

National Consultation on
Institutional and Regulatory Reforms for Training of
Nurses for Overseas Employment

Chief Guest: Dr. A. M. M. Shawkat Ali
Advisor for Ministry of Health, Government of Bangladesh

Chair: Dr. Mohammed Farashuddin
Founder Vice Chancellor and Chairperson, East West University



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Govt to formulate nat'l policy to equip nurses with skills

Staff Correspondent

HEALTH adviser AMM Shawkat Ali on Monday said the government has decided to form a task force with representatives from both public and private organisations for formulating a national policy on nurses' training and education.

'The health and family welfare has already decided to constitute a task force to bridge the existing gap between supply and demand of nurses both at home and abroad,' the adviser said at a 'national consultation on institutional and regulatory reforms for training of highly skilled nurses for overseas employment'.

Refugee and Migratory Movements Research Unit in collaboration with Development Research Centre on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty, UK organised the consultation in Dhaka.

'Bangladesh has a staggering shortage of over 60,000 doctors,

2,80,000 nurses and 4,80,000 technologists. So we have to take initiatives to minimise the gap between supply and demand in the country. At the same time, there is huge potential market of skilled nurses abroad,' Shawkat Ali said, adding that the country can earn huge foreign exchange by sending nurses abroad after giving them necessary training and education.

Over the last couple of years, he said, the government had amended the guidelines aiming to establish more nursing institutes and introduce nursing courses at private universities. 'The government has incorporated the issue in foreign employment policies.'

The health adviser highlighted the need for skilled nurses of international standards to enable Bangladeshi nurses in getting employment opportunities abroad.

Mohammad Farash Uddin, founder vice-chancellor of East West University, chaired the inau-

gural session. He said, 'Bangladesh receives around \$ 7 billion remittances every year. It could have been much more, if we could have exported nurses sufficiently.'

Farash Uddin also urged the government to introduce honours course at the universities.

In their keynote speech, Tasneem Siddiqui of Dhaka University and Margaret Appiah of University of Ghana identified some challenges of the health sector and suggested increasing the number of nurses with BSc degree, teaching staff and nursing training institutions both in public and private sectors.

They laid emphasis on creating competitive edge for Bangladeshi nurses for local as well as international markets, increasing share of professional and skilled migrants from Bangladesh vis-à-vis semi skilled and less skilled, reducing fraudulence and exploitation in processing of overseas migration.