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Promoting Decent Work through Improved Migration Policy and its Application in Bangladesh

The Labour Migration Project Project Office Inauguration on 11 March 2013

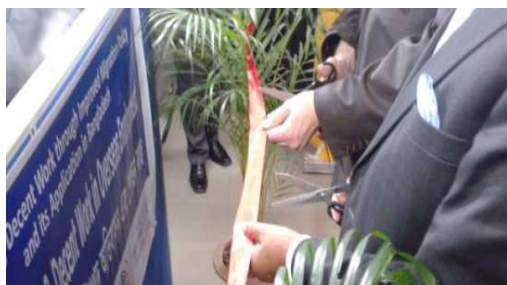


The ILO executed Labour Migration Project, Promoting Decent Work through Improved Migration Policy and its Application in Bangladesh, seeks to maximize the beneficial impact of labour migration on economic development and to improve protection standards for the migrant workers from Bangladesh. The Project provides support to the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment and the Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training (BMET) to strengthen policy, normative and institutional frameworks for better governance of labour migration. The project works within the framework of ILO's tripartite structure involving the Workers, Employers and Government. It also includes the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN WOMEN) and civil society organizations.

On Monday 11 March 2013, the Labour Migration Project office located in the Ministry premises in the Probashi Kalyan Bhaban (building for the welfare of the migrants) was jointly inaugurated by Eng. Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, Minister of Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MEWOE), and Mr. Martin Dahinden, Ambassador and Director-General of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC).



Dr. Zafar Ahmed Khan, Secretary of the Ministry welcomed the guests from Switzerland and expressed the ministry's commitment to protect the Bangladeshi workers.



In his statement, the Honorable Minister welcomed the strong ties between the Project and his Ministry to address labour migration challenges and emphasized on the importance to promote and achieve decent work opportunities for their migrant workers. He mentioned that Bangladesh is aware of the issues concerning migrant workers and is making efforts to address issues from all angles. He expressed hope that the project with SDC's continuous support would be able to help fill some of the gaps that currently exist.



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The SDC Director-General underlined the commitment of Switzerland to contribute to make safe migration more beneficial for Bangladesh as a mean for development, and thanked all stakeholders for the good implementation of the project.

Dr. Urs Herren, the Swiss Ambassador in Bangladesh, shared the need to bring the rights perspective to the issue of labour migration. He also emphasized the need to have the national mechanisms to ensure same labour migration.



Below L to R: Dr. Zafar Ahmed Khan, Secretary (MEWOE); Mr. Martin Dahinden, Director-General (SDC); Eng. Mr. Khandker Mosharraf Hossain, Minister (MEWOE); Dr. Urs Herren, Swiss Ambassador to Bangladesh, and Mr. Gagan Rajbhandari, Officer-in-Charge (ILO)

regional seminar, consultations with recruitment agencies and employers federation, start of a pilot to provide skills and support to the migrant workers, and consultation with the BMET for a comprehensive institutional system review.

Key officials of the Ministry, BMET and the ILO, as well as representatives from the Project Steering Committee comprising of the implementing partners, workers organization, employers organizations, civil society, and government ministries were also present at the inauguration.

Funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), this phase of the project is expected to conclude in mid-2015.

The audience was informed about some of the key achievements that the project has made since the execution began by Mr. Gagan Rajbhandari, Officer in Charge of ILO. The progress mentioned include: Formulation of the proposed draft of the Overseas Employment and Migrant Workers Bill, ongoing research and related national level consultation, assessment of the needs related to the data information system, ongoing set up of a Migration Research Unit in the BMET, labour market analysis in Australia and Sweden, initial planning for an inter-



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