

# National Convention

## Leaving No One Behind

### Discrimination, Exclusion and Rights of the Marginal and Excluded People

20-21 June 2019

Venue: LGED Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207



*Organized by*

Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD),  
Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC), Christian  
Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB) and Gram  
Bikash Kendra (GBK)



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Dear Sir/Madam,

Bangladesh has made commendable achievements in addressing the challenges of poverty. However, poverty is a multi-dimensional reality. One feature of this reality is reflected in the current condition of the marginal and excluded communities who are yet to reach desired levels in reducing poverty. Bringing the challenge of exclusion and marginalization into national focus is thus a key priority in today's Bangladesh. With this goal in mind, we, four organizations—Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC), Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD), Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB) and Gram Bikash Kendra (GBK), with support from the European Union and ICCO Cooperation—have undertaken a multi-year initiative since February 2016 to make the marginal and excluded communities in Bangladesh visible and address the challenges they face.

In this connection, we are organizing a national convention and cultural festival on 20-21 June 2019 (Thursday-Friday) at LGED Auditorium, LGED Bhaban, Agargaon, Dhaka-1207 to share findings of studies and analysis so far, think together about how to deal with exclusion challenges in Bangladesh and to celebrate cultural riches that the excluded groups offer. The theme of the convention is discrimination, exclusion and rights of the marginal and excluded people.

Eminent economist, Professor Rehman Sobhan, will be present as the chief guest. Guests of honour and distinguished speakers at the convention are Prof. Wahiduddin Mahmud, Prof. Rounaq Jahan, Dr. Shamsul Alam, Prof. Sakhawat Ali Khan, Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh, Tessa Schmelzer, Dr. Harishankar Jaladas, Rambhajan Kairi and Rabindranath Soren. The representatives of tea communities, trade unions, ethnic communities and other excluded groups, civil society, community-based organizations, state actors, human rights organizations, cultural groups and the media will attend the convention and cultural festival.

You are cordially invited to the convention.

**Dr. Hossain Zillur Rahman**  
Executive Chairman, PPRC

**Philip Gain**  
Director, SEHD

**Joyanta Adhikari**  
Executive Director, CCDB

**Moazzem Hossain**  
Chief Executive, GBK

## Program

### 20 June 2019 (Thursday)

08:30 Registration and reception of the guests and participants

10:00 Tea

#### ***Inaugural Session***

- 10:30 *Welcome address:* Joyanta Adhikari, executive director, Christian Commission for Development in Bangladesh (CCDB)
- 10:40 *Keynote:* Discrimination, exclusion and rights of the marginal and excluded people: understanding the objective realities—Philip Gain, director, Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD)
- 11:00 *Distinguished speakers and guests of honour*
- Prof. Wahiduddin Mahmud, eminent economist
- Dr. Shamsul Alam, member (senior secretary), General Economics Division (GED), Bangladesh Planning Commission, Bangladesh
- Prof. Rounaq Jahan, distinguished fellow, CPD and visiting scholar, Columbia University
- Prof. Sakhawat Ali Khan, chairman, Society for Environment and Human Development (SEHD)
- Delegation of the European Union to Bangladesh
- Tessa Schmelzer, country representative, ICCO Cooperation
- Rambhajan Kairi, general secretary, Bangladesh Cha Sramik Union (BCSU) and vice-chairman, Kamalganj Upazila
- Dr. Harishankar Jaladas, writer
- Rabindranath Soren, president, Jatyio Adivasi Parishad (JAP)
- Moazzem Hossain, chief executive, Gram Bikash Kendra (GBK), vote of thanks
- 12:40 *Chief guest:* Prof. Rehman Sobhan, eminent economist and chairman, Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)
- 12:55 *Chair:* Dr. Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman, Power and Participation Research Centre (PPRC)
- (The book “Modhupur: The Vanishing Forest and Her People in Agony” will be launched at the inaugural session)
- 01:15 **Lunch**
- 02:15 ***Parallel Session: One***
- Topic: Identity, culture and languages of ethnic and marginal communities of Bangladesh**
- Chair:* Dr. Ainoon Naher, professor, Department of Anthropology,

Jahangirnagar University

*Facilitator:* Philip Gain, director, SEHD

*Designated speakers:* Prof. Mahmudul H. Sumon, Department of Anthropology, Jahangirnagar University; Cornelius Tudu, country director, SIL; Md. Alamgir Hossen, deputy director, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS); and Parimal Singh Baraik, president, Moulvibazar Cha Jangoshthi Adivasi Front (MCJAF)

Open discussion

#### ***Parallel Session: two***

**Topic: Achieving sustainable development goals (SDGs) for the marginal and excluded communities**

*Chair:* Dr. Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman, PPRC

*Designated speakers:* Tapan Datta, president, Bangladesh Trade Union Centre, Chattogram; Dr. Abu Sayed Mohammad Hasan, programme specialist-SRH, UNFPA; Md. Shamsuzzaman, programme analyst, SRHR, UNFPA; Rambhajan Kairi, Bangladesh Cha Sramik Union (BCSU) and Rushina Soren, vice-chairman, Ghoraghat upazila, Dinajpur

Open discussion

#### ***Parallel Session: Three***

**Topic: Understanding international instruments and national laws protecting the marginal and excluded communities**

*Chair:* Dr. Mohammad Abdul Wazed, former director general, Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS)

*Facilitator:* Barrister Jyotirmoy Barua, lawyer, Supreme Court of Bangladesh

*Designated speakers:* Dr. Tanzimuddin Khan, associate professor, Department of International Relations, University of Dhaka; Sharawat Shamin, lecturer, Department of Law, University of Dhaka and Dr. Uttam Kumar Das, advocate, Supreme Court of Bangladesh and program officer, ILO Bangladesh

Open discussion

4:00

**Tea**

4:30

**Screening and launching of documentary film, Aronner Artonad (Sylvan Tears)**

*Chair:* Ajoy A. Mree, president, Adivasi Cultural Development Forum

*Special guest:* Professor Shahidul Alam, Department of Media and Communication, Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB)

5:30 **Cultural Evening**  
*Introductory remarks:* Sarah Marandy, senior programme manager, Social and Economic Development, GBK  
Guest speaker: Prof. Tahmina Ahmed, Department of English, University of Dhaka  
**Topic: Developing resistance through cultural forms**  
*Cultural performance:* Garo, Santal, Adivasi Cha Janagosthi Cultural Team, Telegu Jubo Shangha and Magic of Babul Robidas

## 21 June 2019 (Friday)

9:00 **Parallel Session: Four**  
**Topic: Innovative approaches in understanding and analysing the problem tree of the marginal and excluded communities**  
*Chair:* Dr. Harishankar Jaladas, writer  
*Facilitator:* Sarah Marandy, senior programme manager, Social and Economic Development, GBK  
*Designated speakers:* Milon Das, executive director, Parittran; Bijoy Bunerjee, labour leader and chairman, Rajghat Union Parishad; Soud Khan, Bede Sardar; Nirmal Chandra Das, general secretary, Bangladesh Horijon Yokkho Parishad and Aleya Akhter Lily, general secretary, Sex Workers' Network (SWN)

### **Parallel Session: Five**

**Topic: Understanding micro-realities of forest and commons: case of Modhupur sal forest villages**

*Chair:* Apurbo Mrong, regional director, Caritas, Mymensingh  
*Facilitator:* Eugin Nokrek, president, Jayenshahi Adivasi Samaj Kallyan Shangstha (JASKS)  
*Presentation:* Contents of the book, Modhupur: The Vanishing Forest and Her People in Agony by Philip Gain  
*Designated speakers:* Zoynal Abedin, senior journalist and retired college teacher; Shulekha Mrong, secretary, Achik Michik Society; Mihir Mree; Ajoy A. Mree, president, Adivasi Cultural Development Forum; Jastina Nokrek, vice-chairman, Modhupur Upazila Parishad; and Hasan Ali, Gachhabri

Open Discussion

11:00 **Tea**

11:30 **Parallel Session: Six**  
**Topic: Strategies for protection of the marginal and excluded communities**  
*Chair:* Dr. Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman, PPRC  
*Facilitator:* Moazzem Hossain, chief executive, GBK  
A draft paper on strategies from past discussions is presented —Philip Gain  
Open discussion  
**Parallel Session: Seven**  
**Topic: Land rights of the marginal and excluded communities**  
*Chair:* Khushi Kabir, coordinator, Nijera Kori  
*Facilitator:* David Hilton, associate director, CCDB  
*Designated speakers:* Shamsul Huda, executive director, ALRD; Krishnalal, president, Bangladesh Horijon Yokkho Parishad; Nripen Pal, joint general secretary, Bangladesh Cha Sramik Union (BCSU); Ramjan Ahmed, Bede leader and Philemon Baske, chairperson, Shahebganj Bagda Farm Bhumi Uddhar Sangram Committee  
Open discussion

1:00 **Lunch**

2:30 **Plenary: Summing up reports from parallel sessions and adoption of Dhaka declaration**

*Facilitator:* Dr. Hossain Zillur Rahman

4:00 **Meet the Press**

4:30 **Tea**

5:00 **Cultural Evening**

*Introductory remarks:* Dr. Masudul Haque, Dinajpur Government College

*Guest speaker:* Dr. Harishankar Jaladas, writer

**Topic: Resistance of the marginal people through research and writing**

*Cultural performance:* Monipuri, Hijra, Oraon, Paharia and Mahle

*Contact*

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