

# HRD KOREA

HRD Korea (Human Resources Development Service of Korea), a public agency under the umbrella of Ministry of Employment and Labor of the Republic of Korea, is designated to introduce foreign workforce to Korea under Employment Permit System (EPS) as receiving agency. Bangladesh and Korea have been concluded MOU to implement EPS on June 2007. Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment of the Republic of Bangladesh has appointed Bangladesh Overseas Employment and Services Limited (BOESL) as sending agency. HRD Korea has established its resident office in Dhaka which is called "EPS Center in Bangladesh" and the office is situated in the Korean Embassy premise.

Korea's EPS is a unique system which allows small and medium Korean enterprises to employ foreign workforce. The EPS is



unique since the whole process of sending and receiving foreign workers in Korea is managed by HRD Korea, the Government Agency. Because the whole process is managed by the Korean Government with a total computerized system, the process is kept transparent and fair. Under EPS, if competent jobseekers pass EPS TOPIK, the Korean Language Test, and meet all requirements, they are listed on the roster as candidates. Then, the employers in Korea get chance to choose the person they want to hire from the roster. Not only the system ensures fairness and transparency, it minimizes cost of sending and receiving foreign workers by preventing any

possible intervention by illegal brokers. Korean authorities charge only visa issuance fee and language test fee (USD21). Including BOESL service charge, one way air ticket and other official expenses it takes approximately USD800 as sending fee.

As of August 2012, 11,171 of Bangladeshi job seekers passed the EPS TOPIK, the Korean Language Test, and some 8,000 Bangladeshi workers are now working in Korea. Every year jobseeker's roster quota of Bangladesh has been increasing. Last year it was 4,800, and this year it jumped to 5,600 persons.

Recently, there was some further improvement on the EPS process. To facilitate identical test environment for the EPS TOPIK examinees, HRD Korea has established a computer based test (CBT) center in Dhaka in cooperation with BOESL. In order to select workers who are physically and mentally fit, HRD Korea has introduced a new test called the "skill test". This newly introduced system would be helpful in boosting Bangladeshi Jobseekers employment opportunities in Korea.

This year, the Korean Government has started a new program for the committed foreign workers under a system named "Committed Workers' Re-entry and Re-employment". Foreign worker who worked in a single company and repatriated upon expiration of sojourn period is allowed to come back to Korea after 3 months of departure date without appearing in language test and without paying any service charge to BOESL. Previously, the workers who returned to their home country would have to go through the whole process again in order to come back to Korea. However, under the new system, the Korean Government made it easier for the foreign workers who showed devotion and commitment to come back to Korea again. By providing incentives for the workers to go back to their home countries after the sojourn period rather than becoming an illegal immigrant, the Government of the Republic

of Korea is hoping that the problem of illegal immigration can be addressed. The Government of the Republic of Korea is trying to provide more opportunities to Bangladeshi EPS workers in various manners. Bangladeshi workers in Korea are contributing greatly to the economy of both Korea and Bangladesh. If the Bangladeshi workers continue to follow the rules and procedures of EPS, more and more Bangladesh citizens will have opportunities to work in Korea, enhancing the friendship between the two countries.

## KOICA's activities in Bangladesh

### Making a better world together

To strengthen the friendly and cooperative relationship between Korea and Bangladesh, the Korean government has made efforts to assist the socio-economic development of Bangladesh through various development cooperation programs implemented by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) since its establishment in 1991.

Based on its own experience of eradicating poverty and transforming from an aid recipient to a donor country within a generation, Korea has strived to share its experience with development partners and act as a bridge between advanced and developing countries. Upon joining the OECD DAC in 2010, Korea has increased its volume of ODA and promoted aid effectiveness in order to fulfill the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, and also to comply with global aid norms and standards such as those of the OECD DAC.

As a grant aid agency of the Korean Government, the KOICA Bangladesh Office was established in 1995. KOICA's ODA in Bangladesh consists of six different modalities which are: project type cooperation, training programs (technical training, long-term master degree programs in Korea and in-country training), dispatch of experts and medical doctors, dispatch of Korean overseas volunteers (World Friends Korea), support to NGOs and emergency relief.

According to the draft of the Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) of the Korean Government to Bangladesh and the mutual understanding and bilateral dialogue between both countries, KOICA has placed priority on fields such as education, health and governance.

As for the education field, technical training and ICT education are the main focus areas for KOICA. In this regard, KOICA has previously implemented a technical training center capacity building project in Mirpur and the Chittagong TTC project is ongoing. To promote ICT education and to respond to the "Digital Bangladesh" initiative, KOICA set up the ICT Training Center in BANBEIS of the Ministry of Education and Bangladesh Computer Council. Also, KOICA supports to provide IT labs in secondary schools of the Dhaka district from 2012 to 2013.

For the health sector, KOICA and UNICEF Bangladesh mutually cooperate to enhance the maternal and child health care capacities of the Tangail region. To solve the problem of nurse shortages in Bangladesh, KOICA will establish a graduate nursing institute in Khilgaon to produce skilled nurses. In the governance sector, as Korea has a comparative advantage in the IT industry, many of KOICA's projects are to support IT-related capacity building. The KOICA-provided e-filing system for the Ministry of Public Administration has allowed for the realization of the effectiveness and importance of an electronic management system in the public sector. To enhance the capacity of Bangladesh Road Transportation Authority, KOICA supports to digitalize BRTA for easier access to license issuing and general e-management. On the other hand in agriculture and green energy sector, KOICA supports capacity building of Bangla-

desh Rice Research Institute for food security, REB solar power and solar home system project and Bangladesh Parliament solar power project.

In addition, KOICA is continuously supporting Bangladeshi human capital development and capacity building, which are essential elements in the national development of Bangladesh through its training programs in Korea regarding various fields of specialization. KOICA also arranges in-country training programs for Bangladeshi government officials to improve their technical and managerial skills. Up to now, KOICA has invited to Korea more than 1,200 government officials to participate in training programs in different sectors that are necessary for development. The focus of training programs is to shift from short-term and provider-centered to long-term and Bangladeshi needs- and results-based, so as to enable a more effective contribution to the organizational and institutional capacity development.

KOICA's volunteers program started in Bangladesh in 1993 with six volunteers. At present, around 70 KOICA volunteers are working in Bangladesh to share their technical expertise with their counterpart organizations in order to make a lasting impact in the development of Bangladesh. More than 340 volunteers who have worked in Bangladesh so far had significant roles in cultural exchanges and the development of mutual understanding between the two nations through people-to-people exchanges and interactions. Other than the public sector channels, KOICA also has contributed to Bangladesh through the Korean development NGOs which dedicate their



efforts in supporting the most vulnerable people of Bangladesh at a grass-root level.

As a longstanding good friend of Bangladesh, KOICA always considers Bangladesh as a top priority partner country. KOICA's assistance to Bangladesh, which is expected to be doubled next year, may be limited in comparison to Bangladesh's great development needs, but Korea's development experience from its poor period in the 1970s could serve as a realistic and definitive contribution towards the development of the Bangladesh, attaining the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and promoting Bangladesh to a middle income country by 2021.

Congratulations on the occasion of  
the National Day of the Republic of Korea

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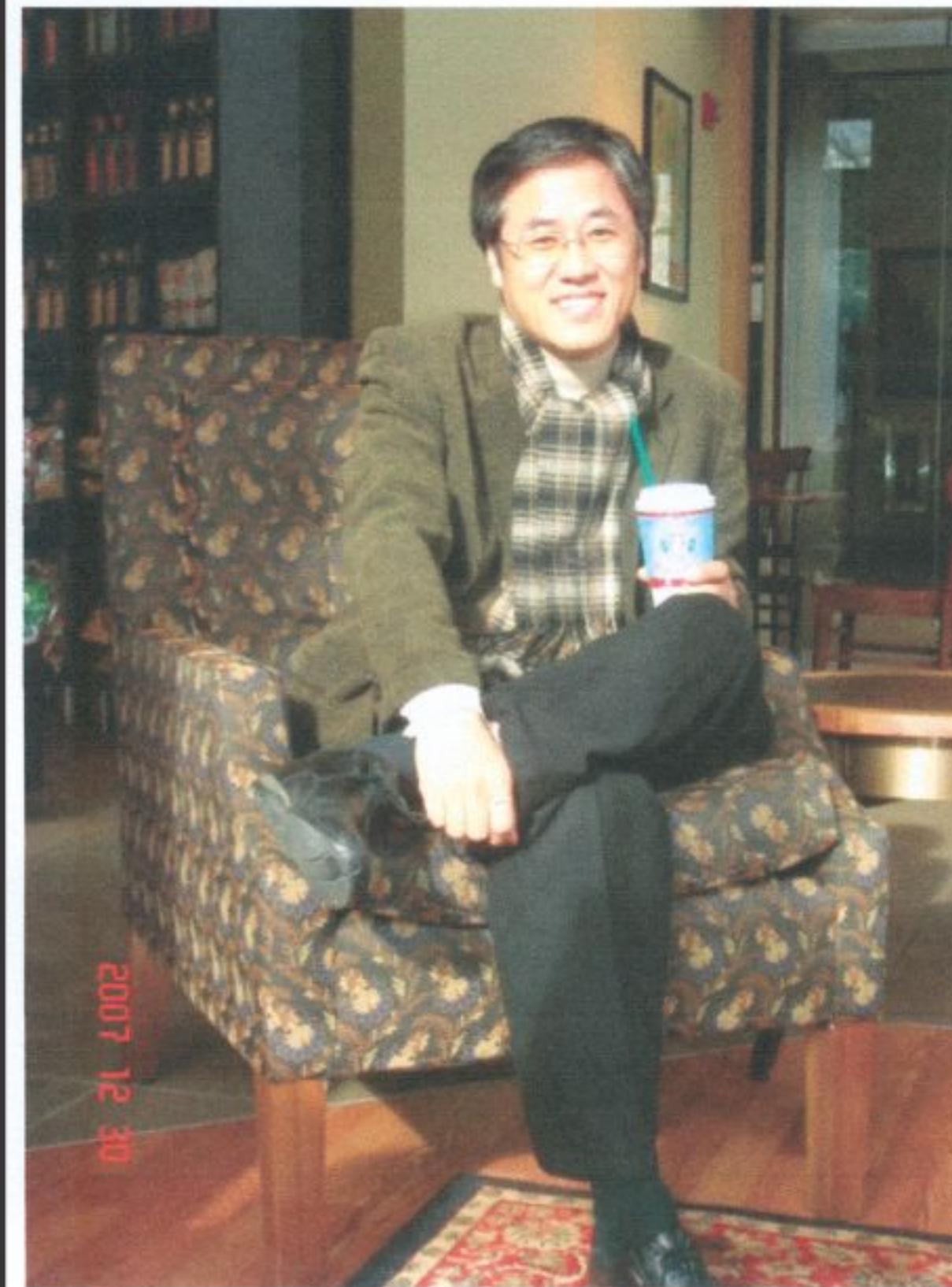
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the glorious occasion of its  
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Do-Ke Park (Harry)

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