

Chapter-40

Ministry of Shipping

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 From time immemorial, the history, economy, society and culture of Bangladesh have evolved centering rivers. The tales of joys and sorrows and the history of successes of the people have been depicted against the background of hundreds of rivers crisscrossing the riverine Bangladesh. Once the rivers were the sole means of communication and economy of Bangladesh. In comparison with other transport systems, the shipping system is relatively less risky, affordable and environmentally friendly. So the shipping system of Bangladesh is recognized worldwide. About 225 million passengers and 25 million vehicles are transported by ferries, coastal and cargo services through inland waterways every year. Sixty percent of the country's total import and export is made through Chattogram and Mongla ports. Chattogram, Mongla, Payra and land ports are the gateways to external trade of the country
- 1.2 Vessels in Bangladesh operate under the Bangladesh Inland Water Transport Act-1958. Bangladeshi ships travel overseas by sea under the Bangladesh Merchant Shipping Ordinance 1983. Foreign flag ships enter Bangladesh waters under the Bangladesh Flag Carriage Protection Act-1982. Apart from this, there are separate Port Authority Acts for river ports and sea ports under the Ports Act. According to these laws and regulations, the country's export-import activities are completed in their own ports.

2.0 Major Functions of the Ministry of Shipping

- ❖ Modern management, development and conservation of river ports, sea ports and land ports.
- ❖ Management, conservation and development of lighthouse and lumberjack on coastal waterways.
- ❖ Formulation, implementation and updating of Act, rules and regulations relating to maritime and port affairs.
- ❖ Ensuring safety of inland water transportation and safe navigation.
- ❖ Maintenance and Development of navigability of internal and coastal waterways.
- ❖ Mechanical boat management, surveys and registration and maritime education and training.

- ❖ Control of pollution generated by marine vessels on inland waterways and in maritime boundary of Bangladesh; and
- ❖ Bilateral and international issues related to shipping.

3.0 Strategic objectives of the Ministry and their Relevance to Women's Advancement

3.1 Enhance the efficiency and the service by improving and modernizing seaport and land ports: The implementation of this strategic objective will reduce the cost of imports and exports of the country and increase the quality of services. As a result, commodities will be produced and marketed at a lower cost and local and foreign investment will be increased. Besides, import & export with neighboring countries have increased through 23 land ports. This will increase the chances of women getting better services. Women will be benefited from creation of new employment opportunities.

3.2 **Development and maintenance of Inland waterways and expansion of shipping system:** Transportation through Inland waterways has been made convenient. Women's access to labour markets has been easier and opportunities are being created for them to be engaged in income-generating activities.

Transportation cost by water is comparatively less than other medium. As the transport system is safe and female friendly, the movement of women in the domestic waterway is increasing.

3.3. **Total development and expansion of the sea transport system:** In order to make the country's ongoing sea transport system more advanced and dynamic, new activities have been taken to develop new fleet of ships. In the maritime sector, skilled manpower is created by training men as well as women to create skilled manpower. Due to this opportunity, employment opportunities for women have also increased

4.0 Role of the Ministry of Shipping in developing Women and establishing their Rights

4.1 Due to the overall development of the communication network, the pace of economic activity has increased in the country, the trade is expanding and new employment opportunities have been created. The field of women's involvement in the economic activities of the country has been expanded. Though the issue on women advancement is not mentioned in any policy document of the ministry specifically, the ministry and its subordinate departments have women involvement in various development activities

4.2 In the Marine Academy, women cadets are being admitted along with male cadets. In other Marine Institutes, women are receiving training as well as men. Besides, men and women are working equally in the offices, hospitals and training institutes

in different organisations of the shipping ministry especially in Chattogram and Mongla port. Women are participating in all other activities except for highly risky and heavy work in shipping. In the vessels there are safe stairs and pontoons for women to climb and emanate. Ships and launches provide better seats for women, healthier toilets, drinking water and emergency health services. In the infrastructure of river ports, seaports and land ports, rest houses, drinking water facilities and separate toilet facilities have been ensured for women. Besides, necessary steps have been taken including recruitment of ansar and security personnel to reduce the harassment of women in the transportation of water.

- 4.3 In order to ensure the security of female passengers, personnel of Bangladesh Ansar (home guard) have been deployed round the clock in ferry and launch services and at landing stations. Top priority has been given to salvaging women and children in rescue operations following accidents. The Ministry of Shipping has taken initiatives to procure technology-based, modern rescue vessels. Women have given highest priority to accidental security.
- 4.4 Quality of life is improving as a result of continuous improvement of the navigability of the waterways and adoption of measures for development under the supervision of the ministry. Women workers are directly benefited due to the creation of opportunities for river excavation and dredging.
- 4.5 Development of waterways around Dhaka city has resulted in better environment and water on river bank area. This has had a positive impact on maternal and child health. Special seats for women in the ongoing ferry services, surrounded by capital Dhaka, have been kept. This ensures the smooth movement of women.
- 4.6 The activities of different organisations under the ministry have been computerised. This has led to increased mobility in providing shipping services and increased employment opportunities for women.

5.0 Priority Spending Areas and Programmes of the Ministry of Shipping and their Impact on Women's Advancement

Serial No.	Priority Spending Areas/Programmes	Impact on Women's Advancement (Direct or Indirect)
1	2	3
1.	Development and maintenance of inland waterways and important channels	Employment opportunities will be generated for women labourers in construction of development infrastructures and excavation works undertaken to ensure the navigability of channels. Due to the development of waterways, the women population will be benefited . Access to the labor market will be easier because it is easy to access and navigate in inland waterways. Besides, opportunities for income generating jobs

Serial No.	Priority Spending Areas/Programmes	Impact on Women's Advancement (Direct or Indirect)
1	2	3
		will be created for women.
2.	Maintenance and development of infrastructure facilities for water transport	Employment opportunities will be created for women in maintenance and development works of infrastructure facilities of river-ports and waterways. As their movement becomes safe and easy owing to these works, rate of their entry to labour market will be increased.
3.	Modernisation of seaports and development of sea transport	Modernisation of seaports and promotion of transport system will result in the expansion of the garment industry. This will increase the employment opportunities for women. Besides, due to the fast supply of essential food items during the disaster, women will be able to encounter the natural risk.
4.	Human Resources Development in Maritime Sector	Female cadets are also included in seafarer's training courses as well as male cadets at the Marine Academy. This has opened the way for women's direct access to the Maritime sector's honorable and high-income profession. Besides, women cadets are working as both officers and cadets as well as men in local and foreign sea-going ships with reputation.
5	Development of land port infrastructure	Infrastructural development of 27 land-ports has resulted in an increase in imports from and exports to neighbouring countries; this has enhanced women's employment in this area.

6.0 Expenditure for Women's Development against total Budget of the Ministry

(Taka in Crore)

Description	Budget 2019-20			Revised 2018-19			Budget 2018-19			Actual 2017-18		
	Budget	Women Share		Revised	Women Share		Budget	Women Share		Actual	Women Share	
		Women	percent		Women	percent		Women	percent		Women	percent
Total Budget	523190	161247	30.82	442541	136036	30.74	464573	136938	29.48	321861	88441	27.48
Ministry Budget	3833	2124	55.41	4215	2486	58.97	3537	1902	53.78	2982	776	26.02
Development	3113	1642	52.74	3585	2070	57.75	2905	1895	65.24	2439	749	30.72
Operating	719	482	67	631	416	65.88	632	7	1.12	543	27	4.9

Source: RCGP database

7.0 Achievements of the Ministry of Shipping in developing Women and establishing their rights

- ❖ There has been an impact on women's development in the country with the increase in imports and exports through Chattogram and Mongla port. In particular, improved port services and its contribution to the expansion of the garment industry has created employment opportunities for a large number of women;

- ❖ Pre-sea Female Cadets training started at Marine Academy in 2012. Till date, Fifty three (53) female Cadets successfully completed the course. Twelve (12) female cadets are now in the training course. Employment opportunities for women side by side men in the international arena have been created due to the development and expansion of the sea transport system. Marine Academy has constructed a separate female hostel for female cadets. As a result, female cadets are getting an opportunity of obtaining training there in a secure and beautiful environment.
- ❖ The transportation cost by waterways is less and safe than other means, resulting in an increase in the flow of women through the internal waterways. This has affected women's development in a positive way.

8.0 Recommendations for Future Activities

- ❖ Different female navy navigators can be started like women buses at certain times for women on which all the working women use to travel to work every day;
- ❖ Identifying different areas of employment opportunity for women in different areas of water conservation, development, expansion and navy management;
- ❖ Improving service standards and safety arrangements for women so that travel by the river routes becomes more female-friendly;
- ❖ Taking various efforts in order to create job opportunities for female cadets, the Ministry of Shipping, the Department of Shipping, Marine Academy and Bangladesh Shipping Corporation can take various efforts.
- ❖ Setting up separate passenger shelters, waiting rooms, toilets and prayer rooms for women in important river ports and terminals.
- ❖ Setting up day care centers, including entertainment and medical facilities for children in the workplace.
- ❖ Employing more women workers in shore (Tori) management and ships.
- ❖ Taking necessary steps to ensure the cadets of women are engaged in foreign flag vessels.