

Event Report

Ethical recruitment through a compact of sending countries

High-level Consultation on Global Governance of Migration

BOESL Conference Room, Probashi Kallyan Bhaban
30th July, 2019



Ethical recruitment of migrant workers will be easier to ensure if the labour-sending countries come to an agreement on the common scale/benchmark of pay and job standards.

Imran Ahmad, Honourable Minister for Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment, called for a compact of migrant-sending countries at the 'High-level Consultation on Global Governance of Migration'.

The Secretary of the Ministry Rownaq Jahan echoed the statement and requested the Minister to lead this campaign. Additional Secretary of the Ministry, Ahmed Munirus Saleheen presented the keynote.

Members of Parliament from Nepal, Bangladesh and Philippines also supported the idea of a compact.

Bangladesh is in a unique position to carry forward this campaign as it is the Chair on ethical recruitment zpractices at the Colombo Process, which is the regional consultative process of Asian labour-sending countries. Alexis Nadine Bautista, Project Coordinator

of MFA, also indentified building South Asian compact as a step towards ethical migration.

Prior to the Global Forum for Migration and Development (GFMD) – to be held in November 2019 in Ecuador – this timely high-level consultation was held on 30th July 2019 at the BOESL Conference Room of Probashi Kallyan Bhaban. The event was jointly organized by IID (Institute of Informatics and Development) and Bangladesh Nari Sramik Kendra (BNSK) in collaboration with Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA) and with support from British Council's PROKAS.

The participants at the event shared ideas and experiences of addressing international migration issues and also discussed the priorities that need to be considered for global (e.g. GFMD), regional (e.g. Colombo process, SAARC) and intra-regional (e.g. Bali process, Abu Dhabi dialogue, Budapest dialogue) cooperation and commitments.

In his keynote presentation, Ahmed Munirus Saleheen emphasized on the importance of putting more focus



on skill development, as skilled labour force can secure better salary and opportunity and reduces the chances of exploitation significantly. Pointing out the lack of skills in most of the Bangladeshi migrant workers, he mentioned that the issue of skill development has been given the highest importance by the Ministry. He also identified the lack of presence of international labour organizations' representatives in the destination countries as a major challenge.

Nazrul Islam, the Director General of Ministry of Foreign Affairs lauded the positive contributions made by the Civil Society Organizations and other stakeholders through several national-level consultations. He mentioned that the consultations resulted in recommendations on how to effectively implement Global Compact for Migration (GCM) in

Bangladesh and other neighbouring countries. He pointed out that a total of 36 recommendations have been developed by experts from Bangladesh, ILO, IOM and other international forums.

Bangladesh and Spain have been assigned to co-develop a migration review forum under the provisions of GCM. He



mentioned that the initial draft on the modality of this forum has already been prepared by both countries, which will be presented to the Honourable Prime Minister of Bangladesh.

Emphasizing on the importance of a collective approach towards migration, Imran Ahmad stressed that it is imperative to create a South Asian compact of sending countries. He highlighted that a mutual understanding within the countries on minimum wages and job facilities





can help to ensure the rights of the migrant workers.

He also pointed out that to protect the domestic workers abroad, instead of thinking about reactive measures—such as financial compensation after an unfortunate event – more emphasis should be given on equipping workers with preventive measures. So that they do not fall prey into



this type of circumstances in the first place.

He also mentioned that as Bangladesh is moving towards skill migration, the sectors which are no longer in demand will be dropped to streamline the overall migration process.

Syed Ahamed, Chief Executive Officer of IID provided the CSOs perspective on setting out priorities in the



global governance of migration. He pointed out that CSOs are playing a key role in migration governance by connecting dots of different consultations and funnelling the suggestions from a variety of stakeholders and taking them to various forums and following up.

Sumaiya Islam, Executive Director of BNSK and Syeed Ahamed facilitated the event discussion. Among others, MP of Bangladesh Shameem Haider Patwary, MPs of Nepal Deepak Prakash Bhatt, Ram Kumari Jhakri, Amrita Devi Agrahari, MP of Philippines Aniceto D. Bertiz III, Project Coordinator in Manila of MFA Alexis Nadine Bautista, Gender & Social Inclusion Advisor of British Council's PROKAS Program Shirin Lira, also spoke at the consultation meeting.





5 suggestions for Colombo Process

- 1. Campaign for sending country compact** – In the upcoming Colombo Process, a campaign should be carried out for building a South Asian Compact by the labour-sending countries.
- 2. Future of Work** – Considering the upcoming transformation in the world's job market due to 4th industrial revolution and its impact on the migration sector, re-skilling the future migrant workers under new skill development projects must be ensured in the labour-sending countries. Concurrently, it also needs to be ensured that the labour-receiving countries recognise the certificates given by the Technical Training Centres at the sending countries.
- 3. Model Embassy** – Drawing on the global best practices, a concept for model embassies can be developed and implemented. Also, a comprehensive post-arrival orientation programme should be developed for both the workers and the employers at the destination countries.
- 4. Implementation of GCM in the destination countries** – The countries of destination must implement GCM in line with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For this, an Action/Implementation plan on the GCM can be developed by the Abu Dhabi Dialogue (ADD), which can be monitored and assessed in the Working Group meetings of ADD.
- 5. Monitoring the progress of SDGs and GCM** – To track the progress of global commitments on migration, such as SDGs and GCM, a policy should be developed and formalised by the government. Also, civil society should play its role as the third-eye in monitoring the progress of these compacts by regularly producing technical reports.

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