

Workshop Summary Report on “Coastal Communities in Fostering the Blue Economy in the South-Western Region of Bangladesh”

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Presented Chief Guest, Chairman BIMRAD and Key note Speakers



Presented Distinguished Guests & BIMRAD Team

More than 11% of the total population of Bangladesh living on the coast is directly or indirectly involved in fisheries for their livelihood. The extent of marine fisheries is no longer limited to creating a safe haven for the livelihood of the vast majority of the coastal population, but it is also contributing to food security, especially nutrition, throughout the country. Those for whom Bangladesh is gaining so much reputation today in the marine resources, especially in the fisheries sector, are mostly neglected. A seminar was arranged by Bangladesh Institute of Maritime Research and Development (BIMRAD) to discuss the role of coastal populations in developing the economy, and ways and solutions to improve their quality of life. BIMRAD arranged the seminar regarding “Coastal Communities in Fostering the Blue Economy in the South-Western Region of Bangladesh” on 24th December, 2019 at

Khulna Naval Base (BNS TITUMIR), Khulna.

The livelihood of the coastal communities, economic dimensions of the coastal region, eco-system of the Sundarbans, and prospects of Sundarbans centric tourism, and initiatives to foster the blue economy plan of Bangladesh were discussed. The honorable Mayor of Khulna City Corporation Mr. Talukder Abdul Khaleque was present as Chief Guest at the seminar. The Chief Guest highly appreciated the noble initiatives of BIMRAD to work for the development of the coastal community of the south-western region of Bangladesh through research, project works, capacity and awareness-building activities. There were about 300 participants representing stakeholders of different sectors of the blue economy, officers of Bangladesh Navy and Coast Guard, academicians and maritime scholars, representatives of government and private organizations, the business community, coastal and forest communities, entrepreneurs, journalists as well as students. The participants gathered information concerning coastal livelihood, constraints and prospects of economic activities in the region from the keynote speeches and discussion sessions among the participants.

Two different sessions were conducted during the seminar to exchange views and learn about the challenges of the coastal community from journalists and concerned stakeholders in the south-western region of Bangladesh. Commodore Kazi Emdadul Haq (retd), Director General, BIMRAD presented the welcome remarks and commenced the seminar to a discussion session with the coastal journalists to find out the problems of coastal people, following which journalists came and share their experience and opinions. He introduced BIMRAD as a charitable independent think tank patronized by Bangladesh Navy, stressed on the

importance of BIMRAD, emphasized the need to research coastal people's quality life, through strong science-based realistic information. Several recommendations like pure drinking water facility, treatment, and education facility, transportation facility, protection of Sundarbans from pollution, the arrangement of alternative livelihood for the Sundarbans based villagers, protection of the coastal area from climate change impact, stopping indiscriminate and destructive fishing etc. were proposed both from the coastal journalists and coastal-forest communities as well during the discussion session.

system of the natural resources that will enhance the livelihood of the coastal people depending on those. She argued in her lecture that without protecting nature no development is possible. Dr. Md Wasiul Islam mainly pointed out the importance of marine tourism and presented the prospect of eco-tourism in Bangladesh to the audience. Shamim Arfeen described the marine resources and their socio-economic importance in his lecture. He also mentioned the role of coastal fishers and their way/chance of vulnerability. In the afternoon session of the seminar, former Chief of the Naval Staff, Bangladesh Navy



During the daylong event, three professors of Khulna University- Dr. Selina Ahmed of Sociology discipline, Dr. Md. Wasiul Islam and Dr. Nazmus Sadath of Forestry and Wood Technology discipline and Shamim Arfeen.

Executive Director of "An Organization for Socio-Economic Development (AOSED)" participated as keynote speakers. Professor Dr. Nazmus Sadath mentioned that this is the high time to work for the sustainable economic development of the blue ocean giving priority on the gradual economic growth of the country and also the climate change issues. Dr. Selina Ahmed emphasized the management

and Chairman of BIMRAD Admiral Nizamuddin Ahmed (retd) gave a vote of thanks to the chief guest, keynote speakers, naval officers and distinguished guests for their participation. The entire program including discussion sessions with coastal journalists and communities were moderated by Commodore Kazi Emdadul Haq (retd), Director General, BIMRAD.

A memorandum of understanding was signed between Khulna University and BIMRAD at the end of the seminar to establish cooperation, conduct research, and capacity building activities for the development of blue economy initiatives and Delta Plan 2100 of Bangladesh.