



NEWSLETTER

December 2023

“ MWPS UPDATES

Migrant Workers Protection Society, Bahrain MWPS Bahrain mwpsbh mwpsbah2gmail.com 00973 17827895



NEWS

A new 12-member Executive Board was elected on 29th October 2023. The Board is headed by MWPS founder Mona Almoayyed and will serve for two years. The members represent a diverse range of expertise and commitment to the organization's mission of safeguarding the rights and welfare of migrant workers. The elected individuals are as follows:

Office-Bearers

Ms Mona Almoayyed (Chairperson)
Ms Evone Bhaskaran (Vice Chairperson)
Mr Madhavan Kallath (General Secretary)
Ms Kavithasree Suvama (Treasurer)
Mr Mohamed Gayaz Ullah (Assistant General Secretary)
Mr Daniel M Ambrosio (Assistant Treasurer)

Members:

Mr Karthikeyan Arumugam - Head, Labour Safety and Welfare Committee
Mr Ayuk Arrey Ndumne – Head, Action Committee
Ms Carolyn Lunt-Bell
Mr Santanu Chaudhury
Mr Joseph Daniel Mulleague
Ms Beulah Timothy

Labour & Welfare Committee News

Thanks to the generosity of our community, the Labour & Welfare Committee was able to organise donations of food, toiletries and blankets throughout the year to expatriate labourers. Thank you so much to all who contributed.



Photos of a few 2023 distributions





ACTION COMMITTEE UPDATES

The Action Committee members responds to cases of migrant workers in distress. They assist migrant workers sort out issues being faced, which can include numerous visits to police stations, hospitals, ministries, the LMRA offices and embassies to find solutions.

The committee has also been involved in holding a number of workshops focusing on issues such as MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS, self-care and labour rights.



The following are a few examples of cases we receive:

Case Study 1: Assistance to repatriate elderly Sri Lankan lady stranded in Bahrain

Ms Kumarathy, a 76-year-old Sri Lankan lady who had been working for many years in Bahrain found herself in a challenging position when her visa expired and she was reluctant to seek help to return home. After a serious fall and operation in hospital where her health deteriorated, she expressed a desire to return home to be with her family. With the combined help of the MWPS, Sri Lankan Embassy and cooperation from Salmaniya Hospital, Gulf Air and many community members, Ms Kumarathy was safely repatriated in October and was able to spend quality time catching up with her relatives before she sadly passed away recently, surrounded by family.

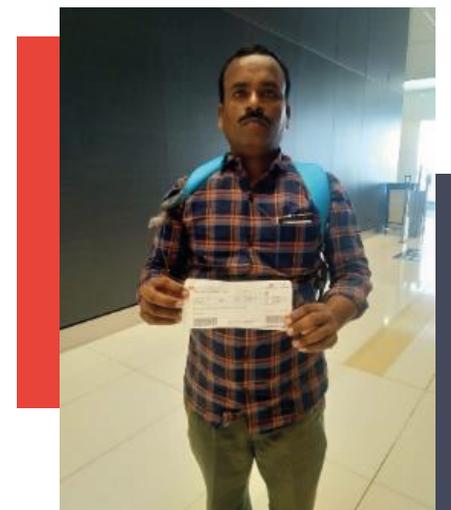


Case Study 2: Nigerian migrant worker with offer of work unable to retrieve passport from agent

Despite paying for her agent to extend her visa at a cost of BD500 which was not completed, the agent refused to give Chinelo a refund and held on to her passport. Although she had an official job offer, she could not take up employment until her passport was released to enable the visa to be issued. After a few calls, a MWPS committee member visited the agent and not only managed to retrieve the passport but the BD500 as well! A very happy Chinelo now has her passport, funds and a secure job – great outcome.

Case Study 3: Destitute Indian migrant worker assisted to repatriate home.

Sivakumar came from India to Bahrain on a work visa in June 2019, to work as a helper in a construction company. In 2022, the company withheld his salary for 5 months and then his visa expired in November 2022. Since then, he has been staying illegally in Bahrain and has had no help to survive. He started working as a daily wage worker, but in June 2023 he fell down from the 2nd floor whilst working. He was unable to continue work due to a fracture in his right arm and severe pain in his hip. As his health weakened, he found himself in dire straits, unable to work or to rejoin his family. MWPS stepped forward and assisted him to obtain an exit permit and helped pay for the immigration penalty. Once cleared, Sivakumar was able to leave Bahrain and was finally reunited with his family.





WORKSHOPS & FORUMS

MWPS members have been busy attending workshops this year to expand networks and build on capacity to assist migrant workers.

January 2023: The New Visa Reform Processes. This workshop updated MWPS members on the new requirements and was held by the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) in Bahrain.

February 2023: Human Rights Training in cooperation with the Sheffield Halam university: held at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) in Bahrain. This programme aimed to provide civil society organizations (CSOs) in Bahrain with the knowledge and skills required to effectively protect and promote human rights in the country.

March 7th to 9th, 2023: The Cross-Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants (CCRM) held a workshop in Dubai that looked at the impact of climate change on human mobility and focused on:

- Strengthening capacity of those working on migration in the Gulf States to engage with non-state actors.
- Working with CSOs to engage and participate in the Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD).
- A joint position statement on the diverse challenges faced by migrants.



July 3rd to 5th, 2023: Empowering the Migrant Rights Agenda:

This workshop was held in Bangkok, Thailand and aimed to:

- Strengthen the network in the field through formative linkages.
- Share best practices and strategies with fellow migrant workers.
- Develop collaborative ties and identify areas of concern.



Oct 7th, 2023: The 6th Domestic Worker Rights Conference was organised by the General Federation of Bahrain Trade Unions (GFBTU) in association with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung under the patronage of the Labour Minister and Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) board chairman Jameel Humaidan. There were 14 recommendations including minimum wages for domestic workers. The press report with the recommendation can be found on our website.

WEBSITE

Please visit us to follow our news and activities:

<https://www.mwpsbahrain.com>



MEMBERSHIP

We welcome new members! Check out the membership section on the website where you will find the link to our very comprehensive membership form that lets you know what sort of activities you might like to get involved with.

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