

Illegal migration and economic challenges with human security in Bangladesh: A way forward

Md Abdul Alim¹, Md Salauddin Saimum²

¹ Professor, Department of Law, University of Rajshahi, Rajshahi, Bangladesh

² Lecturer, Department of Law, University of Rajshahi, Rajshahi, Bangladesh

Abstract

Human trafficking and migrant smuggling are serious crimes and human rights abuses, affecting men, women and children regardless. This study will help on better understanding the relevant connections between migration and vulnerability to trafficking, forced labour, child labour, and modern slavery. In last five years, maritime migration in Asia has become increasingly touchy, as refugees and irregular migrants navigating the region by the Bay of Bengal which enter an epoch of crisis as a wave of migrants and refugees attempted to cross sea to reach Southeast Asia. Numerous Bangladeshi workers risk their lives on overcrowded fishing boats traveling across the Bay of Bengal. Now people are abducted or manipulated and taken to larger vessels anchored in international waters outside of Bangladesh's maritime frontier. This in-depth study will focus the areas where our prevention efforts should center for the protection of the victims and vulnerable migrants.

Keywords: migration, human security, trafficking, modern slavery, vulnerability

1. Introduction: Prelude

Migration is a process that occurs across time and space. Illegal migration *indicates* to the people who ascertain the infringement of the immigration laws of a particular country. The legal right to live in other country tends to be financially upward, from poorer to richer countries. Illegal migration in a new country generates the risk of being detained and deported or facing other sanctions. The principle of non-refoulement ^[1] in the international Refugee Convention expressly prescribed not to expel illegal migrant or asylum seeker. To seek employment and good life workers both skilled and unskilled may lead to pursue the benefits of globalization. This globalized economy fosters demand for diverse types of exploitation, which also makes migrants vulnerable to traffickers ^[2]. The people are looking for a way out of economic *insecurity*, *social inequality*, environmental crises, *external or internal* armed conflict, political instability and persecution, and in view of tightening border restrictions and controlled options for legal migration. Sometimes migrants are motivated to search for the services of smugglers. Migrants are most vulnerable to abuse and exploitation in situations and places where the authority of the State and society is unable to protect them, either through lack of capacity, applicable laws or simple neglect ^[3].

2. Major Challenges in Bangladesh

Socio-economic deprivation and discrimination ^[4] are the major pushing factors of forced migration due to armed conflicts and human rights violations. This force displacement cannot be divorced from the broader socio-economic context within the countries of origin ^[5].

Human Security

Human security is an issue in many other thematic areas. Human security is accomplished by safeguarding the vital core of all human lives from critical, pervasive threats. It is not possible to give detailed schemes for how to address

insecurities in illegal migration, but that is consistent with long-term human fulfillment. Certain key recommendations can be made if migrants have limited access to network; information or resources, migrants frequently need to look to third party sources for help. The role of third-party intermediaries in the migration process is significant. An analysis of coverage of labour laws of G20 countries noted that labour laws do not cover domestic workers in parts of Australia, Germany, Bangladesh, India, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation, the Republic of Korea, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and the United States ^[6]. These factors also accelerate to the vulnerability of migrant spouses to domestic servitude and forced marriage ^[7].

Economic Challenges

Three main economic insecurity shapes were identified: general poverty, economic exploitation, and 'price hikes' in basic commodities. Poverty makes it harder to access basic services such as healthcare, sanitation and education. Poverty and unemployment are also seen as being the two most important drivers of crime and injustice. Food security is closely linked to environmental stability. Natural disasters destroy large quantities of food and severely disrupt agricultural production, while environmental degradation reduces the long-term productivity of land.

Human Trafficking

Human smuggling is the practice of intermediaries aiding undocumented immigrants in crossing over international borders in large groups *for* financial gain. Human smuggling is differing from something associated with human trafficking. A human smuggler will facilitate illegal entry into a country for a fee, but the smuggled person is usually free on arrival at their destination. Trafficking involves a process of using physical force, fraud, or deception to obtain and transport people. Trafficking violates the human rights of its survivors, damages lives, feeds corruption, and harms society at all

levels. Illegal immigration, including human smuggling and trafficking, is an element of the larger problem of organized crime and the illicit global economy. Again, organized crime refers to sub-national and transnational corporate agencies that operate systematically outside the purview of law intending to turn in profits for its members, especially the leaders^[8].

Riverbank Erosion

This erosion leads directly or indirectly to displacement, death or injury, and the disruption of economic production, education, communications, and sanitation facilities. Affected households are often displaced several times, moving from one disaster-prone area to another. This stress of displacement can also negatively impact families and their mind and body: producing domestic violence and causing the disintegration of a family unit because of forced labour migration.

Climate Change

Climate change is expected to have an intensely damaging effect on Bangladesh. Natural disasters may occur even more frequently and be greater in magnitude. A rise in sea levels could submerge a significant proportion of the country. Climate change will thus not only cause environmental destruction but will also drive massive social changes as millions of people migrate from devastated areas^[9]. This would further overstretch inadequate infrastructure and governance mechanisms and lead to a collapse in living standards and an increase in social disorder.

Civil War and Repression

Unauthorized arrival into another country may be prompted by the need to escape civil war or repression in the country of origin. However, in most countries, someone who flees such a circumstance is also not illegal immigrant. If victims of forced displacement apply for asylum in the country, they fled to and are granted refugee status they have the right to remain permanently. If asylum seekers are not granted some kind of legal protection status, they may have to leave the country, or stay illegal immigrants^[10]. In recent years, Rohingya have faced increasing persecution and attacks brutally by Military and Buddhist monks. Thousands of men, women and children from Myanmar escape out to sea, as thousands have drown, victimize by human traffickers and face an uncertain fate^[11].

3. Human Security for Rohingya Situations

In the 8th Century the *Rohingya*, South Asian origin, dwelled in an independent kingdom in *Arakan*, now known as *Rakhine* state in modern-day Myanmar^[12]. When World War II broke out, Britain discarded *Arakan* in the confrontation of Japanese aggression into Southeast Asia. *Rohingyas* felt betrayed as the British didn't fulfill a promise of autonomy for *Arakan*^[13]. So it was saying that British sowing the seeds of ethnic tension that remain to this day. In the year of 1991, 2012, 2016 and 2017 *Rohingya* refugees fled what they said was forced labor, rape and religious persecution at the Myanmar army. The Nobel peace laureate *Aung San Suu Kyi* has been criticized in particular for her silence and lack of action^[14]. When several people asked for revoke her Nobel Prize she response: "show me a country without human rights issues^[15]." Thousands of men, women and children from

Myanmar escape out to sea, as thousands have drowned, victimized by human traffickers and face an uncertain fate. Women are targeting being gang-raped, men killed, houses torched and young children were thrown into burning homes^[16]. It would be pertinent to note that the whole process linked with human trafficking and illegal migration has assumed dangerous proportions due to certain criminal acts that have developed within this paradigm over the past few years. The Myanmar army often gunned down the boats carrying Rohingya refugees on Naf River^[17]. They have burned "homes, schools, markets, shops, and mosques" belonging to or used by the *Rohingya* people^[18]. On September 07, 2017, The Guardian reported a mass killing of *Rohingyas* at the Tula Toli village, referred as Tula Toli Massacre^[19]. Malaysia's Prime Minister Najib Razak criticized the Myanmar authority for military crackdown on *Rohingya* Muslims, and described the ongoing persecution as "genocide"^[20]. With her long traditional hospitality, Bangladesh accepted Rohingya caused domestic and environmental concerns over human and drug trafficking across the Bangladesh-Myanmar border. This is a challenge for Bangladesh, especially considering the nation's domestic context and its limited resources. However, Bangladesh must work with local, regional and international actors for this Rohingya migrant' crisis.

4. Migration and Modern Slavery

Migrants are most vulnerable to exploitation in situations where the authority of the State and society are unable or unwilling to protect them. The world has witnessed the tragic deaths of thousands of people from different countries drowning in the Mediterranean Sea, the Bay of Bengal, and the Indian Ocean, while trying to enter Europe, or Thailand, or Malaysia. People are moving from Mediterranean Sea routes to Europe is marked by high levels of abuse, trafficking and exploitation. Some are more vulnerable than others: those travelling alone, those with low education levels and those undertaking longer journeys^[21]. IOM study in 2017 state that surveyed migrants along the Central and Eastern Mediterranean routes identified a set of statistically significant predictors of vulnerability to human trafficking and other exploitation^[22].

Red Crescent Report on 64 Bangladeshi Death^[23]

Europe has long been a promised land for Bangladeshi fortune seekers. With illusion further fueled by human traffickers, many take risky journeys through water knowing well it may turn fatal in the hazardous sea. A rescue boat carrying around 75 migrants, most of them from Bangladesh, has been stuck off Tunisia for 12 days after authorities refused to let them disembark. The Egyptian boat rescued the migrants in Tunisian waters, but authorities in the government say its migrant centres are too overcrowded to allow them to come ashore, leaving the vessel 25km from the coastal city of Zarzis. It is one of the deadliest shipwrecks involving migrants trying to reach Europe. This is a tragic and terrible reminder of the risks still faced by those who attempt to cross the Mediterranean. Sometimes they are held hostage by human traffickers or other criminal gangs. It's late by then as they already got caught in the grasp of torture and debt. Many young people convinced by a trafficking group like the manpower broker took the risk of leaving for Bangladesh to Libya. Or the manpower broker pretend a trip to the North African

country from where his ultimate goal to reach Italy.

A Saddest Story of Alamin Miah ^[25]

A 25 years old Alamin Miah, of Agailjhara in Barishal, who survived the migrant boat capsize off Tunisian coast, could be the perfect case in point. Alamin was a private university student, says he found it difficult to get a job or do business in Bangladesh. So, he decided to go to Italy and build a career. He told The Daily Star by phone from a Tunisian Red Crescent camp, "I had no idea that things were so different in Libya" He is one of the 16 survivors, including 14 Bangladeshis, of the tragedy that claimed lives of some 65 migrants including around 40 Bangladeshis. Alamin said mafias held him and dozens of others hostage in camps of Libya. The camp was hell for them. They spent days without water and food. Eighty-six people lived in a single room. They had only one toilet. He faced various forms of physical and mental tortures for ransom. His family had to pay around Tk 11 lakh before he was put on an Italy-bound ship. In mid-sea, he along with others was shifted to a small boat. In the meantime the family is in heavy debt, and he was asking, "How can I return home now?"

Though in debt, Alamin and other survivors are considered themselves lucky as they escaped death in what has become one of the world's most dangerous seas for migrants. After those activities local travel agent office is locked and has been absconding with his mobile phones switched off. Yet thousands of Bangladeshi youth were lured to go to Libya over the following years with the promise of a safe journey to Europe or fantasy about Europe. IOM assisted over the last 10 years shows that more than 20 per cent of international human trafficking journeys cross through non-official border points ^[26].

In May 2015 it was discovered 32 shallow graves ^[27] believed to belong to trafficked migrants on a remote and rugged mountain in border district Sadao, in Songkhla ^[28] From Bangladesh, jobseekers from different districts are taken first to Teknaf of Cox's Bazar and then to cargo ships in deep sea by small engine boats in the dark of night. Authorities in Thailand have found 32 graves suspected to be of trafficked migrants from Myanmar and Bangladesh in an abandoned jungle camp ^[29]. Local news portal *Phuketwan* reported that one of the survivors was identified as Anuzar, 28, a Bangladeshi, who said he had been abducted from *Cox's Bazaar* but had no money to pay a ransom. He was abandoned there for nine months. After finding the graves, Human Rights Watch (HRW), meanwhile, demanded an independent, United Nations-assisted investigation and bringing those responsible to justice ^[30]. The United States dumped Thailand to the bottom of its list of countries accused of failing to tackle "modern-day slavery" ^[31].

5. Vulnerability of Migrants

The term vulnerability is also used in certain legal texts, most notably in Article 3 of the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the "Trafficking in Persons Protocol"), which provides that one of the "means" through which exploitation takes place is "abuse of a position of vulnerability" ^[32]. Migrant workers are also vulnerable in certain labour situations that are either unseen, hard to access or simply not covered by existing

legal protections. This includes situations that are "out of sight" such as migrant workers engaged in work at sea or even in private homes as domestic workers, but it can also include migrants who are virtually confined to worksites by private employers or agents who have a high degree of control over their ability to retain a visa, their working and living conditions, and their mobility. There are an estimated 258 million international migrants globally ^[33]. An estimated 31 million children are migrants globally ^[34], legal routes of migration are typically closed to children. Children and adolescents are particularly vulnerable when travelling alone or having been separated from their families. Again, women experiencing higher rates of modern slavery in domestic work, the sex industry and forced marriage, while men are more likely to be exploited in State-sponsored forced labour and forced labour in the construction and manufacturing sectors.

6. Protections for Migrants

Migrants are most vulnerable in places where the authority of the State and society does not protect them, either through lack of capacity or through intentional neglect. In ships where migrants are physically isolated from the rest of the society; private houses and embassies which are considered "private" and "domestic," leading to their physical isolation and exclusion from labour protections; and conflict zones where the state has effectively broken down and society is itself in crisis ^[35]. While there are laws, policies and practices that are intended to protect migrants from abuse and exploitation, there are many gaps in these mechanisms that leave large areas where people are entirely without protection. While there are myriad factors that contribute to migrants' vulnerability to human trafficking, forced labor, and modern slavery, it is possible to identify salient patterns of risk. These are the areas where our prevention efforts should focus on increasing protections for victims and vulnerable migrants.

Furthermore, close gaps in criminal laws by criminalizing forced marriage, all forms of human trafficking and forced labour, child soldiers' use, and the buying and selling of children for sex. In crisis, anticipate the risk of human trafficking, forced labour and modern slavery. Strengthen the capacity of governments, humanitarian workers and partners in these situations. Actively develop protective systems to identify and assist at-risk populations during crisis and during crisis and protracted or post-crisis settings, including in neighbouring countries and areas of return. These are the areas where our prevention efforts should focus on ^[36]:

- Increasing protections for victims and vulnerable migrants.
- Reducing the capacity and opportunity for potential offenders.
- Increasing the capacity and focus of guardians and first responders.
- Focusing research efforts on filling critical gaps in knowledge.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) target 8.7 aims to: Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms ^[37]. Article 15

of the Migrant Smuggling Protocol affirms [38]: Each State Party shall promote or strengthen, as appropriate, development programmes and cooperation at the national, regional and international levels, taking into account the socio-economic realities of migration and paying special attention to economically and socially depressed areas, in order to combat the root socioeconomic causes of the smuggling of migrants, such as poverty and underdevelopment.

International Organization for Migration (IOM) is working to protect certain migrant people’s vulnerability with relative to others as the result of exposure to a particular type of risk. IOM notes there are at least four dimensions in which migrant vulnerability might manifest [39]:

- Individual factors (such as age, gender, ethnicity),
- family and household factors (such as internal family dynamics),
- community factors (such as cultural attitudes and the natural environment) and
- Structural factors (such as legal structures and broader social stability).

7. Forced Migration and Economic Crisis Solution in Bangladesh

There are some differences between forced and voluntary migrants. Voluntary migrants move for economic gain or higher study or job and so go at a time and to a place of their choosing. Forced migrants flee, often to the nearest safe haven, to avoid bodily harm or persecution. Therefore, forced migrants may lose most of their assets, houses and may end up in a place where job opportunities for them are scarce or completely absent, and so they are unwilling to return to their home country. The State responsibilities can solve the refugee burden though the economic crisis and human rights violations. The skilled human forced are assets of a country. State must adopt regulation for human resources management. Because there is a direct link between development and migration, as the massive amount of remittances comes from migrant workers that has an impact on considerable potential for sustainable development in a country [40]. Forced migrants have a tendency to arrive in places where there are a suitable job and social opportunities [41]. Gilbert scrutinized in the following words:

The intertwining of refugee and immigration policies makes protection subordinate to numbers. However, given that there are still the same number of people needing protection from persecution, the EU is simply pushing people further away and into dependency on states that have fewer resources with which to cope and where the guarantees provided to the refugee are weaker, a problem that will only worsen as the EU expand [42].

These migrants worker frequently risking their lives fill essential roles in their economy whether can be healthcare, agriculture, food production or, processing. According to the report of Bangladesh Bank, remittance from legal banking channel amid Covid 19 was 72.65% higher than \$534 million September last year, and record \$922m remittance inflow [43]. Due to the policy of Bangladesh Government, initiated remittance flow is 2 percent cash back. Returning migrants may need training to be reabsorbed in the labor market and the benefit of migrant workers and their families.

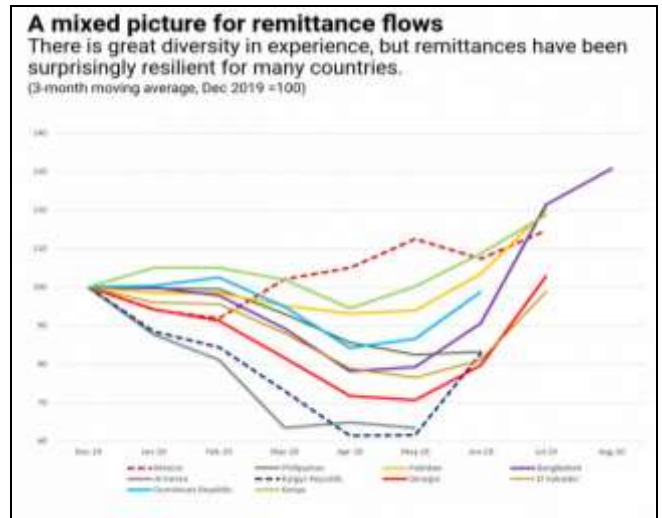
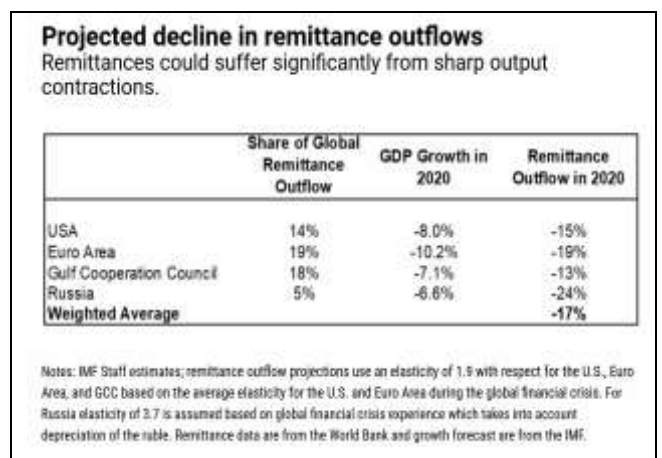


Fig 1



Source: International Monetary Fund

Fig 2

8. Conclusion

Organized Crime is indeed a "high profit, low-risk business". People are often not concerned because they are unaware of the extent, dimensions and implications of the organized crime. Men migrant workers suffer from the exploitation of their employers through changes in contract of employment, non-payment of wages, unsafe and unhealthy working environment, long working hours and exposure to unnecessary risks. Migrant people are in forced labour, about 4.3 million children aged below 18 years enforced labour, representing 18 per cent of the 24.8 million total forced labour victims worldwide. This estimate includes 1.0 million children in commercial sexual exploitation, 3.0 million children in forced labour for other forms of labour exploitation, and 300,000 children in forced labour imposed by state authorities [44]. Modern slavery is also a hidden crime, with the added difficulty of locating affected populations. Modern slavery frequently occurs among migrant who are either little-known to the state or actively seek to stay out of sight of the authorities, such as undocumented migrant workers [45]. Bangladesh must work with local, regional and international actors, including multilateral bodies, aid organizations, civil society and forced migration experts from academia and elsewhere, to develop lasting and ethical solutions to the crisis.

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