

Subject: Letter to the PM of Bangladesh protesting the arrests of returning NRBs.

The Rt. Hon. Prime Minister,
Peoples Republic of the Government of Bangladesh
Bangladesh.

30 September 2020

Subject : Arrests of returning NRBs and putting them on to Bangladesh jails without any specific charge/s

Excellency Madam,

We, the members of the 'Voice for Global Bangladeshis' are greatly saddened and deeply shocked by the news of recent jailing of hundreds of returning NRBs. It has started from July 2020 when expatriate Bangladeshis were returning home being sent from their work places in Qatar, Bahrain, Vietnam, Maldives etc. they are being transferred to jails soon after their quarantine period without any definite allegation.

The ones returning from Arab countries are being held because according to some, while in quarantine they were conspiring against the country. If this is really the case then, the accused need to be charged but the innocents need to be released without any further delay.

The returning NRBS from Vietnam are being held without any specific charge. They were taken to Vietnam with false hopes. Without jobs and without shelter they already were victims of a unholy groups of agents in Bangladesh. On return they were jailed and Bangladesh foreign Minister's explanation in a press briefing was that, they went on to occupy the Bangladesh High Commission!

Excellency Prime Minister, these are poor hardworking people. They went abroad in the hope of earning money for themselves and their families. They certainly do not mean any harm to their homeland. Whilst abroad, they have a fundamental right to go to their respective Embassies or High Commissions asking for help and refuge in matters of urgent needs. Their visit to the Embassies or to the High Commissions can not be termed as 'Detrimental' to the image of home country, as one recent circular from the Bangladesh Ministry of Foreign Affairs suggested ! . . .

Nearly 15 million NRBs, who work in America, Canada, UK, Europe, Middle East and South East Asia; send their hard earned money back to their families in Bangladesh thus raising the country's foreign currency reserve. In fact the net annual remittance from the NRBs exceeds the net earned by Bangladesh's second foreign currency earner ie the Garments Industries. Also, These NRBs are the ones who time and again come forward to help their home country Bangladesh when there is flood, cyclone, draughts and/or any other calamities including the recent attack by Corona virus. In August 2020, the remittance sent by NRBs were the highest in recent history of Bangladesh.

You yourself have time and again valued overseas Bangladeshis for their contribution and love for their home country.

The global Corona pandemic has put a great majority of the NRBs in great hardship; they are without job and without any help from their individual host countries. In this global disaster, as the NRBs are returning to their homeland and to their families; the demeaning statements intermittently being made by responsible Ministers from Bangladesh is creating division and fuelling hatred. Instead of extending them help, they are being jailed, harassed, being told they are not welcome home and, being refused safe return to their village homes, to their suffering families.

There are one other matters we want to draw your attention to and that is :

Thousands of Saudi NRBS will lose their jobs if they cant return to Saudi Arabia on time before their visa expires. They need urgent transportation either by allowing Saudi airlines Saudia, the landing rights in Dhaka or seeking Bangladesh Biman's rights to carry passengers to Jeddah.

Needless to say, if NRBs can not return to their work on time; not only they lose jobs, they family members starve; Bangladesh will lose its much needed remittance. .

We want you to intervene directly in these matters and, as soon as possible.

We shall wait to hear from you.

With our best regards.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Hasanat M. Husain MBE