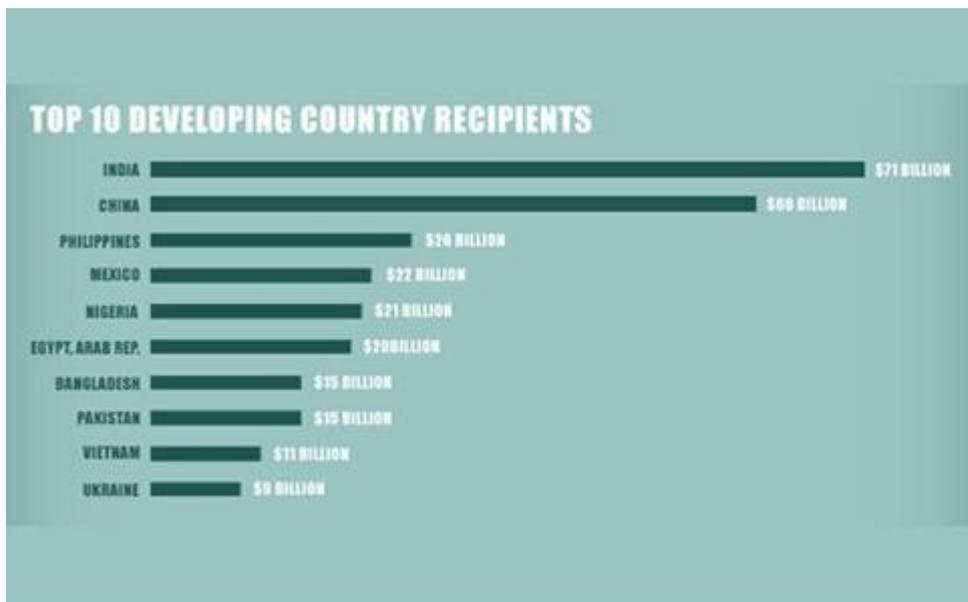


Bangladesh ranks 7th to receive remittance: \$16 bln again

Bangladeshi expatriates are remitting money ahead of the Muslim religious festival, Eid ul Azha as a result oreign currency reserves of Bangladesh Bank have again crossed the \$16-billion mark, according to a report published on BDnews24 last week. On the other hand, the World Bank’s “Migration and Development Brief” on global migration and remittances stated that Bangladesh ranked 7th in the list of 10 countries expected to



receive highest officially recorded remittance in 2013. The World Bank’s brief stated Bangladeshi expatriates are expected to remit \$15 billion in 2013, followed by Pakistan. An overview of the brief was published on the WB’s website on Oct 2, projecting the developing world would receive \$414 billion in migrant remittances in 2013, a 6.3% increase over the previous year. The amount is projected to rise to \$540 billion by 2016.

According to a report published in BD News 24, the WB listed Bangladesh among the 4 countries whose remittances are larger than the national foreign exchange reserve. Remittances to Bangladesh were moderately higher in the first seven months of 2013 than previous year, and growth is expected to accelerate during the rest of the year. The WB brief said all these four countries “have instituted various incentives for attracting remittances.” “In South Asia, remittances are noticeably supporting the balance of payments.” Remittances are larger than the earnings from IT exports in India, which tops the list of tops remittance recipient countries. India is followed by China. These two Asian countries are expected to receive \$ 131 billion, which is nearly a third of the total remittances sent to the developing world. “Growth of remittances has been robust in all regions of the world, except for Latin America and the Caribbean, where growth decelerated due to economic weakness in the United States,” said the WB brief. The direction of remittances in the Middle East and North Africa is unclear as conflicts have assumed critical proportions on that part of the world. According to the brief, costly official channels compel people seek out informal channels as their preferred means for sending money home which is an obstacle to the utilization of remittances for development purposes. “The global average cost for sending remittances is 9 percent, broadly unchanged from 2012.” People are facing difficulties in sending money home over money laundering and terrorism financing concerns. Including the high-income countries, the global remittance inflows in 2013 are expected to be \$550 billion. By GDP percentage, the top recipients of remittances, in 2012, were Tajikistan (48 percent), Kyrgyz Republic (31 percent), Lesotho and Nepal (25 percent each), and Moldova (24 percent). “Flows are expected to remain strong or even increase in several countries affected by weakening balance of payments, notably India, the top recipient of remittances in the world.”

UN High Level Dialogue

Bangladesh makes 4 proposals for migrant rights

Bangladesh Expatriate Welfare and Oversees Employment Minister, Khandker Mosharraf Hossain made 4-point recommendations during a dialogue on migration and development at the UN General Assembly in New York recently. Mosharraf speaking at the inauguration of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development: "Making Migration Work" said, the developed countries are searching for the meritorious from all corners of the world to meet the demand for skilled workforce. The minister recommended that every country for the sake of national development should create working environments for migrants. Besides, employment must be ensured for migrants and they should be properly utilised for the good of both countries. They will have to be skilled so that they can participate in local, national, regional and international arena, he suggested.

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon in his inaugural speech said everyone must admit the extraordinary role of migrants in shaping society. He stressed on the rights and respect for the world's 232 million migrants. Ban Ki-Moon in the dialogue presented report on International Migration and Development, which makes 8 key recommendations to "make migration work" for all. They include: protecting the human rights of migrants who are frequently the subject of abuse and exploitation, lowering the cost of migration, and changing public perception of migrants, as many face discrimination on a daily basis. The World Bank released an observation report said migrants travelling from developing countries are sending back \$414 billion per year which is 6.3 per cent more than last year. High-ranking officials of more than a hundred states, citizen rights bodies, labour unions, NGOs, organisations for migrant rights, religious leaders, academicians and representatives of civil society are taking part in the conference at the UN headquarters.

GIZ-CIM Training Workshop in Germany: BASUG joins

A two-day training workshop on 'Project Planning and Project Application' was held in a local hotel in Frankfurt am Main in Germany on 28-29 September. Board Member of BASUG Germany Chapter, AHM Abdul Hai took part in the training workshop. Apart from the training a NGO Fair was held at the premises where participating organizations displayed their activities and publications. BASUG took part in the fair. German International Cooperation Society (GIZ) and Centre for International Migration and Development (CIM) organized the training program to promote the development activities of migrant organisations. Forum for Social Innovation (FSI) facilitated the training program supported by German Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Development experts Mr Max Pohl und Ms Marina Dumbraava presented model project applications and the financial planning of the successful projects of two



organizations. Among others, Ms Marileen Siebert of GIZ, Ms Julia Hurnaus and Ms Maren Renner of CIM, Ms Katja Feld, Ms Hafssa El-Hasbouni of FSI conducted different technical sessions in the training program. *(Photo: Board Member of BASUG Germany AHM Abdul Hai with the officials of GIZ, CIM and FSI during the training workshop in Frankfurt, Germany--From right AHM Abdul Hai of BASUG, Ms Hafssa El-Hasbouni of FSI, Ms Maren Renner and Ms Julia Hurnaus of CIM, Ms Marileen Siebert of GIZ, Ms Katja Feld of FSI and a participant)*

Traditionally development agencies ask for project proposal in a certain format within a timeline. The successful projects are granted by the donor agencies for a certain period. But CIM has an innovative way of project planning and providing supports for the implementation of the projects. During the training program, CIM officials said, CIM works closely with the partner organisations in developing and processing successful project proposals and application through intensive guideline and cooperation. Because otherwise innovative and reasonable project ideas might fail to be granted and supported by the donor agencies for the effective implementation of the project activities. As a part of the cooperation in project planning and successful project application, CIM arranges central training programs and also follow up day long workshop in different regions of Germany. To follow up the project planning development and project application process, CIM will arrange day long workshop on 26 October in Stuttgart, 9 November in Berlin, 10 November in Hamburg and 14 December in Bonn. Among others, the representatives of BAUSG, Arab Union of Photographers, Moldova Institute Leipzig, Women Lawyers without Borders, Ethiopian Help Organization Germany, Center for Educational and Cultural Exchange AMIKAL, Intercultural Centre FABRO, La Gorrita, Consolata Foundation, Africa Solidarity took part in the training program with their innovative project ideas for their target countries.

GCM Regional Meeting in Koln: BASUG to attend

The regional meeting of Global Cooperation Managers will be held in Köln-Ehrenfeld on 14 October 2013. Engagement Global and Forum for Social Innovation FSI are organising this meeting. The objective of the meeting is to find out potential cooperation opportunities regarding migration and development. The activities of the diaspora and migration organizations will also be discussed in the meeting. The meeting will be participated by representatives from different migration organisations. Mr. AHM Abdul Hai will represent BASUG in the meeting.

BASUG becomes member of BOOM

BASUG became a member of BOOM (Bangladesh Overleg Ontwikkelingsamenwerking en Mensenrechten/ Platform on Bangladesh Development and Human Rights) at the last meeting of the Platform held on 28 August 2013 at ICCO office in Utrecht. Although BASUG became a formal member of the platform on the day, the organization worked together with BOOM in organizing events on Bangladesh issues at European Parliament, Brussels in 2006 and 2007.

Chaired by Henja Visser, Regional Coordinator for South Asia & Southeast Asia/Pacific, International Program Department of ICCO & Kerk in Actie the meeting was attended among others by Wilma Roos (FNV), Lieke Scheewe (Light for the World), Joke le Poole (Max Foundation), Mariet Mulders (Cordaid), Marjan Kruijzen (Cordaid), Remy Kempers (Both ENDS), Bikash Chowdury Barua (BASUG), Dr. Ahmed Ziauddin (BASUG), Samira Zwaini (Plan Nederland) and Marieke Weerdestein (Solidaridad). Leonard Zijlstra of ICCO joined the meeting from Dhaka via Skype. In the afternoon session, Martine van Hoogstraten, Head of South Asia desk of the Netherlands Foreign Ministry joined the meeting and addressed. After introduction by the members the meeting started with the application of BASUG for the membership of BOOM. Two members of the platform wanted to know more about the applicant which was answered by its President and Advisor. BOOM members unanimously accepted BASUG as its new member while BASUG advisor Dr. Ahmed Ziauddin thanked the members. Dr. Ziauddin said, BASUG being a Bangladeshi diaspora organisation will be able to play an important role to materialise the objectives of the platform.

Next Meeting in Dhaka on 30 Oct

The meeting decided to hold its next meeting in Dhaka at the Netherlands embassy on 30 October 2013. The meeting in Dhaka will dwell mainly on the present state of affairs in Bangladesh including the prevailing situation in the textile sector, water management, and transparency of the organisations. In the afternoon session Henja Visser welcomed Ms. Van Hoogstraten of the Netherlands Foreign Ministry. It may be mentioned here that Ms. Hoogstraten is responsible for the economic development part of Bangladesh as a priority country, and the development of main partners. Mrs. Martine van Hoogstraten gave an overview on Bangladesh and said it is a priority country for the Netherlands (also economically), especially because of the garment sector but also for the Food & Water sector. BASUG is scheduled to attend the meeting on 30 Oct.

Solar Irrigation Pumps for Farmers

Bangladesh signed a \$10 million grant agreement on Monday with the World Bank to introduce solar irrigation pumps for farmers to replace conventional diesel pumps. According to a report published in BD News 24, the global lender says, under the project, more than 1,300 solar powered irrigation pumps would be installed covering over 65,000 bighas of land for rice cultivation. It will provide farmers access to clean energy in a comparatively lower cost and save \$ 3.2 million in foreign currency every year, the Bank says. The solar pumps will reduce farmers' dependency on diesel supply, which is often erratic and costly particularly in remote rural areas.

WB's Bangladesh Acting Head Christine Kimes, and Economic Relations Division Additional Secretary Arastoo Khan of Bangladesh signed the agreement at the latter's office. This is the first phase of the total commitment of \$ 24.5 million for the project. The Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL) will implement the project with private sponsors as part of the Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Development (RERED) II Project. World Bank says private sponsors will be responsible for installing, operating, and maintaining the solar irrigation pumps. The



multi-donor financing mechanism, Bangladesh Climate Change Resilience Fund (BCCRF) will provide up to 50 percent of the pump costs in grants, while International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank will provide 30 percent in concessional credit. "Wider use of solar powered irrigation pumps will help Bangladesh to save foreign exchange in diesel imports," said the Acting Head of World Bank said during the signing. "Due to clean and renewable energy used, the project will reduce carbon emission by 10,000 tons every year". Arastoo Khan said the project would contribute "directly to the government's climate change adaptation vision".

RfCD project enters into 3rd year

The on-going project, 'Remittance for Community Development' (RfCD) enters into 3rd year with its extension from mid-October this year. RfCD is a joint project of BASUG, The Network University and Oxfam Novib. The objectives of the extension part of the project among others are: establish collaboration with relevant stakeholders on designing financing opportunities that offer specific products that attract migrant funds for community development. In order to achieve this objective, we have set a number of short term objectives. During the last two years the project partners collected evidences about RfCD from relevant stakeholders and practitioners working in the field. We unraveled the challenges that organisations and individuals are faced with in their endeavours to mobilize migrant funds for development needs in hometown communities and beyond. And, we have discovered some opportunities that are available to strengthen such initiatives. If certain factors are taken into account, RfCD initiatives have the potential to stimulate community development. Some of the factors we found are (i) the need for complementary skills and knowledge, (ii) the necessity of local ownership over the respective RfCD project, (iii) the involvement of (local) government and (iv) the importance of establishing trust between stakeholders. We learned during various stakeholder meetings, the research conducted in Bangladesh and evidence from other countries, that for the potential of RfCD to take shape, it requires an innovative approach. It should respect the fact that remittances are private funds, and therefore design initiatives that meet the needs and expectations of the senders and receivers of remittances. To realize such an approach it is necessary to cooperate with a range of actors: migrants, local communities, local stakeholders, local and national governments, private sector, and the international donor community.

BASUG Workshop in Hobiganj “Remittance for Community Development” (RfCD)

Bangladesh Chapter of BASUG-Diaspora and Development in collaboration with its partner, ENDEAVOUR organized a Workshop on “Remittances for Community Development (RfCD) on 6 July 2013 in Hobiganj.



(Photo: Prof. Ekramul Wadud, Chairman, ENDEAVOUR is speaking in the seminar. Sitting from his left are: Mr. Md. Khalilur Rahman Chowdhury, Chief Executive, Endeavour, Mr. Biman B. Chowdhury, Country Coordinator, BASUG- Bangladesh and Mr. Sayed Liaquat Hasan, Union Parishad Chairman, Chunaroghat, Habiganj;

Below: Poster of BASUG on RfCD) Liaquat Hasan, Union Parishad Chairman, Mr. Khalilur Rahman, Chairman of Edeavour and Mr. Biman B. Chowdhury, Country Co-ordinator of BASUG. Speaking on the occasion Deputy Commission Mr Monindra Kishore Majumdar said, “Remittance plays a very important role in the development of our national economy. He said, “it is good to see that BASUG & Endeavour are working together from Down to Top, which I like most”. He added, in our country we do from Top to Down and that is why there is a slow progress in development. He added that UP (Union Parishad) Chairman distributes tube wells, loan but who are getting those? People who have channels and influence receive such help. We can not select right person or proper person/beneficiary. We give loan for unproductive sectors, because of that our people can not develop themselves. Nepotism & favouritism are so high that we can not progress. Regarding remittances and migration the Deputy Commissioner disclosed that 7% of the total populations are working in abroad. According to the World Bank report, he added, 67% to 68% youths are working in abroad and they are all in age group of 40 to 45 years. They are sending money for their families, relatives and for the community. He also underlined the need for good governance and political stability for sustaining economic growth through productive use of remittance. BASUG Country Coordinator Mr. Biman Barua Chowdhury said, “Today one participant told that nearly 4 billion taka is lying idle in Hobiganj branch of Sonali Bank, people are not getting proper way to invest the money. So, we have to think on it, we have to find out ways and organise trainings for the people on how to utilize remittances in a productive way benefiting the community. In this regard we need government support. As the key representatives from the district administration including DC, UNO, UZVC, UP Chairman are here today, I would request all of them to extend their hand to help implement our programs.

Different stakeholders including senior representatives from the local government underscored the need for constructive and proper utilization of the hard earned remittances for the development of the community. The opening session was chaired by Mr. Ekramul Wadud, the Chairman of ENDEAVOUR. Mr. Monindra Kishore Majumder, Deputy Commissioner of Hobiganj was the chief guest. The Workshop was addressed by Prof. Farooque Uddin Chowdhury, Principal of a local college, Mr. Abidur Rahman, Upazilla Chairman, Mr. Sayeed



Migration: exodus from Bangladeshis to India largest

The exodus from Bangladeshis into India has for the first time been termed by the United Nations as "the single largest bilateral stock of international migrants" in the eastern hemisphere and also in the developing world. Data revealed recently by the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) shows that in 2013, India was home to 3.2 million Bangladeshi residents who had migrated into the country and settled there. Not surprisingly, India was the favourite destination for Bangladeshi migrants in 2013, the report said. For Indians, however, it was the Middle East that was the clear favourite for migration. Two countries in the Middle East were the main destinations - UAE, having 2.9 million Indian migrants, and Saudi Arabia which had 1.8 million.



However the biggest rise in the number of Indians migrating to a single country was to the US. In 2013, 2.1 million Indians were in the US, which was also home to 2.2 million foreign-born from China and 2 million from the Philippines. Asians and Latin Americans living outside their home regions formed the largest global diaspora groups. In 2013, Asians represented the largest group, accounting for about 19 million migrants living in Europe, some 16 million in North America and about 3 million in Oceania.

The report, released by UN-DESA's population division, said Europe and Asia combined hosted nearly two-thirds of all international migrants. Europe remained the most popular destination region with 72 million international migrants in 2013, compared to 71 million in Asia. Compared to other regions, Asia has seen the largest increase of international migrants since 2000, adding some 20 million migrants in 13 years. John Wilmoth, director of the division, said, "This growth was mainly fuelled by the increasing demand for foreign labour in the oil-producing countries of western Asia and in south-eastern Asian countries with rapidly growing economies, such as Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand." In 2013, half of all international migrants lived in 10 countries, with the US hosting the largest number (45.8 million), followed by the Russian Federation (11 million); Germany (9.8 million); Saudi Arabia (9.1 million); United Arab Emirates (7.8 million); United Kingdom (7.8 million); France (7.4 million); Canada (7.3 million); Australia (6.5 million); and Spain (6.5 million). The figures were released ahead of a high-level global summit on migration and development to be held by the General Assembly in New York on October 3 and 4.

BASUG registered in Germany

BASUG is going to work formally in Germany from now on after official registration there recently. In the meantime there has been some changes in the existing Executive Committee of BASUG Germany Chapter. Dr. Ahmed Ziauddin will lead the Chapter as President while Dr. Mazharul M Islam and Ms. Purabi Nannan will work as Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Mr. Mahfuzur Rahman, Country Coordinator of BASUG in Germany has been relieved of his responsibility with immediate effect. BASUG expresses thanks to him for his support during the last years. Dr. Mazharul M Islam will be the contact person for any affairs regarding BASUG in Germany at telephone number: +49-17.39.65.41.55 or E-mail: info@basug.nl

New Faces in BASUG

There have been some changes within BASUG. A number of new faces with sound background have joined BASUG team while some left the organisation after 6 years. The two new **Advisors** who have accepted our offer to become part of the organisation are: 1) **Professor Gerd Junne** of Amsterdam University (Director of The Network University) and 2) **Dr. Moazzem Hossain** who teaches Economics, Development and Trade in the Department of International Business and Asian Studies in the Griffith Business School at Griffith University, Australia since 1990. Professor Gerd Junne is also the Board member of War Child Holland and of Radio La Benevolencija Humanitarian Tools Foundation, and a member of the steering committee of the Cultural Emergency Response programme of the Prince Claus Foundation, the Netherlands.



(Photos from left: Dr. Gerd Junne, Dr. Moazzem Hossain, Dr. Unnati Rani Saha, Runa Laila, Anar Chowdhury, Tanbira Talukder, Dr. Mazharul M Islam and Purabi Nannan)

There has also been some changes in the Board and the Executive committee of the organisation.

Dr. Ms. Unnati Rani Saha, who worked with BASUG as Senior Researcher in 2012 has recently joined the organisation as Board member. Dr. Unnati is now working with Vrije University Amsterdam at Health Sciences Department, Centre for World Food Studies (SOW-VU). She also worked with Nijmegen International Centre for Health Systems Research and Education (NICHE) and Radboud University Nijmegen Medical Centre in the Netherlands. **Ms. Runa Laila**, a Ph. D Researcher at the International Institute of Social Studies (ISS) of Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands joined BASUG as Vice-Chairman. Runa Laila, an active member of BASUG so long did her Masters in Development studies with specialization in Women, Gender and Development at ISS in 2003-2004. **Ms. Tanbira Talukder** who was a member of BASUG for last five years has now taken up her responsibility as Board member. Tanbira's personal blog site <http://ratjagapakhi.blogspot.nl/> was nominated by Deutsche Welle, Germany in 2011 for BOB (Best of Blogs) competition. Her maiden book "Pahar Ar Nodir Golpo" published in 2012 won the Rokomari Critic Prize in 2013. She also worked as Joint Editor of BASUG Newsletter. **Ms. Anar Chowdhury**, a leading social and cultural activist in Benelux who had so long served BASUG in the capacity of Joint Coordinator of BASUG Belgium Chapter, has now taken up the responsibility of Country Coordinator, Belgium. She replaced Dr. Ahmed Ziauddin, who has taken up the responsibility to lead the newly registered BASUG Chapter in Germany in the capacity of President. He will also hold his previous positions of Advisor and Director Projects of BASUG. **Dr. Ahmed Ziauddin** and **Dr. Mazharul M Islam** have been made new President and Secretary of the newly registered Chapter of BASUG while **Ms. Purabi Nannan** is its Treasurer.

Those who have been relieved of responsibilities are: Board members Dr. Nahid Hasan, Engineer Puspak Barua, B. Roy, Treasurer Nityendu Barua, Joint Treasurer Ms. Jean Roy and member, Sahanara Hossain. BASUG expresses its thanks and gratitude to all of them for their sincere support and cooperation during the past years, especially to the three founding members: B. Roy, Nityendu Barua and Puspak Barua. Without their dedication and support BASUG would not have been able to reach up to this position today.

Richard goes back to his roots to Bangladesh to work with BASUG

“I am going back to my roots and will work for Bangladesh through BASUG” says Bangladeshi young man, Richard van Dijk alias Mukul who was adopted by his Dutch parents 38 years back and brought to the Netherlands. Richard recently came twice to BASUG office and expressed his willingness to work with BASUG in Bangladesh for the people. He will be living permanently in Bangladesh from now on and will be associated with BASUG Bangladesh chapter. He writes:

“I was born in Faridpur, Bangladesh on 26 October 1974. Due to circumstances I was given up for adoption through the Salvation Army, Dhaka. I arrived in the Netherlands with my new parents in June 1975. I was raised by my Dutch parents with all love, care and affection all the years. After three years living in the Netherlands my father got a job on the island Curacao, the Dutch Antilles and we lived there for 10 years until 1988, so I spent my entire childhood there. We travelled a lot especially through the Americas. When I was 12 years of age we moved back to the Netherlands in 1988. This was because of the better study facilities than Curacao. After graduating high school we went on a roots trip to Bangladesh for the first time. The trip made such an impression on me that I decided then that I would return to my country of birth when opportunity comes. Once returned

continued as usual studies I started my but Bangladesh was my mind. Once I had some social work in experience for me, I how good ideas can discovered that I liked would do in future if I in Spain for some back to the working but again missing. Then I made myself; I want to go my roots. But how am



from the roots trip life and after finishing new career with job always in the back of the opportunity to do India. That was good saw with my own eyes be implemented. I also the field work and I get chance. I also lived time and then moved Netherlands, started there was something the decision for back to Bangladesh, to I going to do that? I

first took followed the study International Development /Project Management with the field government /NGO. Now I feel confident that I can play a role in BASUG as I believe, I bring in : Rationality, Organization skills, Communication skills and last but not least I am a team player. I am glad that I am affiliated with BASUG and I wish that together we can do great things! Looking forward to meet all of you when I am in Dhaka!”

“Together we can make this world a beautiful place to live”

PICTORAL



Left: AHM Abdul Hai of BASUG at GIZ-CIM Fair in Frankfurt; right: BASUG workshop on RfCD in Hobiganj in July



BASUG Chair Bikash Chowdhury(2nd fr left) speaking at a meeting of Amnesty International at its office in Amsterdam



Looking back: From left: Ismail Awil, Oxfam Novib, Dr Ahmed Ziauddin & Bikash Chowdhury of BASUG, Dr.Ton van Naerssen, Danielle de Winter and Prof Gerd Junne of TNU at dinner during WB & IFAD conference in Bangkok in July.

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