

Airport harassment reduces, but challenges remain: RMMRU

- A Monitor Desk Report

Date: 08 January, 2026



Dhaka: Harassment of migrant workers at airports has decreased compared to previous years, though significant challenges remain, said Tasneem Siddiqui, Acting Executive Director of the Refugee and Migratory Movement Research Unit (RMMRU), on Wednesday.

“The level of harassment we used to hear about has reduced to some extent,” she said.

Responding to a journalist’s question at a press conference titled “The Dynamics of Labour Migration 2025 from Bangladesh: Achievements and Challenges,” held at the National Press Club and organized by RMMRU, Siddiqui said several measures have contributed to the improvement.

“At present, a magistrate remains on duty at the airport round the clock,

and in case of any irregularity, immediate action can be taken through a hotline. In addition, body cameras have been installed on personnel involved in baggage handling and related services, which has helped reduce theft and harassment,” she said.

“These initiatives have brought a positive change for passengers, particularly in terms of movement and baggage retrieval,” she added.

Breaking airline fare syndicates has reduced costs.

Siddiqui also highlighted long-standing problems related to airline fares. She said travel agencies and syndicates previously bought block tickets in advance and sold them at double prices at the last moment.

“Now, block tickets cannot be purchased without a passenger’s name and passport number. This decision has significantly reduced airfares,” she said.

As a result, migration costs have declined in many cases, easing the financial burden on migrant workers, she added.

Dignified treatment is the key issue.

Siddiqui said that more important than airport lounges or ancillary facilities is reducing costs for migrant workers and ensuring they are treated with dignity.

“There is still a lot of work to be done in these areas,” she said.

She also stressed the need to improve the quality of services provided by Bangladeshi embassies abroad. Referring to several studies on the Bangladesh High Commission in Malaysia, she said migrant workers often face various forms of harassment when seeking services, underscoring the need for effective corrective measures.