

## Reduce int'l migration costs, control intermediaries

### Speakers tell workshop

Speakers at a workshop yesterday underscored the need for reducing international migration costs and controlling the activities of intermediaries and sub-agents, says a press release.

They also laid emphasis on raising the professional skills of the migrants.

The national workshop titled 'Challenges and opportunities of recruitment industry of Bangladesh' was organised jointly by the Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit (RMMRU) of Dhaka University and Development Research Centre (DRC) on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty based at the University of Sussex, UK at the National Press Club in the capital.

In his address as chief guest Abdul Matin Chowdhury, secretary to expatriates' welfare and overseas employment ministry, emphasised the need for partnership between sending and receiving

countries, and government and non-government sectors.

He felt that in the competitive international labour market, the negotiating skills of both the government functionaries and the recruiting industry leaders need to be substantially improved.

The success in sending higher number of workers must be matched by sending highly skilled workers, he added.

In his keynote address, Dr CR Abrar of RMMRU said the existence of tires of intermediaries at both sending and receiving ends has led to massive increase in the cost of migration.

He regretted that the recruiters of the receiving countries are largely unaccountable for their ill-practices and their governments are reluctant to streamline them.

He proposed that the government should immediately investigate the activities of the intermediaries at the receiving end, many of

whom are Bangladeshis, and demanded that the sub-agents at home be brought under legal framework.

Abdul Malek, director general of Bangladesh Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET), told the workshop that there had been a major increase in the number of skilled migration from Bangladesh in the last two years.

He urged the recruitment agencies to be more active in securing markets for skilled labour.

In his address, President of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (Baira) Ghulam Mostafa deplored that the contribution of recruiting agents continue to remain unacknowledged by the broader community.

He informed that more than one hundred agencies now operate technical training centres to increase the skills of migrants.

He demanded that the government should be more active to regulate the airlines industry that arbitrarily fix the airfares and investigate the activities of GAMCA for malpractices.

Suprodip Chakma of the foreign ministry, highlighted the need to bring about transparency in the sector.

Dr Nurul Islam, director of BMET, underscored the need for relaxing the rules for emigration of professionals and highly skilled persons.

Another BMET Director Selim Reza suggested introducing one stop service on the BMET premises.

Former labour secretary Dalil Uddin Mandal, recruitment industry leaders Minhajuddin, Abdul Alim, Reaz ul Islam and Zainul Abedin Zafar and Warbe leaders Saiful Haque and Anisur Rahman Khan also took part in the discussion.