

# LABOR MIGRATION MANAGEMENT IN BANGLADESH: CHALLENGES AND LEGAL PROTECTIONS

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## ABSTRACT

### **Keywords:**

*Labour migration;  
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This paper presents labour migration management in Bangladesh. Labour migration is one of the most important economic sector in Bangladesh which plays an vital role in three major ways, firstly it reduces unemployment problems, secondly brings remittance flows to the country and thirdly it strengthens the diplomatic relation among the countries. Middle Eastern countries like Oman, United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Saudi Arabia (KSA), Malaysia, Singapore and Asian countries. The most favorite countries for migrant labourers is the Middle East. Bangladesh is the eighth highest remittance recipient in the world and obtains about \$22.50 billion in the year 2022 as well as the four remittance recipients in South Asia. Migration has developed in Bangladesh but there are a lot of difficulties in the migration sector. Though there are enough laws and policies in Bangladesh to regulate and promote labour migration and monitoring mechanism are still complex to ensure effective labour migration. This paper

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presents difficulties of labour migration historical development, types and nature of migration policy, development, types and issues, management, process and legal protections.

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## INTRODUCTION

Section 2(1) of Overseas Employment and Migrants Act 2013 [OEMA] and section 2(1) of Wage Earners Welfare Board Act, 2018 [WEWBA] states that Statutory Laws define migration as the departure of a citizen from Bangladesh for the purpose of employment in a trade or profession in any foreign country. Likewise, Section 2(2) of OEMA denotes that migrant means any citizen of Bangladesh who has migrated to a foreign country for the purpose of overseas employment in any work or profession and is staying in that country. Section 2(3) of OEMA and section 2(2) of WEWBA further mention that, the terms migrant worker or “worker” means any citizen of Bangladesh who, for wages, is in the planning process to migrate for work or is departing to any foreign country for work or is employed in a trade or profession in any foreign country or has returned to Bangladesh at the end of the tenure of employment or without having completed the tenure of employment in a trade or profession from a foreign country. Migration has emerged as a significant livelihood strategy for the people of Bangladesh, contributing positively to social development and empowerment. It facilitates skill transfer and promotes various community development initiatives (Islam, n.d.).

Labor migration happens from home to abroad for employment though there are various reasons for migration which are urbanization, poverty, landholding system, fragmentations of land, lack of employment opportunities, natural calamities, large family size natural calamities, etc. Labor migration is crucial to Bangladesh's economy, as it contributes significantly to the generation of remittances. A large number of workers leave the country for overseas employment. Bangladesh is recognized as one of the top 10 countries globally in terms of remittance earnings. Every year about 1.07 million workers leave Bangladesh for overseas employment (Prothom Alo 2023). Bangladesh has obtained the position of the 8<sup>th</sup> remittance receiving state in the world (Migration and Migrants: A Global Overview, IOM 2023). Bangladesh earns remittances from migrant workers as the third highest recipient in South Asia (Bangladesh Bank 2024). However, even if Bangladesh depicts gradual improvement in labour migration, many migrants endure long working hours, low wages, and unsafe working and living conditions without adequate legal recourse or support systems (ILO 2024). Legislation and administrative procedures often fail to ensure that migrant workers' social security rights are protected even across borders (ILO 2024). International organizations,

while entrusted with the responsibility of protecting labor rights, often fail to uphold their commitments due to inadequate enforcement mechanisms, political influences, and the exploitation of legal loopholes by powerful stakeholders ((UNHCR, 1992). This paper is aimed to identify the legal lacuna and find possible solutions to ensure safe and secured labour migration.

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

A significant body of research has addressed the vulnerabilities of Bangladeshi migrant workers, with particular focus on irregular migration, deceptive recruitment practices, and abuse in destination countries (Siddiqui, 2024; IOM, 2025). Scholars like Hoffer (2014) and Jamil (2022) have highlighted the weak regulatory mechanisms that enable contract substitution, visa trading, and the exploitation of workers, particularly women. The Asia Foundation (2013) notes that gendered aspects of migration remain under-addressed, leading to heightened risks for female migrants, especially domestic workers. The economic and social shocks of the COVID-19 pandemic further exposed the fragile conditions migrants face, both abroad and upon return (Staff Correspondent, 2021; Islam, 2024).

While these studies offer valuable insights, most tend to focus either on policy frameworks or individual abuses in isolation. This article contributes by connecting systemic governance failures in both sending and receiving countries with the lived experiences of migrants, using recent reports and policy gaps to analyze why exploitative migration persists. It bridges a critical gap in the literature by arguing for stronger bilateral accountability and coordinated reforms grounded in migrant realities.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Labor migration plays a crucial role in Bangladesh's economic development, significantly contributing to foreign remittances and alleviating domestic unemployment. However, despite its importance, the labor migration sector in Bangladesh faces several challenges that impede its effectiveness and the equitable benefit for workers. The exploitation of migrant workers, particularly through fraudulent practices by intermediaries and high migration costs, remains a major issue (Hoffer, 2014). Migrants often lack adequate knowledge about their rights and the migration process, which leaves them vulnerable to abuse, low wages, unsafe working conditions, and trafficking, especially women and girls (Islam, 2024; The Asia Foundation, 2013). Moreover, the recruitment process remains opaque, with workers often dependent on intermediaries who take advantage of their limited understanding of the system (Siddiqui, 2024). There is also a significant issue with undocumented migration, contributing to illegal crossings and involving workers in criminal activities (Jamil, 2022). Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated these issues, leading to mass job losses and increasing

uncertainty about the reintegration of migrant workers (Islam, 2024). The lack of government oversight and fragmented coordination between stakeholders further complicates the labor migration process, leaving workers unprotected and vulnerable to exploitation. There is an urgent need for comprehensive reforms in the migration sector to address these challenges, including improving knowledge and awareness, ensuring better working conditions, and strengthening coordination among relevant stakeholders (Jamil, 2022).

### OBJECT OF THE STUDY

The article aims to address critical issues within Bangladesh's labor migration sector and explore possible solutions to improve the overall management of migration. The objectives of this article are as follows:

1. **To Identify and Analyze the Key Challenges in Bangladesh's Labor Migration Sector:** Focus on issues like exploitation, high migration costs, discrimination, and poor working conditions.
2. **To Propose Practical Reforms for Improving Migration Management:** Suggest measures for enhancing recruitment transparency, reducing exploitation, and ensuring better coordination between stakeholders to protect migrant workers.

### RESEARCH QUESTION

To explore the complexities of labor migration from Bangladesh and its impact on migrant workers, the following research questions have been formulated:

1. What are the primary challenges faced by Bangladeshi migrant workers in terms of exploitation, high migration costs, and discrimination in destination countries?
2. What reforms and strategies can be implemented to improve the transparency and effectiveness of Bangladesh's labor migration management system, ensuring better protection and support for migrant workers?

### METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this research primarily relied on secondary data collection and qualitative analysis. Secondary data was gathered from a wide range of sources, including government reports, academic articles, policy documents, and publications from both national and international organizations. These sources provided comprehensive insights into the current state of labour migration in Bangladesh, focusing on challenges such as exploitation, trafficking, and gaps in legal and policy frameworks. The qualitative analysis was carried out through thematic and content analysis of the collected materials. The thematic analysis helped identify recurring issues and patterns related to labour migration, such as the prevalence of exploitation and inadequate legal protections. Content analysis of policy documents revealed contradictions and inefficiencies in

migration regulations and their implementation. This approach facilitated a deeper understanding of the complexities surrounding labour migration in Bangladesh and the gaps in existing frameworks, offering valuable insights into potential areas for reform.

### **EVOLUTION OF LABOUR MIGRATION POLICIES IN BANGLADESH**

International labor migration is one of the most important sectors of the economy of Bangladesh. Since 2004 about 12.52 million Bangladeshi citizens have migrated for overseas employment (Bureau of Manpower, Employment and Training [BMET], 2024). For the development of the labor migration, governmental and non-governmental organizations are working for overseas employment. The Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) is the governmental institution that is working for overseas employment. Development of Labor migration depends on promoting safe working environments in the foreign country which is the fundamental requirement for the migration policy. The International Labor Organization (ILO) works to forge policies to maximize the benefits of labour migration in the foreign countries (International Labour Organization [ILO], n.d.). For this purpose, The ILO is working for the development of migrant workers through workshops, conferences, consultative meetings, symposiums, etc. To regulate labor migration Bangladesh government has established the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) in 1976 for the skill development of migrants in foreign countries (OEMA 2013).

The government has enacted The Emigration Ordinance 1882 which has been enforced for the Welfare Fund of Migrant Workers for developing migrant workers in the state and abroad. In the year 1998 government signed the UN's International Convention on the Protection of Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families for facilities and in the year 2002 government granted licenses to the agencies for recruiting overseas (General Assembly resolution 1990). In this regard all migrant workers and members of their families get facilities without distinction of any kind of discrimination such as sex, race, color, language, religion or conviction, political or social origin, nationality, age, economic position, property, marital status, birth or other status (International Convention on the Protection of Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, Article 1). However, government also relaxed restrictions for female migrant workers and fixed a nominal cost as a result several female workers are working in the Middle east countries like Bahrain, Brunei, Iran, Kuwait, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, the Republic of Korea, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The state owned the probasi kallan bank (PKB) so that the migrant worker can get easy loans and social security. The interest rate of migration loans is 8% so that the migrant laborers can access hassle-free overseas jobs and reintegrate into economic activities when they come back home (Siddiqui & Saifuddin, 2022). The Probashi

Kallyan Bank was established in the year 2011 to increase and promote welfare for migrant workers. The government also signed a Memorandum with the Malaysia government on sending and receiving workers in the year 2012. The Probashi Kallyan Bank (PKB) currently has 63 branches and in the year 2018 and nine new branches were opened also and 19 more branches are under consideration by the Bangladesh Bank (Probashi Kallyan Bank). The government also enacted the Overseas Employment and Migrants Act 2013 to promote the migration process. For more rapid development the national law has confirmed the rights to choose a formal profession and has confirmed social security in old age, sickness, loss of livelihood for labor migration development (United Nations, 2000). The government has enacted The Emigration Ordinance to control and regulate recruiting agents, information, and training programs, control, and monitor national and international labor markets for resolving legal disputes, etc. The Bangladesh Overseas Employment Services Limited (BOESL) is also working for direct recruitment in the migration process though some migrant laborers are going abroad by individual contract with their friends and family. The Bangladesh government has taken various steps for the development of overseas migration.

#### **CURRENT STATUS OF LABOUR MIGRATION IN BANGLADESH**

Bangladesh is one of the major worker sending countries of the world. Labor migration consists of International Migrant Stock, Nationals Abroad and International Migrant flow (IOM Bangladesh). There are also four major types of labor migration: Invasion, Conquest, Colonization and Immigration ((DBpedia). Most of the migrant labor engaged in short-term work and they are semi or low-skilled workers. Poverty is the main reason for labor migration (Siddiqui, 2021) and natural disasters or civil disturbances also factor in labor migration. There are also reasons for migration like labor demand, extreme climate change, disaster-related events, lack of services, lack of safety, high crime, crop failure, drought, flooding, and poverty for migration for better livelihood. There are also some different types of migration such as counter-urbanization, emigration, immigration, internal migration, international migration, rural-urban migration, marriage, and family reunification. Migration in Bangladesh is the result of poverty, lack of social protection and rights, climate change disaster management, and human resource planning (Siddiqui, 2021).

#### **BANGLADESH GOVERNMENT'S STEPS REGARDING LABOUR MIGRATION**

The Bangladesh Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) is working to regulate projects like "Promoting Decent Work through Improved Migration Policy. To take more initiatives the ILO is also making various policies regarding labor migration" (ILO). For better utilization of remittances, migration policies are taken to enhance the

number of Bangladeshi workers and the government has granted individuals and agencies to engage in the recruitment of manpower for overseas employment. The most important destinations for migrant workers are the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Malaysia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. Bangladesh has established the Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment (MEWOE) to improve overseas employment opportunities for Bangladeshi workers through effective migration management. The ministry's responsibilities include (Bossavie, 2023):

1. Safeguarding migrant workers' rights, ensuring their overall welfare, and contributing to national socioeconomic development through overseas employment.
2. Providing specialized training to align the workforce with foreign labor market demands.
3. Enhancing and regulating migration systems in existing labor markets while identifying and expanding into new markets.
4. Negotiating and signing agreements and Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) with foreign governments and international organizations regarding manpower export and training.
5. Raising public awareness about safe migration processes to protect the rights and well-being of migrant workers.

The International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in 1990 obliges that all state parties are obliged to submit regular reports to the Committee on how the rights of migrant workers are being protected (United Nations Human Rights Treaty Bodies). The Convention came into force in June 2005 (Siddiqui, 2007). The government has also enacted the Overseas Employment and Migration Act 2013 and the Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy 2016.

The Technical Training Center (TTC) is working to make a skilled labor force for sustainable migration. The Expatriate Welfare Bank (PKB) is giving financial support to the migrant workers or people to migrate for Overseas Employment. The Government of Bangladesh has entered into bilateral agreements as well as multilateral treaties with other countries to determine migration policies. Bangladesh had a long-standing commitment to promote and protect the human rights of migrant workers and members of their families which reflected in the ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in 2011 (Committee on the Protection of the Rights of Migrant Workers, 2017). The Welfare Board has taken the initiative to implement projects, emergency support to migrants' social and economic reintegration, help migrant families to carry the bodies of deceased migrants to bear the burial cost, provide scholarships for children of migrant workers as well as support the physically challenged children or dependents of migrants. In this act, the

female migrant worker will get special protection for overseas employment.

### **LEGAL FRAMEWORK OF LABOUR MIGRATION IN BANGLADESH**

The Ministry of Labour and Employment of Bangladesh and ILO are working to improve the labor migration process to protect migrant workers so that the migrant worker gets a safe fair migration system. This matter is regulated by the Overseas Employment and Migration Act 2013 (OEMA), Wage Earners Welfare Board Act, 2018, Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act, 2012, Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Policy, 2016, (Neelim & Siddiqui, 2015), Current Regulations focus on Safe Migration and Human Trafficking and are implemented on recruitment, enforcement agencies, safe migration, and prevention of human trafficking.

Chapter II of the Overseas Employment and Migrants Act, 2013 outlines the regulations governing the migration of workers from Bangladesh. Section 3 establishes that the government, or its authorized bodies like the Bureau and recruitment agents, have control over all migration-related activities. Workers must comply with specific documentation requirements, including migration clearance and proof of employment, as mandated in Section 4. However, Section 5 clarifies that the Act does not apply to individuals leaving for official duties, education, medical treatment, or business purposes. The Act also ensures equality and non-discrimination in migration processes, as specified in Section 6, prohibiting any bias based on personal characteristics. Section 7 designates the ports or places for workers' departure, while Section 8 empowers the government to restrict migration to certain countries if it is deemed necessary for public safety or national interest. Together, these provisions create a comprehensive framework for managing migration and protecting workers' rights.

Chapter IV of OEMA outlines the registration and migration clearance process for migrant workers. Section 19 mandates that all migrant workers must register with the Bureau, which maintains records of their trade or profession, and allows late registration either in Bangladesh or at the Bangladesh Mission abroad. Recruitment is carried out through a computerized database, with open advertisements used when qualified workers are unavailable. The Bureau also ensures the protection of workers' interests abroad. Section 20 requires the Bureau to issue a migration clearance with biometric details and stamp the passports of registered workers upon fulfilling migration requirements. Section 21 authorizes the government to prescribe a ceiling on the cost of migration to ensure it remains affordable for workers.

Chapter V of OEMA focuses on employment contracts for migrant workers. Section 22 requires recruitment agents to ensure contracts are made between the worker and the employer, detailing wages, accommodation, duration, compensation, and migration costs. The agent is



jointly liable with the employer for any contract-related liabilities. A copy of the contract must be submitted to the Bureau and the Bangladesh Mission in the relevant foreign country. If the Bureau or government organization is involved, they must arrange and submit the contract as well.

Chapter VII focuses on the rights of migrant workers. Section 26 ensures that workers are fully informed about the migration process, employment terms, and their legal rights before departure. Section 27 guarantees migrant workers access to legal aid, particularly those who fall victim to fraud during migration. Section 28 allows migrant workers to file a civil suit for compensation if their rights or employment contracts are violated. Section 29 outlines the right to return home for workers in distress, with provisions for the government to assist in repatriation and recover costs from responsible recruitment agents. Finally, Section 30 enables the government to provide financial and welfare programs, such as loans, tax exemptions, and other measures, to support the welfare and development of migrant workers and their families. Together, these provisions create a robust framework to protect migrant workers' rights and welfare both abroad and upon their return.

Chapter VIII of the Overseas Employment and Migrants Act, 2013 outlines offences, penalties, and the trial process related to unlawful migration practices. Section 31 defines offences such as sending migrants overseas unlawfully, charging illegal fees, or engaging in fraudulent activities, with penalties of up to five years' imprisonment and fines starting from Bangladeshi Taka One Lakh. Section 32 penalizes publishing unauthorized advertisements for migration recruitment with a penalty of up to one year in prison and a fine of at least Taka Fifty Thousand. Section 33 addresses unlawful practices in obtaining demand notes, visas, or work permits, with penalties up to seven years' imprisonment and fines starting at Taka Three Lakh. Section 34 penalizes arranging for departures from unauthorized places, with up to ten years' imprisonment and fines of at least Taka Five Lakh. Section 35 stipulates penalties for general breaches of the Act with fines or imprisonment of up to six months. Section 36 covers penalties for abetting or instigating an offence, with the same penalties applied to the instigator. Section 37 holds company officials responsible for offences committed by the company, unless they prove due diligence.

Section 38 clarifies that offences under this Act are triable by a Judicial Magistrate of First Class or a Metropolitan Magistrate and mandates trial completion within four months, extendable by two months with a progress report. Section 39 outlines the cognizability, bail status, and compoundability of offences, with certain offences being non-bailable and non-compoundable. Section 40 ensures that the Act is included in the schedule of the Mobile Courts Act, 2009, allowing for mobile court trials. Section 41 allows aggrieved persons to file complaints to the Government, which must investigate within 30 working days, resolving the complaint through direct action or arbitration within three months.

The Government of Bangladesh enacted the Wage Earners' Welfare Board Act, 2018 to establish a dedicated body for the protection and well-being of expatriate workers and their families. This Act aims to ensure their welfare by providing support such as legal aid, repatriation assistance, and financial security, in line with national objectives and international standards for migrant workers (Wage Earners' Welfare Board Act, 2018). Section 4 of the Wage Earners' Welfare Board Act, 2018 establishes the Board as a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal. It is empowered to acquire, hold, and dispose of property, and to sue or be sued in its name.

The functions of the Wage Earners' Welfare Board, as outlined in Section 8 of the Act, include:

1. Adopting and implementing welfare projects for expatriates.
2. Providing support to migrant workers in emergencies, including war, natural disasters, or financial crises, and assisting their return if necessary.
3. Ensuring social and financial security, and arranging for the rehabilitation of returned migrant workers.
4. Establishing a pre-departure briefing center and providing briefings for workers going abroad.
5. Operating expatriate welfare desks at airports to assist migrant workers.
6. Providing assistance to migrant workers who become victims of accidents, illness, or torture while overseas, including legal and medical aid.
7. Bringing back the deceased migrant workers' bodies and providing financial support for funeral expenses.
8. Assisting in obtaining compensation for deaths, professional hazards, unpaid wages, insurance, and service benefits, and providing grants to their dependants.
9. Offering scholarships to the children of migrant workers and assistance to their physically challenged dependants.
10. Managing and developing the Board's properties.
11. Investing Board funds in risk-free, profitable sectors.
12. Performing other duties as prescribed by the Government for the welfare of expatriates.

## **INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTRUMENTS FOR MIGRANT PROTECTION**

International legal instruments protecting migrants include universal human rights treaties, migrant-specific agreements, refugee protections, regional legal frameworks, and soft law mechanisms aimed at ensuring dignity, security, and equal rights for migrants. At the core, universal human rights treaties such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) (1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (1966), and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) (1966) establish fundamental protections

applicable to all individuals, regardless of migration status. The ILO Multilateral Framework on Labor Migration has paved the way for other international instruments and best practices to compile a set of principles, guidelines, and best practices to guide countries in the formulation and implementation of labor migration policies. The non-binding ILO Multilateral Framework on Labor Migration also works to govern, protect, develop, and provide a useful guide for migration policies. The Global Commission on International Migration, the Geneva Migration Group, and the Global Migration Group meet at regular intervals to coordinate activities and improve coherence within the United Nations system. It is also very important to emphasize international cooperation for coordination and coherence in international migration policies with national migration policies. From Bangladesh's perspective, protecting labor migrants is a key priority, given that millions of Bangladeshi workers migrate abroad, particularly to the Middle East, Southeast Asia, and Europe, contributing significantly to the national economy through remittances.

Bangladesh ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICMW, 1990) in 2011, reaffirming its commitment to ensuring migrant workers' rights, including fair wages, safe working conditions, and legal protection from exploitation. Additionally, Bangladesh upholds global human rights treaties such as the UDHR (1948), ICCPR (1966), and ICESCR (1966), which guarantee non-discrimination, access to healthcare, and social security for all individuals, including migrants. The International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions, including Convention No. 97 (1949), No. 143 (1975), No. 181 (1997), and No. 189 (2011), also play a crucial role in regulating recruitment agencies and preventing labor exploitation. Despite these legal frameworks, Bangladeshi migrant workers still face significant challenges, including contract violations, wage theft, workplace abuse, and inadequate access to legal aid in host countries. Many undocumented migrants are particularly vulnerable to exploitation due to their lack of legal status. To address these issues, Bangladesh has taken proactive steps, such as the Overseas Employment and Migrants Act (2013) and the establishment of the Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Ministry, which oversees labor migration policies and works to protect migrants abroad.

The government also collaborates with international organizations to promote ethical recruitment practices and ensure labor rights. However, enforcement remains a challenge, and many migrant workers still experience difficulties in host countries. In the future, stronger diplomatic engagement with destination countries, better pre-departure training, increased legal support for migrants, and enhanced enforcement of international labor protections will be essential for Bangladesh to safeguard its migrant workforce effectively. Strengthening cooperation with international organizations, regional bodies, and civil society groups

can further improve the rights and welfare of Bangladeshi migrant workers worldwide

### **DIFFICULTIES IN THE MIGRANT SECTOR**

Large-scale migration presents challenges that, when effectively managed, can transform these movements into opportunities for growth for both local communities and migrants. Over the past few decades, the task of regulating migration has become increasingly complex as a growing number of individuals are compelled to leave their homes due to various economic, political, social, and environmental factors (International Organization for Migration, 2025). There are some problems or limitations in labor migration management in Bangladesh in the present socio-economic environment. Bangladesh receives a lower number of remittances compared to the number of migrant workers compared to other labor-sending countries because of short-term employment, less skilled working performance, and low pay (Islam, 2024).

These are mentioned in the following-

- Exploitations and high migration costs are the primary problems of labor migration. Besides these malpractices occur in the destination country through visa trading, recruitment agencies (both at origin and destination) through intermediaries who take advantage of migrants, especially fraudulent practices of the intermediaries. Exploiting the desperation of undocumented migrants is the worst form of abuse and the worst form of wage repression (Hoffer, 2014).
- Problems faced by labor are high fees for migration, low-skilled jobs, low wages, lack of information about migration opportunities and risks, discrimination, exploitation, abuses, and insufficient service to protect the rights of workers.
- The incidence of trafficking of women and girls from Bangladesh and decent working conditions are absent in the destination countries.
- Cultural adaptation is a problem for migrants to meet the challenges of migration and language, homesickness, and loneliness are also general challenges in foreign countries.
- Employers generally pay below their contract wage to the laborers, force them to work long hours and deny regular time off.
- Contractual obligations are not maintained by the employers of the receiver countries.
- Migrants described problems related to food, contract substitution, irregular salary, unfriendly relationship with the employer, etc.
- The common problems endured by Bangladeshi workers and their families through regular remittances and poor facilities are enhancing the knowledge, skills, and employability of migrant women (The Asia Foundation, 2013).

- Irregular migration is one of the serious challenges for Bangladesh to reach in Europe. About 62000 people entered Europe over the last decades (Staff Correspondent, 2021).
- Migrant workers face various incidents of fraudulence and victims are often worried about pursuing legal action because they fear it will deter them from going abroad.
- Poor financial quarters as well as a lack of knowledge about laws and rights are working as barriers in ensuring legal prosecution under the law (Siddiqui, 2024).
- An uncertain homecoming has occurred for Bangladeshi migrant workers because of the COVID-19 pandemic and a large number of workers have been laid off without compensation. During the pandemic, 12 – 17 million jobs were temporarily lost and 4-12 million jobs were permanently lost in 2020. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Bangladeshi workers faced difficulties abroad like job loss, salary reductions, and an increase in deportations from the GCC. As a result, workers have fallen in a sudden loss of income, and unexpected financial precarity which has created uncertain economic disaster for their families and communities. Bangladesh's national budget was also affected by the remittance crisis.
- Illegal labor migration is one of the major problems for Bangladeshi migration. About 10376 illegal border crossings by Bangladeshis on five routes were detected (Jamil, 2022). About 17000 people lost their lives on route to Europe between 2014 and 2021 are listed without any information on country of origin (Jamil, 2022). Besides this, these illegal migrant workers are also involved in various criminal activities which creates a major problem in the migration.

### **HOW TO IMPROVE MIGRANT SECTOR**

Labor migration is one of the most visible and significant aspects of globalization. Migration creates better employment opportunities and better lifestyles. There are a large number of opportunities to spread knowledge and technology, enhanced global Co-operation and tolerance above all promote economic growth. Not only economical but migration also has its impact on social and development dimensions. The country's current reforms, particularly the Labour Reform Commission, present a valuable opportunity to introduce practical changes in the management of labor migration and reintegration (Jamil, 2022). To ensure effectiveness, accountability mechanisms need to be established to eliminate visa trading and monopolistic practices that inflate migration costs. It is also essential to enforce transparent recruitment processes, with private sector involvement playing a more significant role under stringent government oversight.

To make this sector more effective there may be various steps taken by the state. Such as,

- To give migrant workers adequate knowledge about the foreign rules and conduct of the concerned state.
- To upgrade and achieve international job-skill of the worker adequate training programs must be ensured by the government.
- Duties and responsibilities of the recruiting agencies must be monitored regularly by the government. The Bangladesh government has taken an effective initiative to make international migration or recruitment a cost-effective and transparent measure so that economic development can be acquired through improving employment and income.
- Exploiting and undocumented migrants suffer abuse and the worst form of wage repression. These workers are not paid properly as well, they have no health or social insurance and they live in constant fear of the migration police. Undocumented migrants cannot claim their rights. Minimum wage or collective bargaining does not apply to them and they cannot officially rent a flat and are afraid of their children and other family members. Specific laws may be enacted for undocumented migrants for work permits so that the law will prevent undocumented migrants' exploitation and inhuman employment practices. The employers will also realize that there is a business case for legal employment.
- Eliminate all forms of violence against all migrant workers, especially women, and girls in the public and private spheres, and trafficking and sexual exploitation.
- Domestic work should be recognized through the provisions of the act and the social protection policies and the promotion of responsibilities within the household and the family as nationally appropriate.
- Technological upgrading and Innovation should be a focus on high-value added and labor-intensive sectors. To ensure productive employment and decent work for all women and men, young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value.
- Protect labor rights and promote safe and secure working environments for migrant workers, particularly women migrants. Reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere for migrant workers.
- Nations should foster stability, enhance education, and expand employment opportunities to address the root causes of forced migration. By strengthening resilience, individuals can have the freedom to decide whether to stay in their home country or migrate. (IOM's Migration Governance Framework)
- The collection, analysis, and application of reliable data—covering demographics, cross-border movements, internal displacement, diaspora communities, labor markets, seasonal migration trends, education, and healthcare—are crucial for

developing evidence-based policies that carefully assess both the advantages and challenges of migration. (IOM's Migration Governance Framework)

- Strengthening regional cooperation can help mitigate the adverse effects of migration while maintaining its legitimacy. Additionally, it can support regional and global development objectives by enhancing human capital through sustainable growth, ultimately fostering long-term economic progress. (IOM's Migration Governance Framework)
- Above all, different training programs for migrant workers must be ensured before going abroad and rules and conduct concerning foreign countries.
- Government monitoring must be increased so that migrant workers may be protected from fraudulent activities of the 'Dalal' or intermediaries.
- At last, the Overseas Employment and Migrants Act must be implemented strictly by the different governmental implementing institutions.

### CONCLUSION

The population of Bangladesh is increasing day by day so labor migration is a very important sector for the growing manpower. Bangladesh is a lower middle-income country so migration is needed for economic development. One of the major reasons for migration is unemployment so the Government promotes overseas migration and there are different stakeholders in labor migration. They are involved in the recruitment process of sending workers abroad and the process remains very complicated. Most migrants have no adequate knowledge about the process and they have to depend on intermediaries or deals to help them with the processing of their applications and requirements which leads to exploitation. The workers are not aware of existing laws to regulate the system. As a result, the intermediaries take advantage of it. The lack of skills puts migrants in vulnerable or hazardous job situations which is the priority challenge for Bangladeshi workers. The government should meet the current demands of the labour migration process, especially rural poor migrants as they are victims of exploitation at high costs. The government faces difficulties in coordinating with different stakeholders involved in the labor migration process. The complexities of the procedure may increase if workers can process their visas directly under the Government's Recruitment agencies if the policies and monitoring mechanisms are ensured properly for migrant workers. NGOs are working on facilitating the recruitment process and it may be good practice if the government fund is ensured to support the development of NGOs in Bangladesh, NGOs can also play an important role in labor migration activities.

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