

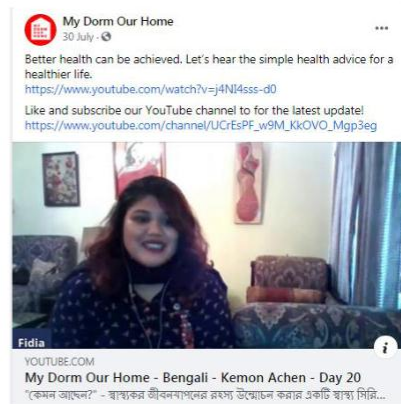
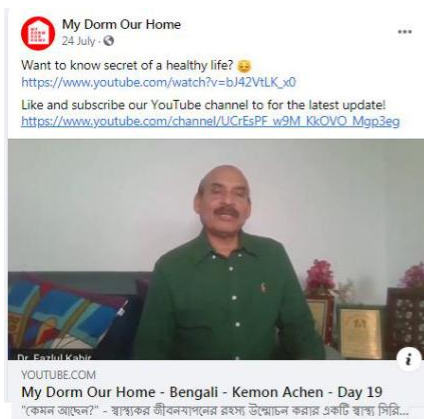


Historically, Singapore is among one of the major developed countries who is receiving migrant workers from Bangladesh, India and China as they rely on foreign resources for its economic development. With time, the growing importance of overseas employment have become the only anticipation of most poor people living in rural areas of Bangladesh for earning in foreign exchange. Hence, the flow of workers from Bangladesh to Singapore has risen remarkably for over 95% from 2005 which again declined later due to the number of unskilled workers. Since then a lot of local agencies, broker, recruitment agents and many local and international, profit and non-profit organizations along with the help of Government of Bangladesh and

Singapore is working in the frontline to improve the skills of the overseas migrant workers by ensuring them with proper guidance and facilities.

Despite of earning in foreign exchange, challenges remain in the life of migrant workers in Singapore as they are mostly involved in the local workforce who lacks in job transparency, safety, and security are low paid. However, the pandemic of COVID-19 has affected the lives of many migrant workers in Singapore, almost 90% of COVID 19 cases were found among this community. So, in order to prevent the spreading of COVID 19 virus in Singapore, this community has been quarantined in specific dorms and hostels. Being isolated and the uncertainty of losing their jobs have pushed many migrant workers towards boredom, insecurities, anxiety and mental depression.

In order to meet such humanitarian crisis and to demonstrate love and care for the people in need, a lot of individuals have come forward with several projects. Among them was Project My Dorm Our Home, which is specially designed by the Diocese of Singapore to address the needs and benefits of all the migrant workers who were quarantined in special dorms and hostels during circuit break or lockdown in Singapore. While many other projects were mainly focused to improve the healthcare and food sources of the migrant workers, My Dorm Our Home project in partnership with Church of Bangladesh (CoB) have felt the need to address social cohesion among the migrant workers, especially the ones who belonged to Bangladeshi community.





Since social distancing was very crucial and frequent contact of people was impossible, Church of Bangladesh in partnership with My Dorm Our Home has influenced the power of social media to intensify connections and care among the migrant workers. In order to keep the Bangladeshi migrant workers sane in their dorms, CoB and My Dorm Our Home has initially designed and introduced several digital programs in the form of talk shows, fitness shows, discussion panels and Facebook lives, which not only connected the Bangladeshi migrant workers culturally but it also helped them to connect virtually with their loved ones. Nevertheless, the purpose to serve the poor Bangladeshi community for development did not only end with virtual programs and shows, a creative way was introduced jointly by CoB and My Dorm Our Home to keep

the Bangladeshi migrant workers engaged in social activities. To regain the lost confidence among the Bangladeshi migrant workers, a Facebook based online singing talent show called “Idol Hunt” was organized by CoB in partnership with My Dorm our Home. Throughout this movement, Church of Bangladesh along with My Dorm our Home has unveiled various singing talent within the underprivileged community and also rewarded them with the price they truly deserved. The talent show has touched the heart of more than 31,500 people residing in Singapore and Bangladesh.



Apart from the success gained from the first two phases, Church of Bangladesh is working with My Dorm our Home project in the third phase focusing more on skill development of Bangladeshi migrant workers. Hence the third phase kicked off with “Swapno joy Boot Camp led by Barisal Youth society in partnership with UNDP, My Dorm our Home and CoB. The Boot Camp provided an opportunity for developing the skills of migrant workers and youths from rural parts of Bangladesh. Several interactive digital workshops were held in the presence of national and International professionals from different expertise.



Also, an interactive show Club “DIY” (Do it yourself) has been designed for migrant workers to develop basic skills in field of art, self-protection and awareness and mental health. Club DIY kicked off with an acting workshop whereby migrant workers had the opportunity to engage and learn from Bangladeshi professional actors and film makers. The second edition of Club DIY focused on self-awareness program specifically on prevention from online and phone scam. Project My Dorm Our Home is also planning to participate in campaign in collaboration with CoB, BYS and IFNB’s 16 days of activism for elimination of violence against women.

Project My Dorm our Home is a very special project for Church of Bangladesh, because it offered the whole team of young individuals to aspire for more. Moreover, the project acted as a tool to uplift and empower those people of Bangladesh who were deprived and struggling.



Report by: Paul S. Malakar (CoB) and Ehsan Kabir (Green Ink).
November 2020.