

TOWARDS BUILDING A MODERN ECONOMY



DHAKA TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 20, 2018
FALGUN 8, 1424 BS

31

Protecting migrants' welfare

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 30

these issues should be entitled to foremost considerations. Lobbying with the host government for monitoring violations of contract by employers and recruiting agents, facilitating legal support, collecting compensation of the deceased, and providing shelter to those who are in need can ensure progress.

There is a need for specific arrangement to look after the welfare of migrant workers including visiting their workplaces, responding to their queries and complaints, and extending

There is a need for specific arrangement to look after the welfare of migrant workers including visiting their workplaces, responding to their queries and complaints, and extending consular services.



SOURCE: INSTITUTE OF POLICY STUDIES OF SRI LANKA

consular services to expatriate workers. Measures are required to increase financial assistance for stranded workers waiting to be repatriated, emergency treatment for the distressed, and burial of the deceased workers abroad.

Current pre-departure training and orientations are not adequate for migrant workers, in particular for women migrants. The content is heavy on hard skills development, such as how to use machines. However, it is a timely demand to improve the soft skills of migrant workers, e.g. orienting them on the kind of behaviour and culture to expect in a

destination country, food habit, human rights issues of migrants, and so on.

Considering the country-specific situation, women migrants must be made aware of the safety and security measures abroad, especially protective measures on violence against women and sexual harassment. Secondly, the materials that are used for pre-departure briefing such as booklets and leaflets should be more user-specific considering the literacy level of the migrant workers. Using simple, easy audio-visual communication materials can be useful for migrants in the classroom. They can keep these

materials with them even at the workplace.

In addition to these, the following immediate measures can significantly improve migrants' human rights situation: (i) Visible strong political will to support migrants for their safe, quality and dignified (both for individual and for the country) migration as opposed to the existing modern-day slavery-like means to earn income, (ii) Providing full support in the GCM (Global Compact on Migration) process which reflects the voices of and advocates at the grassroots, (iii) Reviewing migration process to reduce cost and stop

harassment in the process, (iv) Finding alternate markets as countries of destinations and reduce dependency on Middle Eastern countries to send women migrants as domestic or other workers, (v) Emphasising more on skills-building of migrant workers in areas of hard skills (language, machine handling, etc.) and softer skills (attitudes, behaviour, human rights, access to justice and redressal of violence against women and sexual harassment), (vi) Strengthening pre-departure and pre-decision programmes considering the cultural context of both sending and destination countries, as well as the knowledge, information and awareness needs of the migrant workers, (vii) Educating/ equipping women migrants with multiple internet-based types of communication and connectivity mechanisms (e.g. browsing social media, etc.) for confidence-building and personal safety, (viii) Enhancing skill of negotiation and research capacity of the policymakers as such to make the memorandum of understanding or contracts with destination countries transparent and accountable to the citizens, (ix) Strengthened networking with destination countries, using diaspora community as a connection with the Bangladeshi migrants abroad, and (x) Importance of being informed, responsive, caring and respectful towards migrants should be embedded in the training and the appraisal process for the embassy staff responsible for migration.

Sheepa Hafiza is an equality and rights activist, and executive director of Ain o Salish Kendra (ASK).


 **Nestlé**
Good Food, Good Life™



Enhancing quality of
life and contributing
to a healthier future

Good Food, Good Life is our promise.

Nutrition, Health and Wellness is what we deliver everyday to our consumers.

 **08000 16 12 71** (Free from mobile)
e-mail: WeCare@bd.nestle.com, www.nestle.com.bd

NESCAFÉ



Good Food, Good Life™