



GEFONT 6th National Congress;
28-31 March 2014, Kathmandu, Nepal

A LONG FIGHT BEYOND BORDER

Efforts for safe migration to ensure
respect & rights of migrant workers



REPUBLIC OF KOREA

***Migrants to be ready for those jobs;
which are Menial, Dirty & Dangerous felt by the Locals!***

Mid 1990s, Republic of Korea was becoming a preferential destination for Nepali workers. Those days South Korean world of work was portrayed as the hell of industrial accidents. The pictures of those young Nepalis who lost their body-parts and even the life had deeply shocked us. Many educated young Nepalis, who landed in Korea, dreaming a beautiful dream for their future were terribly burying under the sea of tear.



Surendra Kumar Rai and Yojendra Lal Lama, who lost their body-parts in 1992



It was the year 1994, December 14- mid-night. We the leaders of GEFONT were worried how to explain our heart and minds with the Korean *Dong-Ji*? We had just concluded 4-days long *international trade union conference*, where a group of Korean Trade unionists were delegates. Those colleagues were from the present day KCTU movement. A leader from Hyundai Trade Union Federation was the team leader.

No wonder, as our expectation, the Korean comrades running under the job crisis due to looming financial crisis of the decade, began with some sorts of critical notes on guest workers in their fatherland. Naturally that night, their burst was targeted to Nepali.

Our team led by the then President and Secretary General entered into the issue. We began with how we visualise Indian guest workers in Nepal and how do we face reciprocating behaviour in India! We concluded by saying- it was not our choice, but the resultant effect of the wrong policies of rulers of our respective countries- against whom we are on struggle!

We tried to explain our feelings; that the emigrants were neither the job snatchers of the comrades in the country of *destinations*; nor were there because their motherland failed to feed her citizens! It was a mutual trade of necessity between the two parties. A trade between two governments, two economies, and the two partners with conflicting interest- the seller and buyer of labour! One needs more & more labour to complete such menial jobs, which her citizens discard & hate to perform; and the Other, having sufficiently surplus labour power,

where citizens- are ready to sale their labour for available work whatever!

Our presentation turned to touch the feelings of the Korean *Dong-ji!* We exhibited various tragic pictures from our album, collected from Korean world of work. Finally we came to a conclusion that being a progressive trade union movement we both has no other option rather than lending solidarity to each other to interpret our motto in reality- **Worker of the World, Unite!** A rough idea we draw that GEFONT would encourage all Nepalis working in Korea to join Korean trade union movement; in return Korean Union would pay effort to protect their rights! Nepalis will pay necessary dues following union rule; in exchange they will enjoy equal benefits provided by the union to its member!

This way GEFONT triggered a long fight beyond border; honestly there was no specific strategy,

*Migrant Workers'
Demonstration in Korea*





however, for the first time, GEFONT dared to decide officially to involve in the cause of migrant workers.

Steps:

1. During those days, Nepalis were fragmented in various interest groups, some based on their locality and some on their community and religion; to some extent, based on political belief as well. The resultant effect was, they were misused by the Nepali themselves who were running recruiting agencies and exploited easily by the local bosses! An urge of unity was also there. Thanks to the then leaders, a loose platform known as **NCC-Nepali Consulting Committee** (नेपाली सम्पर्क समिति) was established as a pioneer thread to weave Nepali migrants under the union umbrella in near future.
2. **Getting involved** through NCC was the corner stone; it inspired to involve various community organisations together with the migrants of various countries working at Korean land. A process of **learning by doing** led them to involve basically in two different fronts of organisation and education:
 - a. **Unionising thru agitation** (directly participating at labour action): This became possible, because Korean labour movement had inspiring tradition of militant labour action. Having an understanding with KCTU's predecessor unions, the excessive

exploitation at workplace convinced Nepali Migrant workers to join the picket line without hesitation. Thus, Nepali became the strongest element in 1995 & 1997 general strikes of the Korean trade union movement.

- b. Educating thru music, and cultural events:** Korean movement is used-to, to apply music in order to inspire their activists. Realising the tradition, migrant workers created a popular musical band known as *Stop Crackdown*. It as an example in this regard, which was created with singers & composers of **5 people**- including Nepali, Burmese, Cambodian migrant workers along with Korean themselves. Stop Crackdown remained influential till deportation of Nepali vocalist of this band.

*Migrant Workers'
Demonstration in Korea*



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- c. Using Communication tools:** To communicate their sorrow and joys, victory and deportation, Nepali began to publish their own news bulletin in Nepali language. Those days use of computer was not common for migrants: it was still expensive and Nepali fonts were not available in Korea till then. A creative initiation was applied; use of fine hand-writing instead of computer typing; photocopying instead of printing press to produce the news-bulletin. Later, GEFONT printed it in Nepal and sent it.
 - 3. Bi-partite collaboration particularly with KCTU movement encouraged us to form GEFONT Support Group. Soon after, the NCC itself converted into GSG Korea. GSG prioritise work, issue and task:

 - a. The GSG classified issues, to be performed at home and aboard. Hard-core jobs such as *organising*, *educating* and *agitating* were remained major tasks in destination; whereas at home we had been asked to work supporting acts including providing legal and moral support, lobby to prepare policy instruments, action against fake companies & manipulators. Some examples-

 - i. Some accident victims were deported without compensation. GEFONT fought a case with embassy in Kathmandu. Some 11 people got sizable compensation; it approved our strength and generated much hope among the migrant community.

- ii. Issue of money transfer was problematic those days, an illegal channel called **Hundi** was in practice, cheating poor migrants. At a time when word 'remittance' was unfamiliar in Nepal, GEFONT stood against this *practice* and advocated for safe money transfer through formal financial channel.

- b. We focused our action against 'bad' recruiting agencies. To make migration safe and honourable, we continued our intervention. Lobbying and pressure from field to Government, legislature-parliament and National Planning Commission as a regular task.

- c. Joining in Korean labour market was risky and expensive in those days. In order to discourage "bad" private recruiting agencies, GEFONT urged to handle

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between KCTU and GEFONT on Bilateral Co-operation





recruiting process by government itself. It was opposed heavily by the private sector, branding it as an anti-market economy move. Policy maker themselves were against it. However, both governments-in home and destination realised the extent of problem. Now, despite some reservation, Employment Permit System (**EPS**) is in place, which has been proved instrumental to check extreme ill-practices. As an example, those who were paying around NRs 600,000 in 1990s to go Korea are now paying these days around NRs 100,000.

4. New types of union movement emerged in Korea. Started in a name of Equality Trade Union Migrant Branch (**ETUMB-KCTU**), all migrant have clubbed under the Migrant's Trade Union (**MTU**) in Korea now. We feel proud that founder president of ETUMB was Nepali (*SamarThapa*). In MTU, out of 5 presidents, 4 were Nepalis. They continued their fight till they were deported to their homeland.
5. Perhaps Korea is the only Country, which is widely using mass media inspired by Migrant workers. A new Television channel-Migrant Workers TV (MWTV) was launched. It was as popular as other stations, members of GEFONT support group has big say on it. It is still effectively running.
6. Union intervention does not limit in national level, it further reaches to diplomatic level. Two-states reached into bilateral agreement and the union of both countries have signed

MoU. Now Chief of GSG is working as a full time organiser for all migrant workers, who is stationed in KCTU HQ.

7. There is still debate, what sorts of job that migrant would get? Based on years-long experience, we came in a realisation as following slogan-



*Founder President
of ETUMB,
Mr. Samar Thapa
(2nd from right),
during demonstra-
tion.*

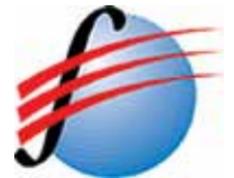


HONG KONG

Don't fix foot according to size of Shoes!

Experience gained in Korea pushed us to work in next destination Hong Kong. Hong Kong was the home for ex-Gurkha Army and thus, to some extent, the dreamland for Nepali people. There were, alike feelings, that Hong Kong has Dollar-producing trees; and those who enter Hong Kong would pick Sterling pounds and dollars from those trees! Breaking previous tradition, in 1990s Hong Kong became dream destination for Nepalis other than ex-Gurkhas.

As **NCC** in Korea, a Nepali Community organisation-**FEONA** (Far East Overseas Nepali Association) was launched in Hong Kong in 1993. The coverage of NCC was limited to Korea, whereas **FEONA** aimed to cover all Far-East Asian countries from Japan to Singapore. Such institution was felt necessary also as **NRN** (Non Resident Nepali's organisation) of present day was not in existence. By character, NCC was formulating every possible action & plans concentrating on migrant workers issues such as **3D-jobs** (*Dirty, Difficult and Dangerous*) along with industrial accident, manipulation and issues related to undocumented emigrants; whereas FEONA was picking up more general social issues such as harassment, abuse of woman and violation of rights. Later on, when GEFONT Support Group was created along with FEONA, issues such as under-payment



FEONA Hong Kong



& compensation was taken up. Long time FEONA network fought legal fight in Hong Kong's court for the rights of Nepalis; it even cared Pakistani and Indian nationals in initial days.

In Korea, undocumented migrants were protected even by religious institution against crackdown. In Hong Kong some favourable context was available as regional NGOs particularly AMC, CAW, and AMRC were ready to lend their solidarity to organise migrant workers. International trade union support organisations were also linked up through these NGOs.

Unlike Korea, Hong Kong was embracing multiple categories emigrant Nepalis. However, linking migrant workers with trade union centre of this destination was somehow in slow pace. In Korea, GEFONT's chemistry was much matched with KCTU due to left leaning background and originally non-affiliation with international trade union bodies. It didn't hamper even after KCTU's affiliation with the then **ICFTU**. When GEFONT became founding affiliate of **ITUC** together with KCTU in 2006; bond of solidarity further strengthened.

However, in Hog Kong the chemistry between union centres was not Chrystal-clear. The **HKCTU** and GEFONT both were sharing similar democratic credence, however being member of large family of ICFTU; HKCTU had fraternal relationship in Nepal with another centre other than GEFONT. However, with ITUC formation of GEFONT-HKCTU relations entered a new dimension.

As mentioned above broadly there were 4 categories of work in Hong Kong:

- 1. Security Service:** Basically persons associated with ex-Gurkhas didn't consider themselves as "worker" and were arguing for facilities being enjoyed by ex-British army. Though there were security worker other than ex-Gurkhas as well, but our efforts to organise security guard didn't produce remarkable result.
- 2. Elementary Occupation:** This area of work was also remained unimpressive as of security service.
- 3. Construction:** This category of work was one of the successful areas. Locally active GEFONT network was gaining solidarity support by the global union federation- the BWI. BWI even facilitated to bring GEFONT affiliate CUPPEC in Hong Kong to encourage construction worker

Migrant workers' demonstration in Hongkong





to unionise and CBA. Thanks to the formation of ITUC which encouraged GEFONT and HKCTU to work closely. HKCTU provided office space and training to legality to form a union. As a result, **NCWU**-Nepali Construction Workers Union, HK was formed in 2007; immediately it was recognised by HK authority. It eventually won affiliation nationally with HKCTU and globally with BWI later on.

- 4. Domestic Helper:** Exploited and ignored category was the domestic work. GEFONT get inspiration to organise generally migrant and particularly to domestic maid by the Filipino colleagues. There was convergence of wave-length (of GEFONT) with HKCTU; both put priorities to organise domestic workers. This theory of necessity encouraged us to organise domestic workers and formation of **UNDW**- Union of Nepali Domestic on 2010 was the visible outcome. Worthwhile to mention that HKCTU not only help Nepali to organise such union in HK, they further encouraged us launching of Domestic workers' union in Nepal through **IDWN/ADWN** network (present days **IDWF**).

Launching up of these two unions in Hong Kong is part of the story of success for both GEFONT and HKCTU.

Further what else we did then? Our activities in HK can be summed-up as following:

1. Preparation of **basic information** book- it was originally prepared by various groups in HK in English language, adopted it in Nepali. This publication became a basic guide to organise migrants Nepali.
2. **Unionisation**- Formation of Trade Unions was key work. By HK experience, a lesson is learnt- until union of destination country is not favourable; organising migrant workers couldn't get progress.
3. **Solidarity**- Multilateral solidarity is a key-step in HK case. The organisers seek solidarity from local unions, community organisations to GUFs, TUSO and other international trade union bodies.

**“Formation of legally recognised trade unions of
Nepali Migrant Worker
is visible outcome of our work in Hong Kong!”**



MALAYSIA

***You can't fix our rules- follow it;
we only are the Game changer- realise this!***

GEFONT's next move was towards Malaysia. Malaysia was already full of Nepali migrants with much diverse area of work. However, Malaysia, as a State itself, was less liberal compared to Korea and illiberal compared to Hong Kong for migrant workers. Thus, the experience gained in Korea & Hong Kong could be a reference only. There was less opportunity to explore possibility for organising. Formation of any sorts of union of migrant workers as of Korea or the HK was just impossible!

There were no charity organisations as in Korea. Among the few NGOs working with migrant workers, there was unnecessary rivalry. As a part of the standing order of GEFONT movement, we tried to form GSG in Malaysia. Having strict in rule it was difficult to form any types of union structure there. However, some sorts of association

*GEFONT Support Group
(GSG) in Malaysia*





were acceptable to the authority! In Malaysia, a saying was repeatedly mentioned by the unionist as well-**You can't fix our rules- follow it; we only are the game changer-realise this!** Thus, honouring the law of land, in 23 July 2005, we formed **Nepali Migrant Workers' Association** (नेपाली प्रवासी श्रमिक संघ, मलेसिया) as the Malaysian incarceration of *GEFONT Support Group*. Similar to HK, the chemistry between GEFONT and **MTUC** was also as of with HKCTU. Thus, till the end of 2006 in the absence of strong working relationship with only union centre, **MTUC**- Malaysian Trade Union Congress; our efforts couldn't generate convincing result.

GSG Malaysia explored mass-media as a tool to expose exploitation against migrant workers. Regularly news from FM radio and TV in Nepal helped to attract public concern on the issue. Having big numbers working in Malaysia- not in few thousands; but in hundreds of thousand, Nepal as the state itself became comparatively more sensitive. GEFONT's reach in national legislature-parliament and its long experiences to organise migrants in various destinations prepared ground to intervene in diplomatic mission as well.

The year 2007 became landmark. Being a member of same GUF, GEFONT's affiliate **CUPPEC** reached in an understanding with **TEUPM**, the MTUC affiliated union. On the occasion of CUPPEC national congress, on 23rdMarch, 2007 both union signed on a MOU. According to this, a Nepali migrant worker selected in mutual acceptance, will station in Malaysia as a full

time organiser. S/he will help TEUPM to organise migrant Nepalis in timber and wood work sectors.

This decision opened the multiple avenues of organisation. This MOU was an indication of policy-shift of MTUC family towards migrant workers. At least MTUC was accepting involvement of migrant workers in their movement.

GEFONT also allocated a full time organiser (*Bed Kumar Khatiwoda*) in GSG Malaysia. One of the important aspects of GSG Malaysia- it was membership-based network. Thus, in initial stage GEFONT itself generated limited fund to support its full time organiser. Later on, Lo-Norway and GUFs (BWI, UNI) supported partially. The process of solidarity continued in later years. In a short time frame, work of GSG got popularity.

By the end of year 2011, GEFONT reached into another landmark agreement with multiple actors. Parties of the agreement with GEFONT were MTUC and GUFs (BWI, UNI-MLC, and PSI).By this agreement, a SMS Helpline (+60 12



Nepali workers, who lost their body-parts and life



223 4357) was set-up for migrant workers. A system was planned, which encouraged migrant workers to send SMS, which reached immediately to helpline centre and the full time organisers rescued them accordingly. The effectiveness of this system is yet to be evaluated; however, it is one of the unique initiatives.

Another peculiarity of GSG Malaysia was, it has used full capacity to intervene Nepali Embassy for the protection of Nepali migrants. Ensuring travel document to overstayed persons and rescue of undocumented workers became daily work for GSG. GSG drags Nepali mission together with concerned authority of country of destination in the process. This tripartite cooperation made possible to cover Nepali migrant by recently fixed minimum wage as well. As of KCTU and HKCTU, by 2007 onward, MTUC office became most visited place for Nepali migrants. One record mentioned by education officer of MTUC in 2011 said- out of bulk of total visitors in MTUC HQ with various cases, 95% were Nepalis. It indicates the effectiveness of GSG Malaysia work. We acknowledge GUFs for their involvement in maximum possible extent for the cause of migrant workers.

To sum-up, following bullets remind us what GEFONT did in Malaysian land:

- **Organise** Nepali MWs
- **Empowerment:** through leadership training on various issues including relevant legislations
- **Support:** Legal support and rescue support to the victims
- **Coordination:** Maintaining cooperation & coordination between GEFONT-MTUC and its affiliates-GUFs- CSOs, and HR groups
- **Reach:** Maintaining necessary communication & contact with Nepali Embassy in KL
- **Solidarity:** Connecting various Nepali community and maintaining wider communication with entire migrant workers working in Malaysia
- **Information dissemination:** Sending news to publish in digital as well as print mass media including GEFONT and MTUC websites
- **Celebration:** Regularly marking May Day and IMD (18th December)



Migrant wokrers' demonstration in Malaysia



Signing of MOU on the Hybrid Trade Union Cooperation on migration



LEBANON

Beirut proves to be a better destination if we work in collaboration

A Small country in Arabic part of the globe, **Lebanon** has unique identity in Nepal. The name of this country has remained popular here due to Nepali peace keeping force deployed there some decades ago. However, Nepali Commoner had never expected that some day they would land in Lebanon as workers. More unexpected that woman would get employment there, and GEFONT to work for their cause!

But it happened interestingly. Thanks to **ASI**-Anti Slavery International, on 2011, it invited GEFONT to participate in the formulation of a project focused on Nepali domestic women workers in Lebanon. An active right-based organisation in Beirut known as KAFA was chosen as local partner.



Lila Acharya found dead in Lebanon



Previously GEFONT was not connected with any trade union centre of Lebanon. However, the number (nearly 8,000) of Nepali domestic woman workers mentioned by KAFA (a right-based organisation in Lebanon) pressed us to think over the new potential initiative. The issue of a number of suicide cases were in our notice including mysterious one of **Leela BK** in 2010. On request of her innocent family, GEFONT made arrangement to bring back her dead body; receiving the coffin of the young lady in Tribhuvan International Airport, was a painful moment, which motivated us to go into partnership in Lebanon.

Considering the GEFONT effective role to organise migrant in the destinations, **ASI** recognised special role of GEFONT. It invited GEFONT leadership in order to explore further plan of action to organise Nepali Domestic women workers in Lebanon. Thus, GEFONT delegation consisting of Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General decided in consultation with HQs to design a plan under ASI-KAFA-GEFONT cooperation and to implement it. This way, GEFONT get involved in Lebanon. Unlike others in Arab world, Lebanon did not disappoint us, moreover encouraged to keep continue our endeavour.

As a part of our cooperation within a couple of years, we could develop NAARI as an organization of Nepali domestic women workers in Lebanon, which will work as GEFONT Support Group to take care of the issues of domestic workers. **NAARI** will also work in cooperation with organization of Non Residential Nepalis in Lebanon.

Based on variety of experiences, GEFONT put efforts to explore link to trade union organization also. Thanks to the ILO Office for the Arab States, it helped to connect us with **FENASOL**- a trade union centre of progressive union movement.

To sum-up, following bullets are worthwhile to mention about GEFONT work in Lebanon:

- 1. Research:** Research to explore the complexities associated with recruitments, working conditions, hardships and possible way outs have been conducted in the course of involvement. A research institute **NIDS** was commissioned for this purpose.
- 2. Information Sharing:** For awareness to the potential Nepali domestic migrant workers, pre-departure sharing of information was launched and continued. GEFONT mobilised specially two affiliates for the purpose. One was **NEVA**- Nepal Health Volunteers Association, it has

Domestic worker place of Lebanon





uninterrupted access to every Nepali door as their job is to visit every house. And **ITWAN**- Independent Transport Workers Association, because they are the ones who transport the domestic migrant workers from their doors to the borders of the country for far destination!

3. **Relevant materials production:** Multiple types of materials were produced and utilised in order to organise & aware them such as –
 - **Reading materials-** GEFONT produced a *Contact card* with useful information; ASI published a publication in English & Arabic languages as an urgent call for the protection of Nepali migrant domestic workers in Lebanon
 - **Multimedia-** GEFONT prepared a *CD of songs* with touching feelings of Nepali migrant domestic workers. KAFA developed an *audio visual* material about Lebanon. GEFONT used *FM Radio* (in Nepal) in four different local languages; and also staged street drama in various districts
4. **Learning by visit-** creates a situation of multi-actor involvement through bilateral visits. This process involves high officials of Government of Nepal including concerned ILO officers.



Migrant workers' demonstration in Lebanon



**WHICH ARE NEXT
DESTINATIONS THEN...**

In Arab world, we have variety of experiences in organising migrant workers. Glorifying and gloomy part of efforts made by us are witness to this. MOU made with **KTUF** and **GFBTU** have surely given us morale to represent our citizen in the land of difficult regimes. However, ineffective implementation pushed us to share gloomy part of our success in this region.

From Saudi Arabia to Oman & Jordan including all GCC countries, sizable number of our citizens is toiling to build their economy. However, we are helplessly glancing towards them offering inadequate solution.

We the GEFONT, as the member of international working class community would like to share our feelings how we are realising one of the GCC state, the much talked state- Qatar!

Thank you!

Concept Note for sideline meeting

Brief overview¹

"We, the Nepali- the Global Citizen ..." these days the Nepali generally exchange such statement. The reason behind this is-, one encounters with Nepali nationals in every corner of the world! Considering Nepal's link to business with China (500 BCE), intellectuals calculate historical length of Nepali migration. However, many of the history tellers used to refer 1815; the year Nepal made a pact with British-India, which facilitated Nepali recruitment in Ghurkha Army nearly 200 years back. The continuation of this process has reached now opening up the countries from Afghanistan to Zambia as the destination of labour outflow by the Government of Nepal.

¹ *The reference in this Concept-note is highly influenced by a book entitled- **Governing Labour Migration in Nepal** (An Analysis of Existing policies and institution Mechanisms), written by **Bandita Sijapati & Amrita Limbu**, published by Himal Books and Centre for the Study of Labour and Mobility*

The uniqueness of Nepal can be viewed as a country of origin along with destination to some of the neighbouring countries at the same time. Nepal sells her labour to as many as 108 countries and simultaneously door is opened for importing labour from neighbouring countries specially India.

Around 56% of Nepali household is linked up with out-country migration, which shares remittance not less than 23% of GDP.

From agro-based subsistence to present day post-peasantry, national economy of Nepal is in long transitional character, where big herd of workforce has came out from agriculture in search of new job. However in the absence of regular employment in industry & services, the large number of workforce is at a crossroad generally trapped to precarious job.

In fact, Nepali labour market is largely mismatched in addition to its unfair character; there is scarcity of skilled human resources and critical skill to run the business as usual, whereas on-an-average 30% (considering all figures indicating labour underutilisation) of the total workforce is unemployed.

ESTIMATE	
Nepali Migrants	
in Major Destination	
● GCC Countries-	
○ Qatar	393,881
○ UAE	271,908
○ Bahrain	37,294
○ Saudi Arabia	389,891
○ Kuwait	65,000
○ Oman	21,056
● Malaysia	432,152
● Republic of Korea	20,147
● Lebanon	13,000
● Japan	6624
● Hong Kong	4563



Tracking the data of latest 10 month of the year 2013, the out flowing number of Nepalis towards various countries for employment is 357, 707 - A lowest 25,167 in Oct and highest 41,640 in March-April; which is up by 14% compare to the same period of last year! A rough figure says- every year Nepal welcomes some 400,000 job seekers; and this figure is almost equal to the total number of out-country migration.

Apart from India, official figure says there are around 3 million Nepali Emigrants in various countries with major destinations- Malaysia and GCC countries (big number Qatar, Saudi Arabia). There are 4 categories of destination as – India (for extremely poor); Malaysia & Gulf countries (having petty collateral), South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, Israel (educated +2 and above) and Japan/Australia/Europe/North America (middle class and sufficiently educated).

Nepal has even forced to welcome refugees from Tibet, Bhutan and some of the African countries.

Nepal's labour migration is terribly blurred with human trafficking. Misusing open border with India, the traffickers are using Indian land for this crime of human trade. Moreover, they are creating much trouble by providing fake Nepali passports to Indians, Bangladeshi, Pakistani, and Bhutanese Nationals!

Role of trade unions vis-à-vis GEFONT

GEFONT as one of the leading trade union centres in the country has initially started to address this issue beyond India 1994 onwards. It started by cooperating migrant workers in South Korea, who in those days were the victims of industrial accident and cheated by the *Hundi* practice (illegal money carriers). Our first attempt was to establish formal link with the trade unions in countries of destination, making them convince that we were not the job snatchers! An agreement was made that the Nepali Migrant Workers would be the member of the union concerned and act as union member; whereas they seek similar support and solidarity of the in-land member. By establishing GEFONT support group we geared up the process!

In the country, we began our work by asking safe money transfer process through the formal financial channel. At a time when remittance word was unfamiliar in Nepal, GEFONT advocated it – challenged those policy makers who would argue against it. Asking for foreign employment policy and devise possible way to

BILATERAL INSTRUMENTS

Regulating Nepal's Labour Migration

1. **India**
31 July 1950- treaty
2. **Qatar**
21 April 2005- Labour Agreement
3. **UAE**
3 July, 2007- MOU
4. **South Korea**
23 July, 2007- MOU
5. **Bahrain**
29 April, 2008- MOU
6. **Japan**
2009- Letter of exchange



check manipulators, we started & continued lobbying and pressure from field to parliament and to National Planning Commission.

Now we can proudly mention GEFONT's efforts are demonstrating colour. There are bilateral agreements and understandings taking place between unions of the country of origin & of the destination. There are several Treaties, Labour Agreements, MOUs and Letter of Exchange between Government of Nepal and various governments of destination countries aiming to regulate Nepal's labour migration.

Demonstrating effect is seen through the Multi Actor Coordination with cooperation on the issues such as minimising deception, timely and effective rescues, reduction of incidents of forced labour & trap to bondage and minimisation of mental disorders, unexpected deaths due to working and living conditions and suicides.

What for the sideline forum

The flow of migrant workers to several destinations worldwide has become a common phenomenon. The economy of both the sending and destination countries are in actual indebted to the hard works of migrant workers. The contribution of migrant workers for growth with stability of the developed part of the receiving globe and simultaneously the remittance to the sending part of the globe is still not recognized by the relevant actors. However trade union movement and labour friendly organizations have been in high endeavour to ensure rights and due benefits to the migrant workers. In this regard, as one

of the key actors in the country, GEFONT has to tell many stories; the story of our sorrows, odds and challenges, and to some extents, the proud story of our success! During the time in the presence of our international delegates in our 6th Congress to extend their warm solidarity to our movement, GEFONT wants to seize the opportunity by organising this important forum.

Programme Proposed

GEFONT has sent invitation over 5 dozen trade union organisations along with global labour bodies- the ITUC, GUFs, ILO and SSOs. Specifically, we are expecting presence of unions from Arab world where Nepali are toiling to build their economy. From Korea to Hong Kong and Malaysia, GEFONT has very diverse experience of organising migrant workers in foreign soil. GEFONT has been in continued cooperation with and solidarity of the trade union and civil society movement. GEFONT has already travelled a bumpy journey of 2 decades; a long fight beyond the border. We are now focusing our efforts towards Arab world where sizable number of Nepalis are shedding their sweat and blood merely to ensure hand-to-mouth of 2 times meal, which is creating

Knock on Effect

- 29 embassy staffers to handle counseling needs of 90 percent of around 2.5 million migrant Nepali workers in the Middle East and Malaysia
- Nepali embassy in Riyadh claims to have repatriated around 90 percent of the estimated 60,000 Nepali staying in the kingdom illegally
- Nepali embassy in Malaysia with just 8 staffers has yet to ascertain the number of Nepali workers affected during the recent govt. crackdown on illegal migrant
- Nepali mission in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, UAE, and Malaysia receive around 400 applications for new passports daily



significant resultant effect- positive to the economy of the destination in spite of agony for their personal life.

Thus in the sideline forum it is proposed that GEFONT will present its experience in various ways, where it is expecting intervention-suggestion- and collaboration by the international trade union movement. Our high desire is our journey partners, the Korean-Hong Kong and Malaysian Union leaders will add value on our experience; unions from Arab world will carefully listen with kind concern and other colleagues will watch our words & our deed.

It is expected that the sideline event, in the presence of media and selected dignitaries, would be helpful as the reference in order to chart future course on safe migration to international trade union movement in general and Nepali union movement in particular.

अप्रवासी कामदारहरूका
अधिकारसम्बन्धी
दस्तावेजहरूको सँगालो

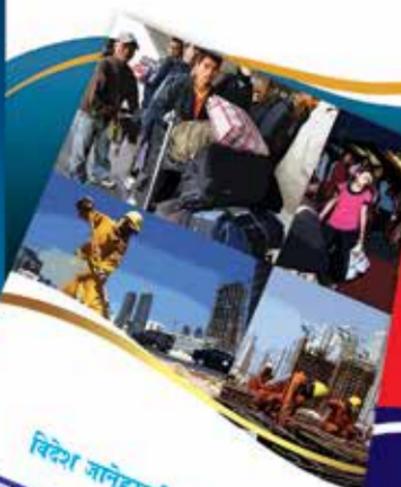
सुरक्षित
वैदेशिक रोजगारीका
लागि
जागरण अभियान



Networking with
Social Partners



रोजीरोटीको
लागि
उपरोजी शक्ति संगठन



कलेरियाजमा
वैदेशिक रोजगारमा जाने
श्रमिकहरूका लागि

विदेश जान्नेहरूको लागि आवश्यक
जानकारी पुस्तिका

विश्वकै प्रवासी श्रमिक अधिकार
पासपोर्ट

वैदेशिक रोजगारीमा नदिँ हुनुहुन्छ ? सुरक्षित होस् !
वेचबिखनमा पर्नबाट बचौ र बचाऔँ !

- श्रम अनुभव भएकै कारण वैदेशिक रोजगार सम्बन्धी
बारेमा यहाँ वैदेशिक रोजगारीका लागि
- वैदेशिक रोजगारीमा नदिँ हुनुहुन्छ र जसको
सम्बन्धी विषयमा यहाँ
- वैदेशिक रोजगारीमा नदिँ हुनुहुन्छ र जसको
सम्बन्धी विषयमा यहाँ
- वैदेशिक रोजगारीमा नदिँ हुनुहुन्छ र जसको
सम्बन्धी विषयमा यहाँ
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सम्बन्धी विषयमा यहाँ
- वैदेशिक रोजगारीमा नदिँ हुनुहुन्छ र जसको
सम्बन्धी विषयमा यहाँ





*Migrants to be
ready for those jobs;
which are Menial, Dirty &
Dangerous felt by the Locals!*



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