform” to be live for all relevant stakeholders.

About Bdeshjaatra:

The Bdeshjaatra is a digital information platform can be accessed by both webpage (<https://bdeshjaatra.com/>) and Android App on Google Play Store (<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.bdjobs.bideshjatra&hl=en>) designed especially for migrants and their families in Bangla. This application size is 6.10MB in google play store mobile and can be used with limited bandwidth, even in offline cache. It is suitable for users in Bangladesh with low data usage as well as users in countries of destination. The Bdeshjaatra contains the relevant information on safe migration, sustainable reintegration and better remittance management covering the four parts of the migration-cycle: pre-decision stage, pre-departure stage, migration stage and return stage.

Objective of the Bdeshjaatra Virtual Launch:

The primary objective of the Virtual Launch event of Bdeshjaatra is to ensure wider publicity and outreach for the digital platform and its uses among the targeted stakeholders and gain acceptance from a broader range of audiences. The launch event will target not only the migrants and their families themselves, but also the wider stakeholders including- government stakeholders, recruiting agencies and associations, private as well as financial organizations and non-state actors working on the migration system.

To avoid physical gathering due to the pandemic, the launch event will be carried out virtually.



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Date: 26 November 2020

Time: 3:00 PM- 4:30 PM

To access the virtual launch, please contact with Laila Tasmia at ltasmia@iom.int

Event activities:

- **Welcome speeches from IOM Bangladesh, Bdjobs and EU Delegation**

- Giorgi Gigauri, Chief of Mission, IOM Bangladesh
- A.K.M Fahim Mashroor, CEO, Bdjobs.com Ltd
- Alexandru Calota, Programme Manager – Governance, Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh

- **Presentation on Bdeshaatra by IOM Bangladesh**

- **Inauguration and virtual tour of the Bdeshaatra website and mobile app**

- **Open discussion and Q/A moderated by IOM Bangladesh**

- **Remarks from distinguished guests**

- Md Shamsul Alam, Director General, Bureau of Manpower and Employment and Training (BMET), GoB
- Md Hamidur Rahman, Director General, Wage Earners Welfare Board (WEWB), GoB

- **Remarks from special guest**

- Her Excellency, Ambassador Rensje Teerink, Head of Delegation, EU Delegation to Bangladesh

- **Remarks from chief guest**

- Dr. Ahmed Munirus Saleheen, Honorable Secretary, Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MoEWOE), GoB

- **Closing remarks**



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