

English Press release

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UNOPS-a2i-ICT Division-BIISS Roundtable Highlights Urgent Need for Stronger Digital Safety Measures

Dhaka, 27 November 2025 — The Country Office of UNOPS in Bangladesh, in collaboration with Aspire to Innovate (a2i), the ICT Division, the Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS), and the High Commission of the Republic of Maldives in Bangladesh, convened a high-level roundtable today titled **“UNiTE to End Digital Violence Against All Women and Girls.”** The event brought together government officials, diplomats, legal experts, mental health professionals, private sector leaders, civil society representatives, and media to address the growing threat of digital violence in Bangladesh.

Hosted at the ICT Division in Agargaon, the roundtable centered on the urgent rise of online gender-based violence, ranging from cyberstalking and harassment to deepfake exploitation and image-based abuse and emphasized the need for coordinated, multi-sectoral action to build a safer digital environment for women and girls. The session was moderated by **Dr Tasneem Siddiqui**, Executive Director, Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU).

Opening the event, **Md. Abdur Rofiq, Project Director (Joint Secretary), a2i**, highlighted the accelerating risks alongside Bangladesh’s rapid digital transformation:

“Digital spaces are essential for opportunity and participation, but they must not become spaces of fear. Protecting women and girls online is fundamental to ensuring an equitable digital future.”

Mr. Sudhir Muralidharan, Country Manager of UNOPS in Bangladesh and Bhutan, addressed the audience as Special Guest, stressing the shared responsibility of all stakeholders:

“Digital violence is not a standalone issue—it is a development challenge, a governance challenge, and a human rights challenge. Today’s dialogue underscored the need for collective, coordinated action that centers the safety and dignity of women and girls.”

Delivering the keynote speech, **Barrister Tasnuva Shelley**, Deputy Attorney General & Advocate at the Supreme Court of Bangladesh, examined the gaps in legal and institutional frameworks:

"Technology is evolving faster than our laws. Survivors need faster remedies, stronger safeguards, and systems that can respond meaningfully to new forms of digital abuse."

Special guest **Shiuneen Rasheed**, representing the High Commission of the Republic of Maldives in Bangladesh, reaffirmed the Maldives' commitment to advancing digital rights:

"We stand with Bangladesh in recognizing digital safety as a regional priority. Empowering women and girls online is central to ensuring their full participation in society."

Shish Haider Chowdhury, ndc, Secretary of the ICT Division, further emphasized the government's commitment to strengthening digital governance:

"Bangladesh's digital transformation must be anchored in safety. The ICT Division is working to reinforce reporting systems, enhance cyber investigation capacities, and promote responsible digital citizenship."

The roundtable featured two in-depth panel discussions. In the session **"Navigating the Digital Minefield: A Survivor's Journey and the Psychological Toll,"** speakers, including renowned actress **Azmeri Haque Badhon**, law enforcement representatives, and legal experts, examined the emotional, psychological, and legal dimensions of digital abuse.

The second discussion, **"Building a Safer Digital Bangladesh: A Multi-Stakeholder Roadmap,"** brought together representatives from a2i, Oxfam, and Robi Axiata PLC, who proposed concrete pathways for technological innovation, improved coordination, private-sector accountability, and public awareness.

The programme also heard from Dr. Muhammad Ekramul Haque, Acting Dean of the Faculty of Law at the University of Dhaka, Maha Abu Emier, International Project Manager at a2i; Dr. Shehela Pervin, Additional DIG and General Secretary of Bangladesh Police Women Network; Anamika Bhakta, Senior Director of Robi Axiata; actress Sabnam Faria and representatives from law enforcement agencies.

The dialogue concluded with a collective call to action to strengthen policy frameworks, introduce user-friendly reporting tools, enhance digital literacy, and improve cross-agency collaboration to prevent and respond to digital violence.

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Notes to the editors:

[Photo Link](#)

About UNOPS

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) supports the UN and its partners worldwide in delivering peacebuilding, humanitarian, and development projects. UNOPS provides expertise in infrastructure, procurement, human resources, and project management, helping partners achieve sustainable impact efficiently and effectively.

About a2i

Aspire to Innovate (a2i) is the Government of Bangladesh's flagship digital transformation program, working to improve public service delivery and advance digital innovation.

About BIISS

The Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategic Studies (BIISS) is a premier national research institute conducting policy-focused research on strategic and international affairs.

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