



جمعية حماية العمال الوافدين
Migrant Workers Protection Society
(MWPS)

MIGRANT VOICE

EMPOWERING COMMUNITY

NEWSLETTER | VOLUME 01 | EDITION 07 | JULY 2024

MISSION STATEMENT

**TO CREATE A COMMUNITY
WHERE EXPATRIATE
RIGHTS ARE PROTECTED
AND TO RAISE AWARENESS
OF THESE RIGHTS AND
RESPONSIBILITIES**

CONTENTS

- SPOTLIGHT - MEET THE TEAM
- OUTREACH - CASES IN JULY
- INSIGHT - COMBATTING TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS
- IN FOCUS - DRY RATION DISTRIBUTION

#EXTENDTHESHADE



MWPS launched its campaign #EXTENDTHESHADE, in an online press conference. This initiative aims to extend Bahrain's summer midday work ban to three months, instead of the existing two-month pattern. MWPS chairperson Mona Almoayed led the meeting. Also present were General Secretary Madhavan Kallath and campaign coordinator Raji Unnikrishnan.

FROM THE CHAIRPERSON...

As we move through July, I want to take a moment to reflect on the importance of creating a supportive and harmonious work environment for everyone. This message aims to provide some valuable insights and practical advice for both employers and foreign employees in Bahrain.

To our foreign employees, it is essential to know your rights. Understanding your entitlements under Bahrain's labour laws is crucial for your protection and well-being. Communicate effectively and timely with your employers and colleagues to build trust and resolve any issues promptly. Remember, you are not alone; reach out to networks like MWPS for support and guidance. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is essential for your well-being, so take time to rest and rejuvenate. Stay connected with your family and loved ones.

To the employers, I would wish to say that your role in creating a safe, healthy, and positive work environment cannot be overstated. Respecting employee rights and ensuring fair treatment is not just a legal obligation but a moral one. By doing so, you contribute to Bahrain's reputation as an employee-friendly labour market, recognised internationally for its merits. Let's work together to uphold these standards and create workplaces where everyone can thrive.

Yes, I repeat, together, we can make a difference.

With warm regards,

MONA ALMOAYYED

CHAIRPERSON

MIGRANT WORKERS PROTECTION SOCIETY

IMPORTANT

A dedicated hotline (32265727) is now available for citizens and residents to report any violations during the midday work ban period.



**Leave
no child
behind**

in the fight against
human trafficking



WORLD DAY AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

Observed annually on July 30, World Day Against Trafficking in Persons raises awareness about the plight of human trafficking victims and promotes their rights. This year's theme, "Leave No Child Behind in the Fight Against Human Trafficking", emphasises the urgent need to protect children, who make up a significant portion of trafficking victims. Bahrain marked the day with the Labour Market Regulatory Authority hosting the first forum on combatting Trafficking in Persons.

More details on page 04

SPOTLIGHT

EDITORIAL

MEET THE TEAM

Get to know the exceptional individuals behind the MWPS scenes in this segment.



#teammwps

A JOYFUL HEART

AYUK NDUME

Ayuk, a proud Cameroonian, believes that being a blessing to others is a great privilege and has dedicated his life to this cause. After leaving his homeland, he spent over a decade in the GCC, starting in Qatar and then moving to Bahrain. In Bahrain, he joined the Migrant Workers Protection Society (MWPS) to be a voice for the voiceless. Currently, he serves as a board member and heads the MWPS Action Committee. As an educator and pastor, Ayuk has been serving the community since 2009, bringing smiles to everyone he meets. He initiated "Operation Smile," a vision to bring profound joy to at least 10 distressed individuals each month by providing solutions to their challenges. Ayuk is a happy husband to a supportive wife and a proud father to two incredible daughters. His dedication and compassion continue to inspire and uplift those around him.

GRATITUDE

Thank you, BMMI and St Christopher's School for your generous donations. Your continued support has helped us to continue our mission in making a meaningful impact in our community.

Human trafficking is a grave violation of human rights that affects millions of people worldwide.

On July 30, the world unites to observe World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, a day dedicated to raising awareness about the plight of trafficking victims and promoting their rights. This year's theme, "Leave No Child Behind in the Fight Against Human Trafficking," underscores the urgent need to protect the most vulnerable among us.

Bahrain's commitment to combatting human trafficking is commendable, as evidenced by its Tier 2 ranking in the US Trafficking in Persons Report for the seventh consecutive year. This achievement reflects the diligent efforts of the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) and other government bodies in implementing robust anti-trafficking measures. Initiatives such as the Wage Protection System, the Optional Insurance System for Domestic Workers, and the National Referral Mechanism for Victims of Trafficking are pivotal in safeguarding the rights of migrant workers.

However, while we celebrate these milestones, it is crucial to remember that the fight against human trafficking is a collective responsibility. Each of us has a role to play in ensuring that these efforts translate into tangible benefits for every migrant worker. We must remain vigilant, advocate for stronger protections, and support initiatives that uphold the dignity and rights of all individuals.

As we mark this significant day, let us renew our commitment to ending human trafficking and ensuring a safer, just world for everyone. More details on Bahrain's initiatives and the LMRA's efforts can be found inside the pages of this newsletter.

Happy reading!

RAJI UNNIKRISHNAN

EDITOR - MIGRANT VOICE

HEALTH AWARENESS



Bahrain Public Transport Company partnered with MWPS to conduct five health awareness sessions for their employees, focusing on the drivers of red public buses.





OUTREACH

In this segment of Outreach, we highlight five cases, which are among the many handled by MWPS in July, where we provided critical assistance to individuals facing challenging circumstances.

Case 01

A Filipino national faced a tough situation after a bus accident left her with a severe elbow injury. She was struck by a pole inside the bus, resulting in a fractured elbow. Due to concerns about her visa status, she didn't report the incident to the authorities, which has prevented her from making any insurance claims. Doctors have advised her to rest for six months, during which she cannot work. This has caused significant financial strain as she now faces joblessness and the inability to support herself. The MWPS stepped in and provided her with medical assistance and dry ration. Although MWPS offered to assist her with returning to her country, she declined.

Case 02

A Sri Lankan national arrived in Bahrain in 2018 and unfortunately exceeded her permitted stay. This led to those responsible for her visa filing a case against her. As a result, she was fined BD600 for overstaying for 20 months and was blacklisted by the authorities. Facing significant legal challenges and a travel ban, she found herself in a difficult situation. However, with the support of MWPS, she was able to overcome these challenges. MWPS successfully helped lift the travel ban imposed by the court, allowing her to resolve her legal status. She was able to reunite with her husband and move forward with her life.

Case 03

A Bangladeshi national was arrested after his visa expired last month. His employer, facing financial constraints, had an expired Commercial Registration (CR) and submitted the required documents and an online form requesting a grace period. Despite these efforts, no response or update was received. The MWPS Action Committee stepped in to assist, which enabled the man to obtain a ticket to fly back to his home country.

Case 04

An Indian national on a visit visa who worked in the housekeeping department at a local hotel from 2018 to 2023 faced severe hardships after losing his job. He continued to stay in his accommodation and the building owner allowed him to stay for seven months without payment of rent. Unfortunately, he was also deceived by an agent promising immigration to Canada. When the building owner demanded the unpaid rent, the individual could not pay, leading to his passport being taken as collateral. Jobless and homeless, he lived in parks and beaches, overstaying his visa by three months. During this period, he attempted suicide due to his dire circumstances. Seeking help, he approached MWPS, who intervened and negotiated a settlement. His BD700 rent debt was reduced to BD100, which he agreed to pay. MWPS will follow up with immigration to arrange for his repatriation to his native country, with the ticket generously donated by a local church.

Case 05

A mother of three is in dire need of assistance to return to her home country, Kenya, with her children. She has been facing severe financial difficulties since her husband's deportation in October 2023. Unable to meet her basic needs, including rent, she accumulated a huge debt. The landlord has now issued a two-week eviction notice. The situation is further complicated as none of her children had valid visas since October last year. While two children have valid passports, an emergency travel document has been arranged for the third child. Arrangements to facilitate their return home are currently in process, with MWPS providing flight tickets for all.

PROGRESS IN WORKER PROTECTION

Bahrain has achieved a 60pc reduction in occupational injuries since implementing the midday work ban, according to the Labour Ministry. The 2013 ministerial decision, which prohibits work under direct sunlight during July and August, has also decreased severe workplace accidents

BULLETIN

by over 40pc in the past five years. The ban, effective from 12 noon to 4 pm, has improved working conditions and boosted productivity. This initiative highlights Bahrain's commitment to worker safety and health.



INSIGHT

LMRA Chief Executive Nibras Mohammed Ali Talib delivered a keynote address, emphasising Bahrain's commitment to respecting human rights and dignity. He highlighted the kingdom's numerous sustainable projects and initiatives aimed at combatting trafficking in persons. These efforts have solidified Bahrain's regional and international standing, resulting in the country maintaining "Tier 1" status for the seventh consecutive year in the United States Department of State's 2024 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report.



PICTURES BY: SVETLANA PRODANOVA

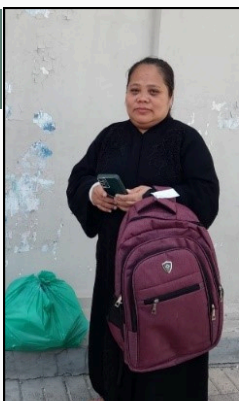
COMBATting TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS: A COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

The Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA), in association with the International Organisation of Migration (IOM), organised the first forum on combatting Trafficking in Persons in Bahrain. This event coincided with the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons, a day dedicated to raising awareness about the plight of human trafficking victims and promoting their rights.

Additionally, the "Working Together" initiative, a collaborative effort between LMRA and IOM, was launched. It aims to enhance awareness of the rights and responsibilities of both employers and employees, promoting justice, equity, and stability in the workplace. Details of these initiatives were presented by LMRA Partnership and Outreach Director Fahad Albinali and IOM Interim Chief of Mission Erika Broers. The forum also featured a panel discussing best practices and success stories from private enterprises.



IN FOCUS



There are estimated 281 million international migrants worldwide!
(World Migration Report 2024/ IOM)



GOOD JOB!

MWPS received an appreciation letter from the Chairman of the Kenya Community, recognising the support provided to Kenyan community members in need.

RATION DISTRIBUTION



St. Christopher's School donated dry rations to individuals facing financial hardships, including the unemployed, low-income earners, and those without salaries. This initiative ensures access to basic necessities and underscores the community's solidarity and compassion for its most vulnerable members.

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Check out our website for the link to our membership form.
Tel & WhatsApp: 00973 17827895 Email: mwpsbah2@gmail.com



www.mwpsbahrain.com