

Reconstruction of Devastated Japan after Earthquake and Tsunami: Roles of Migrant Bangladeshi Community in Japan

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In the beginning of this seminar, on behalf of **SHAPTAHIK** and Bangladesh, I would like to show my heartiest respect to all the victims of devastating earthquake and tsunami, occurred on March 11, 2011. I am also conveying my sympathy to the misfortunes and thanks to the people of relevant administration and all the volunteers, who did a lot for the victims. At the same time, I would like to thank the people who have been opened the opportunity for me to say something on behalf of SHAPTAHIK and Bangladeshi Community in Japan.

There is a friendly relation between Japan and Bangladesh. Though countries are different, however there is very common mind set among the people of both countries. There is a similarity in the design of national flag of both countries. The people of Bangladesh always remember the participation of Japan to rebuild infrastructures of Bangladesh after the liberation war. Japanese support towards the communication sector, particularly in constructing bridge which has been bridging the relationship between the countries. The most recent initiative in this sector is the signing of contract for Padma Bridge.

The migrants' population of Bangladesh, who live in Japan, passed their most valuable time of life in Japan. They feel Japan as their second home and similar to their mother land. I am also one of them. Therefore, we enjoy all the success and good things of Japan and the same way we feel sorrow to see any shocking incident, happen in Japan.

Consequently Bangladeshi residents in Japan became upset during the earthquake, but these people lent their hand to the victims after the shock. At first they try to help from their own personal initiative, after that they worked together for the sufferer. Some person also worked from their business house.

I would like to mention here about Mr. Akter Hossain, a Bangladeshi business man lives in Japan. He used his two hotels as a shelter center and provided food and other necessities in his own cost. That news was covered by Japanese media and the government also thanked him.

With the support of Bangladesh Embassy, Bangladeshi migrants rescued 58 Bangladeshi people from Miyagi Ken on March 15 and took all responsibilities of them. Those, who had urgency to go back to Bangladesh, community helped them, as required. They also kept the contact with the Bangladeshis lived in IWATE ken and Fukushima ken. Bangladeshi cultural group Uttoron and Islamic Mission distributed fresh and hot food to the shelter centers on April 02. Fresh food also were distributed several times by two

restaurants Ruchi and Rani in affected areas, which was admired by the local administration.

Bangladeshi migrant community organized a charity concert at Takinogawa Kaikan on April 3rd to raise fund for supporting the victims. Representatives from Japan Foreign Ministry, Member of Parliament (Kokkai giin), Mr. Akira Ishii, representatives from local administration and people from different countries joined the program and contributed to the fund. Ambassador along with all the staff of Bangladesh Embassy was present there. In total 1200022 yen were collected from the charity show and handed over to the representatives of Japan Red Cross. **SHAPTAHIK** was the media partner of this event.

On the same day Bangladeshi community live in Saitama Ken distributed food among the people living in shelter centers at Misato city. Mr. Yano, the caretaker of shelter centers appreciated the initiative and said that people of other communities are following Bangladeshis. Bangladeshis are also working as volunteer. Bangladeshi migrant Hafej Alauddin has given 150,000 yen at Koshigaya city office on behalf of Islamic Mission on April 04. Bangladeshi community in Tsukuba town distributed food among the victim on April 10, after getting permission from the local administration.

Bangladeshi community celebrates the Bengali New Year festival in April at Ikebukuro Nishiguchi Park. In this year, in respect to the missing and departed souls, they tighten up the celebration and collected fund on the occasion to help the earthquake survivors. It was also a charity program and 821,617 yen were collected from the participants both Bangladeshis and Japanese. Organizers provided more fund and handed over a total of 1,000,000 yen to the starving people through the Toshima City authority.

The cultural organization Uttoron organizes a musical program named *RANALA* as the tribute to Rabindranath Tagore, Kazi Nazrul Islam and Lalan Shah on May 15. In this year they also declared it as a charity program and sent the collected fund as relief for the victims.

Bangladeshi community living in Osaka, Kiyoto, Sapporo, Nagoya, Fukuoka, Chiba, Saitama, Kanagawa, Ibaraki, Gunma, Tochigi, Hiroshima and Nagasaki tried their best to support the vulnerable peoples.

In fact as a matter of wealth these are not enough for the needs. You know the owner of Soft Bank Mr. Masayoshi Sonn has personally given 10 billion yen and 100 Million Yen from the company. Owner of Uniclo also has given 100 million Yen. In comparison with them it is really very small contribution from Bangladeshis. However all are not being calculated in currency. It is true that the Warm support of migrant Bangladeshis amplified the courage of Japanese friends.

The Japan, who helps to rebuilding our country, we have not left her behind during the disaster. We are always beside you. Bangladeshis are trying to contribute in rebuilding Japan. The same message was disseminated through the 12th Tokyo Boishakhee Mela and curry festival. We did not escape from Japan and we will always beside there. Actually we would like to say in the same voice that Gambaro Nippon.

Apart from these people in Bangladesh prayed for Japan in different mode. Head of the Government, opposition leaders sent mourning message on behalf of the people. A mourning moment was proposed combined in great national parliament. Bangladesh government sent relief and financial support to Japan. Japan Government has also accepted the relief with gratefulness and thanked to the people and government of Bangladesh.

Actually Bangladeshi Community in Japan, Bangladesh Government and People of Bangladesh always remained beside the Japanese people in such way and reminded them you are not alone. We are beside you.

And **SHAPTAHIK** disseminated all the information towards the Bangladeshi people living world wide through both the print and web version.

At the end of my speech I would like to thank you again on behalf of Bangladesh and Shaptahik for hearing me patiently.

Gambaro Nippon. We are always beside you.

Thank you all.

Rahman Moni
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