



A Newsletter on Refugee and Migratory Movements

UDBASTU

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Conference calls for Addressing PROBLEMS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN REFUGEE MANAGEMENT

Speakers at a Conference called for special attention to the problems of women and children refugees. They stated that women and children constitute almost 70% of any refugee population and hence there is an urgent need to take their problems into account. The two-day conference on *Women and Children in Refugee and Refugee-like Situations in South Asia* was organised by the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) at the British Council Auditorium, Dhaka, on 12 and 13 November 1999. A good number of academics, human rights activists, lawyers, policy makers, researchers, UNHCR personnel and representatives of refugee groups participated in the conference and shared their experiences and views. They identified the issue of women and children in refugee and refugee-like situations as a crucial one, which has never been distinctly recognised by any of the national or international refugee regime as such. Owing to the accelerated pace of untold sufferings of these vulnerable groups, it has now been felt by all of those present in the conference that time has come to develop concrete policy measures and press for their implementation.

The conference was divided into six sessions. Three sessions were held on the first day. Of the eight papers two were on the theme of the conference, three on the present scenario of women refugees / women migrant workers and three on the policies and management of women and children refugees. Dr. Asha Hans, Coordinator of the Centre for Women's Studies, Utkal University presented a paper titled *Tracing Women's and Children's Inclusion in the Refugee Regime*. She underscored the need for the identification of the special problems faced by women and children refugees and advocated for their inclusion in the refugee regimes. Mahendra P. Lama from JNU presented paper on *The Essentials of Refugee Management: Women and Children in South Asia Settings*. The paper dealt with the root causes behind the deprivation of the women and children in refugee and refugee-like situations in the regional context. The second working session heard the experiences of Mangala Sharma, a Bhutanese refugee woman and NGO Activist. Nasreen Ghufuran and Dr. C R Abrar focused on the Afghan refugee women and Bangladeshi women migrant workers during the Gulf Crisis, respectively. The presentations at the third working session were made by persons engaged in refugee management, Sameh Youssef of MSF – Holland, Dayal Kanti Dasgupta of Concern, Bangladesh, Jayashree Jayanand of UNHCR, New Delhi and Inge Colyn of UNHCR, Dhaka.

At the fourth working session held on the second day Dr. Sumaiya Khair of the Department of Law, Dhaka University and Dr. S. H. Hasbullah from Peradeniya University, Sri Lanka, presented papers on *Women and Children Trafficking* and *Child Labour Practices among the IDPs of Sri Lanka* respectively. Both of them identified the socio-economic causes of trafficking and child labour. Working session V began with the presentation of Maryanne Loughry of the Refugee Studies Programme, Oxford University on *the Definition and Orientation of Psychological Programming for Children in Crisis Situation*. Linnie Kesselly, another participant of this session, was very vocal on the rights of the Afghan refugee children. Important recommendations such as need for a data bank, special attention to the disabled children and birth documentation figured prominently in her presentation. One of the main attractions of this session was the report on the condition of Bihari children in Dhaka camps presented by the Young Researchers' Forum of RMMRU. Their field findings, data analysis and policy advocacy for ensuring the socio-political rights of the Bihari

children living inside the camps earned special appreciation from other participants. Following the presentations a heated debate took place on whether or not they should be rehabilitated in Bangladesh.

An important aspect of the conference was the open forum in which a detailed discussion took place to set an agenda for research and action. Participants put forward valuable recommendations in this regard. Community based approach, women empowerment through economic participation and decision making, establishment of a data bank and dissemination of data, regional convention on refugees, comparative research using same methodology, peace education for children were some of the recommendations put forward. Finally, the participants agreed to establish a South Asian Migration and Refugee Network (SAMReN) and RMMRU was to act as its secretariat.

The Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Prof. A K Azad Chowdhury chaired the concluding session of the conference. In his speech he emphasized the need for gender sensitive policy in dealing with refugees and hoped that the proposed network will help facilitate interaction between refugee scholars and activists of different South Asian countries. He also stressed the rights of free movement of people across the borders in the twenty-first century. Mr. Tom Cowin, Director of the British Council and Mr. M M Sunnah of UNHCR also spoke on the occasion.

Summary of Presentations

Working Session I

Dr. Asha Hans, presented the first theme paper which was titled as *Tracing Women's and Children's Inclusion in the Refugee Regime*, at the opening session of the conference. She focused on the gender issues in refugee policies and studies and identified the special problems of women refugees such as the sexual violation, post-traumatic stress disorder, material loss, loss of personal dignity, illiteracy, absence of voting rights, health facilities etc which are more acute to those from the South Asian region. Nevertheless, she finds it difficult to put women and children under the same heading for children are devoid of their special rights and privileges, they must enjoy rights such as education, health, family environment etc. Contextualising these problems through Afghan and Sri Lankan Tamil refugees in India and displaced women and children of Kargil she reached the conclusion that besides the inclusion of women and children refugees in the refugee regime, there is need for an open discussion on the issue in South Asia.

The other paper of this session was provided by Mahendra P Lama, entitled *The Essentials of Refugee Management: Women and Children in South Asia*. Dr. Lama identified the complex interaction of economic, political and social factors of the region as the main factors behind creating the refugee problems. Women and children consist of three-fourths of the total South Asian refugees and they face dual crisis of loss of present and future status. These are manifested in their psychological stresses, health problems, apathy and fear, dilemma in reintegration, problem of social assimilation, conflict with the local people, land mines, lack of opportunity for economic participation and education, losing childhood, political atrocities and obscurity etc. Although every refugee situation is unique, considering their plight and humanitarian issues, Dr. Lama suggested that these two unfortunate groups must be taken under the government and NGOs refugee assistance programmes with special care.

Working Session II

Nasreen Ghufuran presented her paper on *Afghan Women Refugees and the Conflict*. The paper deals with women perspective of a war and its impact upon them. Ghufuran gave a very comprehensive analysis how Afghan women lost their rights at various stages of the Afghan conflict. The woman, who was allowed to go to the school during the Soviet rule, fought against them during the Mujahideen's time and the same women were driven away by the Taliban forces when they captured most of the country. It was the educated urban women who became the prey and forced to take refuge in Pakistan due to their voice against the conservative attitude of the Taliban. Even in Pakistan they hardly get any honour and dignity, as they are not that conservative like those illiterate women of the rural areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan. Therefore, Nasreen suggested the need to strengthen the

position of those Afghan refugee women in order to regain their forgotten and lost role for the country.

As a representative of the Bhutanese Refugee women in the Jhapa camps of Nepal, Mangala Sharma described her practical experiences of being a refugee in her presentation on *Empowerment of Women: A Case Study of the Bhutanese Refugee*. She highlighted the socio-political awareness of women before they became refugee and their role after being a refugee. From 1988 onward as a result of the *Bhutanization* programme of the government thousands of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese fled to Nepal. The first days of the camp were very uncertain. But gradually they not only coped with the situation but some women like her took initiatives towards the empowerment of women by creating women organizations in the camp. They provided assistance to the women refugees to take part in the economic activities besides the male members by producing different handicraft items, post-school education, training on family welfare and reconstruction etc. Thus, they wanted to see the solution in women's empowerment that can be only achieved through decision making power and self-sufficiency.

C. R. Abrar from the RMMRU, Dhaka University, spoke on *Experiences in Refugee like Situation: Bangladeshi Women Migrant Workers during the Gulf Crisis*. After the Iraqi invasion in Kuwait in August 1990, thousands Bangladeshi migrant women workers were displaced and they faced untold miseries during their flight such as food scarcity and lack of security. Usually the employer seizes their passports on their arrival. As a result they had to face an additional problem while leaving Kuwait. There are few incidents of intimidation, harassment, and sexual assault against the women migrant worker but more or less they got the support of the local people. After returning although compensation was awarded in 99.21% cases, a host problems remained in receiving the compensation money.

Working Session III

MSF's Post Emergency Assistance to Rohingya Refugees was presented by Sameh Youssef of MSF. A complex environment evolves the post-emergency phase of an assistance programme to a refugee problem and in this period a comprehensive health and nutrition programme is essential. MSF, an international private medical relief organisation provided services like in-patient treatment, out-patient treatment, laboratory, graveyard monitoring, expanded programme on immunization (EPI), male circumcision, reproductive health programme, nutrition programme, water and sanitation, refugee knowledge and participation on health issues, to the Rohingya Refugees, who are the victims of human rights abuses in Burma and fled their country to neighbouring Bangladesh. The programme is coordinated with UNHCR, WFP, BDRCS, other international agencies and relevant , ministries of the GoB. From his practical experiences, Youssef recommended that health education activities should be intensified and training is to be imparted to the community health workers. The addition of blended food to the general ration also can be a cost-effective way to reduce the prevalence of low birth weight babies, prematurely and neonatal deaths. There is also need for counseling, education and improving the image of blended food for its improved use.

The second paper of this session was offered by Dayal Kanti Das Gupta, programme officer of Concern, Bangladesh. Like MSF, his organisation also provides health assistance to the Rohingya refugees since 1992. Their services includes curative medicare facilities, antenatal and postnatal care, immunization, health education, Supplementary feeding programme for pregnant and lactating mothers, family planning activities, sanitation, food basket monitoring, supplementary feeding for under 5 children, school health education, therapeutic feeding programme for severely malnourished children etc. Thus they directly cover the women and children refugees in their work.

Another fieldwork-oriented presentation was made by Jayshree Jayanand of UNHCR, India. She spoke on *Situation of Women and Children Refugees in India: Policy Perspectives*. From her practical experiences she showed how the programmes of UNHCR such as women empowerment, micro-credit facilities, vocational training, health facilities, accessing local government faces problems of implementation. There is problem of freedom of movement, exposure towards higher education by the children, finding suitable jobs by the women refugee etc. Although they are committed to promote gender equality, their efforts sometimes find fund constrain.

The last participant of this session was Inge Colyn of UNHCR, Dhaka. Her paper on *Women and Children in Rohingya Refugee Camps in Bangladesh* gives an overview of UNHCR's plan and objectives of self-reliance, voluntary repatriation and redressing the special problems of women and children in a difficult law and order situation. While different agencies tried to reduce sexual harassment, increase women's decision making, and ensure their participation, the women faced obstacles like traditional male

Conference Recommendations: Setting of Agenda for Research and Action

- A data bank should be created on migrants, refugees and IDPs of South Asia. The data should be developed in an organised manner and be disseminated for further research.
- Empirical research on comparative perspectives using same methodology may be undertaken to understand the dynamics of population movements in the South Asian region. More funds should be secured for this purpose. A workshop on *Research Methodology on Refugee Research* may be arranged at the regional level to develop a module of methodology as proposed above.
- Colleagues from other disciplines such as psychology, nutrition, health education, economics and anthropology should be involved in conducting inter-disciplinary research.
- Comparative study between the refugee and non-refugee groups about the facilities provided to both categories needs to be undertaken.
- Any permanent solution to the refugee or refugee-like situations must be focussed on the research on the root causes of the creation rather than service related issues. As follow up to the research conducted, policy advocacy is also very important. In this context policies and cases must be evaluated where the situations have been successfully dealt with.
- IDPs must be given importance and different agencies should take up programmes and provide assistance. International community should pay proper attention to their plight as well.
- Refugees must be involved in any planning process and their inputs should be passed on to the policy makers for implementation. Forced repatriation by the government or any other agencies must be stopped. For prolonged refugee situations, inter-governmental studies may be undertaken.
- A South Asian Migration and Refugee Network (SAMReN) be established, RMMRU would act as Secretariat. SAMReN will undertake the responsibility to maintain the data bank and ensure its proper use through Web sites. It would help researchers to identify and prioritise critical issues in the region and conduct research for action plans, develop a directory on specific subjects, networks, particularly those aiming at self reliance, vocational training, income generation, job placement etc. Seminars, conferences and consultations may be arranged to strengthen the South Asian network. Studies can be divided among the participants of the conference and one person in each of the South Asian countries may act as the national focal point for networking.
- Although a good number of NGOs are involved in refugee and migration related activities, very often researchers face the problem to get access to NGOs' activity reports and research findings. Therefore, NGOs should share information with different organisations and individuals and with this end an *NGO Database* may be established.
- Popular awareness about the rights of the refugees could be developed through regular features in the regional, national and local newspapers and also teaching at the educational institutions. Civil society members should play a more active role to make people more aware and sensitive about the issues.
- Women have gender specific needs. Therefore laws protecting and ensuring their rights must be comprehensive in practice. Also a community based approach should be taken for ensuring refugee women and children's rights.
- Based on the commonalties and specificities of the South Asian refugee cases, a regional policy or declaration with regard to the refugees may be adopted for the South Asian region. As most of them have large caseloads of women and children, being non-signatory states, the declaration should clarify their role about these people.
- The issue of third country settlement of refugees, specially, in the developed countries must be explored. Developed countries should take up humanitarian responsibility to overcome fund constraints in refugee protection and management.

domination in the society, lack of accommodation, lack of freedom of movements, leadership crisis, lesser cooperation on part of the government of the host country, slow rate of repatriation etc. In order to get rid of the impediments against the implementation of the programmes, like women and children's education, medical services, recreation, she felt the need for a documentation of the constraints faced by this group.

Working Session IV

In her paper entitled *Enslavement across Borders: Trafficking in Women and Children in Bangladesh*, Sumaiya Khair highlighted the issue of women and children trafficking which are determined by multidimensional socio-economic, cultural and religious factors such as poverty, patriarchal system, labour market, illegal migration, etc. Various national and international laws have been enacted in this regard but those are hardly implemented due to corruption, lack of accessibility and slow processing. Repatriation, rehabilitation and reintegration of the trafficked women and children become a more dangerous problem because there are organized groups of traffickers who maintain good network and in most of the cases family and society remain reluctant to welcome them. So she recommended for an effective legal system, state intervention, addressing at the regional level, creating popular awareness about the legal protection, rescue operations, changing the popular psyche about women's role and developed infrastructure of the rural poor.

Dr. S H Hashbullah presented a case study of *Child Labour Practices in Sri Lankan Kalpitiya Peninsula*. In his study, child employment is seen as an indicator of an unhealthy socio-economic development. It reveals that a high proportion of IDP children is engaged in employment activities. Family decides about whom in the family must involve in income earning activities. It was discovered that the involvement of female children is higher than male children. Competition among IDPs and local workers for limited available jobs further lowers wage rates. It also affects school education of these children. Therefore, besides taking into consideration the issue of alienation from the same ethnic group, the issue of economic solvency must be taken care by the Sri Lankan Government.

Working Session V

At this session of children in refugee and refugee like situation, Maryanne Loughry made a presentation on the *Psychological Programming for Children in Crisis Situations*. Her paper looked at the nature of modern armed conflict namely civil war, social breakdown and lawlessness etc and then she discussed the international humanitarian and human rights instruments to protect the children from the crisis situation. She identified globalisation of childhood as problematic as universally agreed norms and standards may be at odds with local customs and beliefs. Her psychosocial perspective for the children in crisis consist of specialised clinical intervention, community interventions and large-scale intervention such as social participation, shelter, health care etc. This is designed to advance children's psychological and social development and to strengthen protective factors that limit the effects of adverse influences. Thus, she stresses overall programme of supporting local capacities to assist children, early child development programme, strengthening of family and community support.

Linnie Kesselly, UNHCR, Pakistan presented a paper on *Action for the Rights of Refugee Children in Pakistan*. A brief but comprehensive idea about the UNHCR's Action for the Rights of Children (ARC) is found in her deliberation and specially ARC's regional activities for the Afghan Refugee Children. She identified child exploitation and abuse, drugs, child labour and child beggars, disabled children, refugee adolescence as the issues where there is need for accurate information and data. She also pointed out the need for birth registration and adolescents health education.

The session on children refugees ended with a paper on *Condition of Bihari Children in Dhaka Camps* prepared by the Young Researchers' Forum of RMMRU. Since the independence of

Bangladesh in 1971, the Bihari people are living in a deplorable condition in camps situated in different parts of the country. While their basic child rights like right to health and hygiene, food and nutrition, education and a childhood free of labour are violated, there is hardly any initiative for ensuring them those rights. The young researchers advocated for ensuring their rights on the ground that as Bangladesh is a party to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Convention on Rights of the Child, it is obliged to provide them so.

Reporter: Syeda Rozana Rashid

Young Researchers' Forum Consultation on SLUM AND BROTHEL EVICTION

The Young Researcher's Forum of RMMRU organised a Consultation on the recent slum eviction in Dhaka and brothel eviction in Narayangonj. The programme was held on December 2, 1999 at the Meeting Room of the Faculty of Arts, University of Dhaka. This was a follow up of discussions previously held in the monthly meetings with the Unit. In October 1999, Mahbubur Rahman of Department of Political Science presented a paper on the *Slum Eviction of Dhaka City*, and in November Afroza Khanom of the same Department presented another paper on the *Brothel Eviction of Narayangonj*. The participants of those meetings felt that expert opinion and experience were necessary for a better understanding of the issues involved. Activists and legal practitioners, who had dealt with the issues, were invited to the Consultation.

Mahbubur Rahman made a brief presentation on slum eviction. Almost 40% of the total population of Dhaka City live in the slums. The slum dwellers have often been used as vote-banks, political work force, sources of a number of crime such as terrorism, drug dealing and many other anti-social activities. On 7 August 1999 the Home Minister of Bangladesh gave an order to evict all slums in Dhaka city following an inter-ministerial meeting, as a consequence of a death of a police officer during a clash between the police force and dwellers of a Gopibagh slum on 6 August. From 8 to 11 August a number of slums were destroyed. On 11 August *Ain-O-Salish Kendro* (ASK), Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) and *Odhikar*, three NGOs along with two slum dwellers named Ismat Ara Dipa and Rohima lodged a writ petition to the High Court challenging the legality of such eviction. On the 26 August the Court ordered that the government must not evict any slum until the final judgement was passed. The presentation ended with some questions on the legal ground of the writ petition, slum eviction as violation of human rights, violation of the Constitutional provisions of Bangladesh, growth of slums and its legal status, and the role of different organisations.

In the second presentation on *Brothel Eviction of Narayangonj* Afroza Khanom stated that on 24 July, a large contingent of police and government officers came into the Tanbazar and Nimtoli brothels to evict the sex workers at dawn. It was done as a part of government initiated rehabilitation programme for prostitutes. Most of the sex workers were able to flee but the rest were taken to the Gazipur Rehabilitation Centre by bus, and the two brothels were sealed. The questions raised in the presentation focused on the legal status of prostitutes, brothel eviction, issue of eviction from legally rented premise and its implications for the tenancy act, the role of public opinion regarding prostitution and socio-psychological costs of such eviction.

In the discussion session, Dr. Shahdeen Malik of BLAST stressed the notion of justice rather than legislative references while he responded to the questions raised in the presentations. Dr. Malik stated that there is no law on settlement on government land. He argued that poverty can not be crime and the poor are the most vulnerable segment of the country. Therefore, they should have the optimum privilege from the well-off part of the society as well as the government. What the government can do is that it can purchase any land for public welfare and give prior notice for eviction. Dr. Malik underscored the need for looking into the issue from the affected and evicted people's point of view.

Advocate Nizamul Huq Nasim has been dealing with the case for the petitioners on behalf of BLAST, ASK, and *Odhikar*. He narrated the rules and regulations of the procedure and the events of slum eviction chronologically. He emphasised people's basic human rights, which include right to life as the fundamental right ensured by the Constitution of Bangladesh. Right to life basically incorporates right to food, shelter, education, liberty and so on, which is the prime argument in favour of the slum dwellers. They had been settled in the slums of Dhaka City after they had already lost their land, home, and sources of income in the rural areas and had to migrate to the urban areas. As the GoB is incapable of ensuring the right for every citizen of the state due to some inevitable constraints, the

government therefore has no right to evict its people from a settlement. Nonetheless, the government scheme to resettle the slum dwellers is quite a time consuming and gigantic task. Their case should be considered on humanitarian ground, since the contribution of the slum dwellers in the country's economy is undeniable. This is not merely an issue to be considered in the manner of right or wrong. It is the reflection of our failure to limit the differences between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots'. There should be consensus not to let new slums grow, and there must be an alternative process other than coercive way to eradicate slums.

On the issue of brothel eviction, advocate Habibunnesa of *Naripakkha* shared her experience as an activist for the cause of the sex workers. Habibunnesa stated that the Tanbazar brothel was established around 200 years ago, for the entertainment of the English soldiers. Girls have been brought into here in the name of employment, overseas migration, and often sold through unfair means. At that time the government owned the land. But in course of time, the powerful people of the area illegally grabbed the land and became owners of the houses. There are some small associations of the sex workers in the area to deal with the landowners. A large sum of security money had been regularly given to the house owners, with whom the sex workers had oral and written contracts.

At the time of eviction, around 13,000 women and children were evicted overnight, and were attacked by armed elements. This is absolutely illegal in terms of tenant-owner contract, whatever the form of contract is. Therefore, the government has no right to evict. However, the government version for eviction was that it was part of a step to reduce prostitution. But there had been no prior notice of such action, let alone any participation of the affected people on the procedure of prostitution reduction. On the question of burial right of the dead prostitute from the religious point of view, Habibunnesa informed that it is a basic right of every individual to have a proper religious burial. Responding to another question, she informed

that prostitution is neither prohibited nor encouraged in Bangladesh. But there is no institutional form supported by the law. Regarding the role of different local and international organisations on the issue of sex workers, she informed that in 1995 UNDP took a decision to start micro-credit programme for the prostitutes of Bangladesh through training and make them health conscious. But it was not launched. She criticised the society's negative view towards the sex workers since it is considered one of the oldest professions of human history. Therefore, she urged that it is the duty of the civil society to look into the issue on a humanitarian ground.

The workshop was attended by students of Arts and Social Science faculties. A lively interaction took place between the panelists and the other participants.

Reported by Shahzada M Akram

A Milestone: THE ASIAN MIGRANT YEARBOOK 1999

The Asian Migrant Yearbook 1999: Migration Facts, Analysis and Issues in 1998 co-published by Asian Migrant Center Ltd. and Migrant Forum, in Asia is a resource book that can be placed in the 'must-read' and 'must-have' category for those working or interested in this area. The volume presents a comprehensive picture of the crisis faced by the Asian migrant workers in 1998 and deals extensively with various issues related to Asian labour migration and activities of different regional and country organizations working in this field. Divided broadly into three parts Asian Migrant Yearbook 1999 (AMY) provides an informative and well-substantiated analysis on Asian labour migration.

The overview section of the book sums up the impact of Asian economic crisis on growing anti-migrant worker sentiment and restrictive policies and discriminatory practices and harsh treatment of undocumented workers. The measures taken by the labour exporting countries were also briefly detailed. It should be noted that chronic abuses, violation of rights of the migrant workers has increased in 1998. Despite the economic crisis and rise in incidence of violation of rights of migrant worker in labour importing (and in some cases exporting country) the year has been notable for growing grassroots and international activities, and strong national/ international responses.

The second part of the book consists of many insightful and informative articles that deal with various themes on migration. Some of the articles are on issues that have been highlighted in the past. For example, the article on Migration and HIV/AIDS that throws light on the little discussed but incorrect view that migrant worker are 'carriers' of HIV/AIDS in both receiving and sending countries. The article analyzes the factors that make migrant workers vulnerable to HIV, the vulnerability of women workers, restricted access of migrant workers to health services in the receiving countries etc and show that the realities of migration process make the workers a vulnerable group. Articles in this section also deal with much debated themes related to migration: impact of neo-liberal economic crisis in Asia, connection between debt condition of migrant workers etc. The achievement and role of Migrant Forum in Asia and campaign activities for establishing "migrant rights are human rights" (global campaign for ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families) were also extensively described in this section. The other articles focused on strategies for migrant reintegration and regional "three level strategies" i.e. social justice, empowerment and compassion and defense strategies for meeting the challenges of labour migration. The articles are easy to read and include informative box items (i.e. piece on appointment of a special UN Rapporteur on Human Rights of Migrants).

The last section of the book consists of country reports and includes various declarations and statements that were drafted and reports on conference proceedings that were held in 1998. The country report on Bangladesh provides an excellent overview of the situation of Bangladeshi workers, the role and actions of the government (banning migration of female workers) activities of various organizations (such as WARBE) in 1998. This important work will have popular appeal will be regarded as a milestone in the years to come.

Sohela Nazneen

**ACTIVITIES OF THE UNIT
October – December, 1999.**

Conference: Regional Conference on *Women and Children in Refugee and Refugee like Situations in South Asia* organised at The British Council Auditorium on 12-13 November 1999. The conference was participated by local and foreign delegations, human rights activists, affected groups, scholars, and representatives from government and non-government organisations.

Consultation: Consultation on *The Recent Slum and Brothel Eviction* was organised at the Meeting Room of the Faculty of Arts, on 2 December 1999. This was the first Consultation organised under the banner of Young Researchers' Forum of RMMRU and participated by University students, and human rights activists.

Publication: The July-September, 1999 issue of *Udbastu*, the Unit newsletter was published in July 1999.

Monthly Meeting: Monthly meetings of Student Associates were held regularly. In the meeting of September 1999, Shahzada M Akram, Research Associate of RMMRU presented a paper on the *Kosovo Refugee Crisis*. In October, Mahbubur Rahman of Department of Political Science presented a paper on *Slum Eviction of Dhaka City*. In November Afroza Khanom of Department of Political Science presented a paper on *Brothel Eviction of Narayangonj*. The presentations were followed by discussion from the associates.

Field Work: Field work of the study on *Condition of the Bihari Children in Dhaka Camps* in October. The paper was presented at the regional conference on *Women and Children in Refugee and Refugee like Situations in South Asia* at The British Council Auditorium on 12-13 November 1999.

Field work of the study on *Experience in War like Situations: The Case of the Bangladeshi Female Migrant Workers during the Gulf War* in October. The paper was presented at the regional conference on *Women and Children in Refugee and Refugee like Situations in South Asia* at The British Council Auditorium on 12-13 November 1999.



We invite you to join us

In our regular monthly meetings held at 1:00 p.m. on the first Thursdays of every month at the office of RMMRU, Dhaka University

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