

Report on

Bangladesh's Participation in the 10th MOWCAP General Meeting, Held on 06-10 May 2024 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

Memory of the World Committee for Asia/Pacific Region (MOWCAP) was set up in 1998 during its first General Meeting held in Beijing, China and is a subsidiary body of the International Advisory Committee (IAC) which itself was established in 1992 by UNESCO. MOWCAP embraces the Asia/Pacific region of 43 countries – one of the five UNESCO regions across the globe. MOWCAP is composed of UNESCO National Committee for MOW Program in the Asia/Pacific region. It is a cooperative structure through which people from two or more countries in the region can be brought together to pursue the objectives of the MOW Program.

The Organization Structure of MOWCAP consist of:

1. General Meeting
2. MOWCAP Bureau
3. Register Subcommittee



Certificate of Inscription

The General Meeting, convened biennially, sets the policies and activities of MOWCAP. It makes decisions on programs submitted to it by the Bureau. The General Meeting also elects members of the Bureau. Each MOW Committee has one vote at the General Meeting.



Members of MOWCAP Bureau



MOWCAP Delegates

The meeting was hosted by the Ministry of Culture of Mongolia, the Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO, and the UNESCO Regional Office in Bangkok.

Mr. Mofidul Hoque, Trustee, Liberation War Museum and Convener, Bangladesh Memory of the World Committee and Ms. Zubaida Mannan, Deputy Secretary General of Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO and Member Secretary, Bangladesh Memory of the World Committee represented Bangladesh and participated in the 10th

MOWCAP General Meeting which had been convened from 6th May to 10th May 2024 in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

On the second day of the meeting, Ms. Zubaida Mannan presented the biennial report (2022-2024) of Bangladesh Memory of the World Committee. At the outset of her presentation she expressed her gratitude to the organizing country as well as the Committee for arranging the prestigious events. She conveyed her sincere gratitude for inscribing the “Historic 7th March Speech of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman” on the MOW International Register in 2017.

After paying homage to the Father of the Nation Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Ms. Zubaida introduced the new Bangladesh MOW Committee to the MOWCAP which represents archival, library & museum community, ministries and Government Departments responsible for heritage & Culture, education, information & broadcasting of Bangladesh. She also mentioned about the achievements of Bangladesh in the Memory of the World Programme so far. Additionally, she projected on the ongoing and upcoming activities of the Committee. She expressed her appreciation towards MOWCAP for promoting the priceless documentary heritages of the region and cooperating with the member states by sharing their knowledge, expertise and passion for safeguarding documentary heritages for attaining a sustainable future. Through the biennial report prepared by BNCU, MOWCAP was introduced with the work of Rokeya S. Hossain and its significance.

One of the main agenda of the meeting was voting on nominations to the MOWCAP Regional Register. Following a long, strict and thorough evaluation by the Register Sub-Committee (RSC), 20 nominations from all over the Asia-Pacific Region were accepted and recommended by the RSC for provisional inscription to the MOWCAP Regional Register. Bangladesh’s *"Sultana's Dream" by Rokeya S. Hossain* was one of them. The Liberation War Museum, Bangladesh was the nominator of the file.



Mr. Mofidul Hoque and Ms. Zubaida Mannan Receiving Certificate from The Chairperson and Secretary General of MOWCAP

On the third day of the meeting, the nominators of documentary heritages applying for inscription to the MOWCAP Regional Register 2024 gave a presentation on their respective elements/files. In their review on Bangladesh's nomination, the RSC mentioned, ***"Sultana's Dream and Rokeya have become synonymous with women's liberation in the subcontinent and beyond, including recent films and visual art forms. The nominated documents are significant sources about Rokeya's life, and her great contribution to society and to the education of girls in particular."***

Rokeya resided in then Bengal state of British India, and *Sultana's Dream* was originally published in English in an Indian journal. However, later editions, translations and other non-print manifestations of the work, as well as recognition of Rokeya's contributions have been particularly strong in present day Bangladesh."

Based on that presentation and the RSC's recommendation a voting was cast on those 20 nominations for final inscription. Mr. Mofidul Hoque, Trustee, Liberation War Museum and Convener, Bangladesh Memory of the World Committee gave a five minutes' presentation on ***"Sultana's Dream" by Rokeya S. Hossain***". In his presentation he introduced Rokeya S. Hossain to the meeting, a woman ahead of her time, remained unsung for long. Since the 1960's Rokeya and *Sultana's Dream* gradually got recognition nationally, regionally and globally. He explained the historical significance of ***"Sultana's Dream"*** and its relevance and significance to the whole world at present times and in future.

This year 40 member states participated in the meeting among which 38 participated as nominators. After a long submission, revision and resubmission by the Liberation War Museum and after a thorough reviewing process and voting finally 20

nominations were declared for inscription on the MOWCAP Regional Register. Bangladesh's ***"Sultana's Dream" by Rokeya S. Hossain*** is now proudly represented on the MOWCAP Regional Register.

UNESCO published the list of 20 successfully inscribed items to the MOWCAP Regional Register for Asia-Pacific in their website. In a news published on their website UNESCO mentioned, **"The 2024 cycle also celebrated science and literature, recognizing Bangladesh's sci-fi feminist author, Rokeya S. Hossain, who imagined both helicopters and solar panels before they had been invented in her 1905 utopian narrative, Sultana's Dream"**.

"Sultana's Dream" by Rokeya S. Hossain is the first ever element from Bangladesh to be inscribed on the MOWCAP Regional Register. Bangladesh has a rich collection of documentary heritage which needs to be inventoried, preserved and promoted nationally, regionally and globally. The new Bangladesh Memory of the World Committee has started working on collecting information on the potential, unique and rare documentary heritages of Bangladesh. With the inscription of ***"Sultana's Dream" by Rokeya S. Hossain*** on the MOWCAP Regional Register Bangladesh has joined the MOWCAP with rejuvenating enthusiasm. Marking it as the beginning of a new journey, we believe the new Bangladesh Memory of the World Committee will continue adding to this endeavor and uphold Bangladesh's unique documentary heritages to the world.