

## BAIRA urges syndicate-free manpower export

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Dhaka: Manpower recruiting agencies in Bangladesh and Malaysia have jointly stood against the 25-agency syndicate for recruiting workers bound for Malaysia.

A group of Bangladeshi recruiters, virtually joined by recruiters from Malaysia, has demanded equal opportunity for all agencies in a press conference held at Hotel Intercontinental on February 10.

"Bangladesh as a sovereign country should also be allowed the same as other countries like Nepal, India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Pakistan can send their workers to Malaysia without any such syndicate," said Abul Bashar, former President of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies.

"All recruiting agencies are of equal qualifications and they have acquired license by providing the same amount of caution money so they cannot be considered sub-agents of the 25 chosen ones," added Abul Bashar.

Although some ten agents and 210 subagents were approved in 2016, in reality, only the 10 agencies could send workers to Malaysia.

Moreover, these agencies have been charging 2-3 times more the amount of actual airfare

from the expat workers who travel from Bangladesh, the recruiters complained at the press conference. They warned of tougher actions against the decision unless reversed.

A debate over syndication in labour recruitment in Malaysia is taking place, especially after Dhaka and Kuala Lumpur signed a memorandum of understanding in this regard on December 19.

At the heart of the debate is the syndicate of 25 Bangladeshi agents and 250 subagents mentioned by Malaysian Human Resources Minister M Saravanan in a letter to Bangladesh Expatriates' Welfare Minister Imran Ahmad on January 14.

Responding to the letter, Expatriates' Welfare and Overseas Employment Minister Imran Ahmed on January 18 sent a letter to the Malaysian government reiterating the ministry's position against any sort of syndication in manpower export to Malaysia, which was lauded by the Bangladeshi recruiters.

Recently, the Bangladesh and Malaysia chapters of Transparency International, a Berlin-based global corruption watchdog, have jointly called to release the details of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed on December 19, 2021.

They urged the governments of the two countries to take preventive measures against all possible corruption, including syndicate control in the recruitment process.

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