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B'deshi apparel workers get low wages in Mauritius, Jordan

Md Owasim Uddin Bhuyan | Published at 12:36am on February 18, 2018

Apparel workers from Bangladesh are paid relatively low wages in Mauritius and Jordan compared to their Sri Lankan and Indian compatriots.

Bangladeshis are also provided with poorer accommodation facilities though they are required to work more and are not paid for the overtime they put in.

On return home many of them told New Age that the Bangladesh embassy in Jordan and its high commission in Mauritius could never help the country's apparel workers in overcoming their unfavourable working conditions.

On return home in 2017, Mohammad Shawpan of Brahmanpara, Comilla said that he had worked for CCKM, a Jordanian apparel firm for 13 years since 2004 on wages lower than his colleagues from the other countries.

He said during 13 years he was never allowed home leave.

He said that the food and the accommodation provided to him and the other workers from Bangladesh were not of the same standards as their South Asian colleagues were given.

He said that Indian embassy officials pay visits to apparel factories to see their workers which was never done by Bangladesh mission officials.

Rozina Akhter of Faridpur said on return from Mauritius that she felt disappointed earning no better wages there compared to what she got from garment factory in Bangladesh.

She said that in the hope of earning better wages in Mauritius she paid Tk 35,000 to a broker to go there.

On return from Jordan, Happy Akter of Habiganj she said that in that country 12 Bangladeshi female workers had to share six beds in a single room.

Nilambar Bhuiya, who works for the protection of apparel workers' rights in India told a workshop in Dhaka recently that workers lodging protest against discriminatory treatments in Mauritius are sent back home.

The workshop on Workers' Perspectives on Working and Living Conditions at Garment Factories abroad was jointly organized by the International Labour Organization and Awaj Foundation.

Nilambar was an invitee as director of Kolkata based Paradigm Shift.

He said, in Mauritius he saw Indian garment workers enjoying better living and working conditions compared to their colleagues from Bangladesh.

Bangladesh high commission's labour attaché in Mauritius Ohidul Islam admitted, 'our apparel

workers are paid less wages.

He said nearly 22,000 Bangladeshis were working for the garment and construction sectors in Mauritius.

WARBE Development Foundation Chairman Syed Saiful Haque told New Age that the apparel factories in Mauritius were mostly owned by Indians.

Awaj Foundation's director (migration) Anisur Rahman Khan told New Age that the recruiting agencies should make migrant workers aware of their rights and specify their job conditions.

He said Bangladesh mission officials should regularly visit factories in Jordan and Mauritius to see the working conditions of 'our workers' including their wages and accommodations.



Editor: **Nurul Kabir**, Published by the Chairman, Editorial Board ASM Shahidullah Khan on behalf of Media New Age Ltd. 30 Tejgaon Industrial Area, Dhaka-1208 Phone: 880-2-8170450-56 (PABX), Fax: 880-2-8170457

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