

'Introduce skill training programme for migrant workers'

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Experts at a roundtable yesterday suggested introducing employable skill training for workers going abroad for jobs, saying that skilled workers send much more remittances than unskilled ones.

They also called for arranging free or affordable gender- and rights-based pre-departure training programmes, including training on skills, language and health issues such as preventive measures against HIV/AIDS, for prospective women workers in order to ensure safe migration.

United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Bangladesh organised the roundtable on 'Gender Issues in Migration' at Mohakhali Brac Centre in the city where the participants emphasised comprehensive standardised manual and training module.

Speaking as the chief guest, Women and Children Affairs Adviser Geeteara Safiya Choudhury said training programmes would have to



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Adviser Geeteara Safiya Choudhury speaks at a roundtable at Brac Centre in the city yesterday.

be taken up for female migrant workers to prepare them for various jobs such as nursing, housekeeping, elderly care and baby care.

"Standard curriculum, materials and modern equipment will have to be provided for the training and the

government, NGO, private sector and recruiting agency should establish technical training centres to raise massive awareness about safe migration process," she said.

She also called for introducing language courses, especially English, Arabic and the language of Malaysia, saying that language is an important tool for migrant workers to create a positive environment in the work-place.

Md Abdul Matin Chowdhury, secretary of expatriates welfare and overseas employment ministry, said presently Bangladesh is sending migrant workers to more than 100 countries.

"About 4.8 million workers had been employed in various parts of the world up to June 2006. This year it is expected that around six lakh workers would be able to go overseas and a total of 2,65,827 workers have already gone abroad by May," he said.

Naheed M Ahmed, national programme manager of UNIFEM, Bangladesh, said the country has already adopted 'Overseas

Employment Policy' in 2006 and it is time to take a plan of action to implement the policy.

Nurul Islam, director of Bureau of Manpower Employment & Training (BMET), said the BMET has a total of 26 technical training centres, six of which are exclusively for women.

Ferdous Ara Begum, member of UN CEDEW Committee, said adequate and accurate statistics on female migration process is absent

but such data is essential for a comprehensive approach.

Secretary of women and children affairs ministry Rokeya Sultana and Ovibashi Karmi Kalyan Forum Chairperson Mahbub Elahi also spoke at the roundtable moderated by Dr Hossain Zillur Rahman, executive chairman of PPRC.



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Former Awami League lawmaker Sheikh Fazlul Karim Selim and other family members grieve the death of his mother Asia Khatun beside her coffin at her residence at Banani in the city yesterday. Detained Sheikh Selim was released on parole after his mother died yesterday.