back abroad again, he will take it, the young man adds – "I have nothing to lose."

Mamun is not alone. In spite of many success stories, there are tens of thousands of failed migration in this country. Like Mamun, they cannot share their experiences with their communities.

This behaviour is natural, says Shakirul Islam, chairman of Ovibashi Karmi Unnayan Programme (OKUP), a grassroots migrants organisation. "If someone shares his difficulties, he lowers his social status," he explains.

migrants organise their trip back to the villages. But not all of the migrants expect a happy welcome party.

"Especially the female domestic workers who were abused or tortured abroad come back highly traumatised," says Islam. Therefore, sometimes the families are not ready to receive them. His organisation provides those women with shelter and medical assistance and mediates with their families. Once they are rehabilated, the women can go back to their relatives.

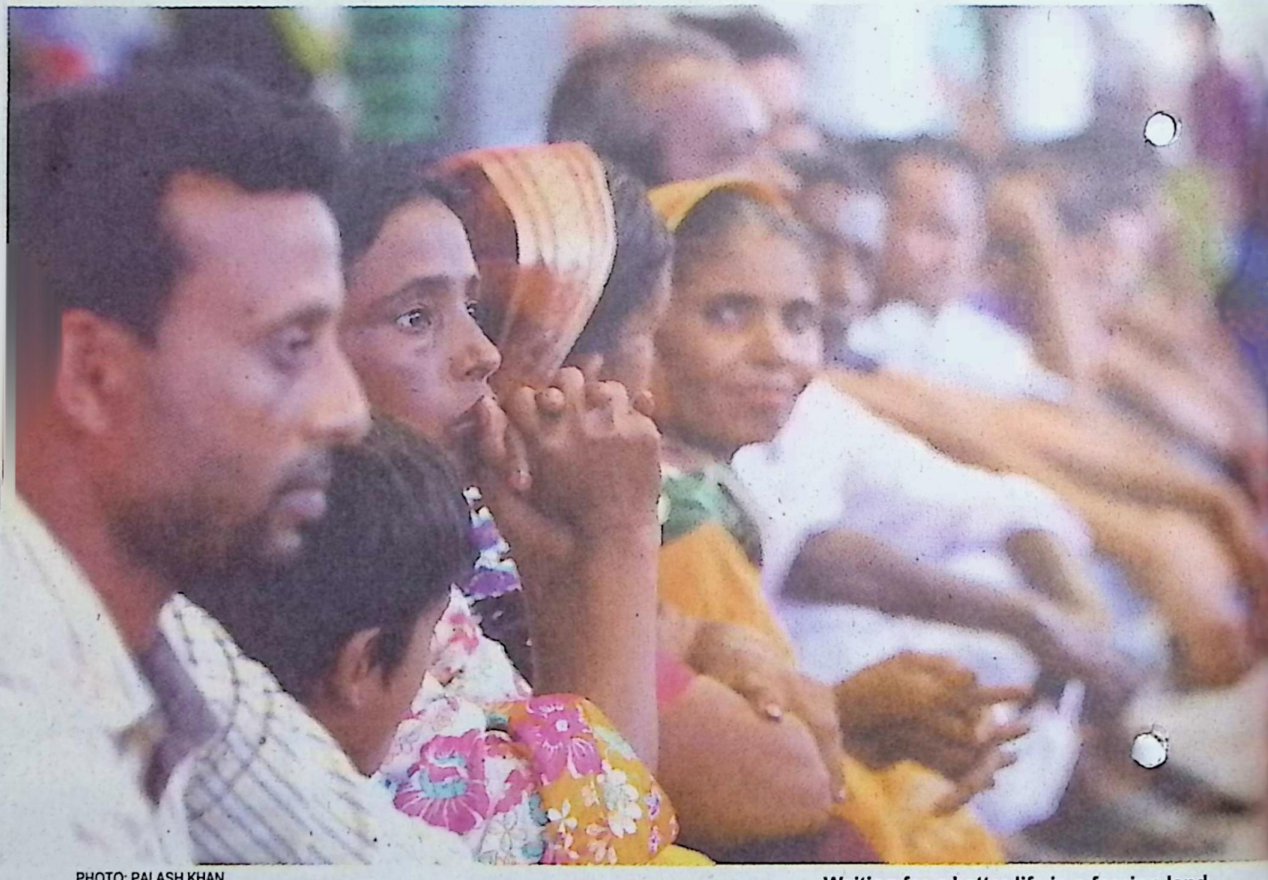


PHOTO: PALASH KHAN

Waiting for a better life in a foreign land.

OKUP and other organisations support the returned migrants with various offers such as medical assistance, psychological treatment, skills training, economic reintegration, legal assistance to file cases against cheating agencies and so on. The needs are tremendous, they say.

Help at the airport

The helplessness begins at the airport. "When you come back, you see so many changes that you even have trouble finding your way home," says Syed Saiful Haque, chairman of the Welfare Association for the Rights of Bangladeshi Emigrants (WARBE). He was a migrant himself in the 1980s.

Keeping it in mind, various organisations offer a meet-and-greet service at the airport, to help the

High expectations

Another challenge for many migrant workers is to face the high expectations of their families. "Many returnees cannot fulfill all the wishes and requests," says Haque. As a consequence, instead of heading towards their villages, some hide in the capital after their return.

However, in most cases, the expectations are created by the migrants themselves: because they do not want to show how dirty and dangerous their workplaces in the Middle East or elsewhere are, they pretend to be rich and happy. "They send photos of themselves in front of expensive cars, instead of pictures of the dirty and crowded dorm they sleep in," Haque adds.