ALLIANCES FOR SOLIDARITY

On 26 May 2018, Humanitarian Award Giving Ceremony 2018 was organized by Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu) at Conference room, Spectra Convention Centre, Gulshan, Dhaka. A total of 124 eminent guests representing awarded guests, journalists from different print and electronic media, community members, NGOs and INGOs, representatives of Embassy of Sweden, Bangladesh, USAID, Save the Children, Nepal, lawyers, Doctors, Law Enforcement Agencies, National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), Lecturer and Professor from different educational institutes and 'Bandhu' Staff members attended. The objective of the event was to Develop strong network among the gender diverse population and different stakeholders in Bangladesh.

Mr. Anisul Islam, Hero, Chairperson of Bandhu Social Welfare Society presided the event where Mr. Kazi Reazul Hoque , Hon’ble Chairman ,National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh participated as chief guest. The event was divided into two parts; one is unveiling Photo Novella and the other is Award Giving Ceremony who have contributed unconditionally for the development of gender diverse population in Bangladesh.

"Photo Novella" is a photography art for engaging gender diverse youth to learn social personal issues and help them for social change. Over the last couple of years there has been growing interest in the use of community-based participatory research (CBPR) for preventing and controlling complex public health problems. Photography Art is one of several qualitative methods utilized in CBPR, as it is a participatory method that has community participants use photography, and stories about their photographs to identify their present scenario important issues. Over the past several years Photography Art methodology has been frequently used to explore community health and social issues. 16 youth participants from gender diverse population participated in photo novella and awarded as well.

Shale Ahmed, Executive Director, Bandhu Social Welfare Society mentioned that Path of Bandhu was not always easy and almost impossible to come this far without help of its well wishers from different sectors. Bandhu family remembers all of his well wishers who supported very closely from very beginning till date. It was very tough for us to select a single person or institute for the award because the list is very big.

"Every citizen has the right to receive equal treatment by the law and society"
From now on Bandhu will try to arrange such kind of award program in every year. We want to thank all the awardees from the core of our heart for their immense support towards gender diverse population. I also thank NHRC Chairman for his kind presence in the program as a chief guest. We are very grateful for relentless cooperation of NHRC and its really encouraging for us that NHRC included special plan to work for gender diverse population in their strategic plan.

Kazi Riazul Haque, Chairman, National Human Rights Commission Bangladesh handed over the awards to all awardees. In his remarks, he appreciated Bandhu for their challenging work over the last 20 years for the Gender diverse population. He also addressed that, “Despite so many obstacles Bandhu has been working for this population and indeed it's not an easy task.” He appreciated Bandhu for their International attempts of advocacy for the gender diverse population issue, he also mentioned that the recognition of third gender was a great achievement and credit goes to Bandhu as well.

He also said, “Every citizen has the right to receive equal treatment by the law and society. There is no proper record or data on the total number of Hijra population in Bangladesh. So a proper census for this community is basic need. We need to integrate them into mainstream society. We know Hijras harass people on the streets or even at their houses. Their behavior might seem crass, but it is our fault that they are marginalized and ignored. This needs to change.” Mr. Haque informed the audience that, “Government is working on Anti-Discrimination Law and NHRC with help of organizations like Bandhu to send a draft version which includes the issues regarding gender diverse population. There should be an authentic census for Hijra population so that government can easily identify the actual number and it is easier to work for a specific number of people.”

Anisul Islam Hiru, Chairperson, Bandhu Social Welfare Society (Bandhu) congratulated all the awardee for their unconditional support to the gender diverse population. He requested all to continue their support like always for the well-being of this population. He declared the audience that this kind of initiatives will continue in future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- We all try from our own position to make a difference in favor of Hijra people of our society. If you can’t do anything for this Hijra people, then just accept them as a rightful burgher of the society.
- We are serving gender diverse populace with HTC and HIV treatment but it is very high time to ensure complete health package.
- ULAB has taken initiatives to include gender diverse issue in student affairs office. Moreover, media studies and journalism department also taken initiatives to broadcast programs on the gender diverse population issues through their own national level TV and Radio channel, so that other students as well as audiences can be more sensitized.
- Need to arrange some sensitization workshop on gender diverse issues for the Police, so that they can be oriented on this population.
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He also added that, “Progress cannot happen in society without integrating Hijras into mainstream communities as respectable and respected citizens.

“NO ONE SHOULD BE LEFT BEHIND”

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HONORABLE AWARD WINNERS

WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED UNCONDITIONALLY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF GENDER DIVERSE POPULATION IN BANGLADESH...

Entrepreneurship Development
Mirza Azam MP
State Minister of Textile & Jute, Government of Republic of Bangladesh

Media and Communication
Dhaka Tribune
Online Newspaper

Social Justice
Barrister Sara Hossain
Honorary Executive Director, BLAST

Health Service
Dr. Shariful Islam Khan (Bobby)
Scientist and Director, Program for HIV, IDD, Iodd/b

Law Enforcement Agency
Habibur Rahman, BPM (BAR), PPM
Additional DHO, Bangladesh Police

Civil Society
Solina Hossain
Writer

Celebrity
Sadia Islam Mou
Model, Dance Choreographer, and Television actress

Education
University of Liberal Art Bangladesh (ULAB)
Private University

Hijra Community
Arifa Yesmin Mouyari
President, Sir Shovon Kuliyan Shongtha, Jamalpur

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