

Appeal not to send Nepali workers to Israel

Monday, 1 July 2024

We urge the Government of Nepal and the Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security not to put the lives of Nepali citizens at risk by sending them as workers wartime Israel, which is flouting all norms of humanity and ignoring attempts at peaceful resolution by the United Nations in order to continue horrifying atrocities.

On 7 October 2023, ten innocent Nepali citizens lost their lives in Hamas's attack on Israel. Another citizen remains missing. The relevant ministries and the Government of Nepal must honour the right to life of Nepali citizens and maintain respect for fundamental human rights. When a lack of livelihood security in the country compels citizens to put their lives at risk in search of work, it is abrogation of responsibility for the state and government not to do what is required to protect them.

Palestinians have been struggling for 75 years against the occupation of their homeland by Israel. Since the 'Nakba' of 1948, the genocide on which the state of Israel was founded, the plight of the Palestinian people has not been treated with the seriousness globally that it demands. This is in large part because the narrative of this conflict has been prepared and disseminated by Western media and powers.

Israel is currently at war with Hamas in the south and Hezbollah in the north. It is in order to deny native Palestinians their right to livelihood that Israel has had to seek workers from elsewhere. In Nepal's case that has included recruitment as caregivers, agricultural workers, and agriculture students who provide labour on farms. Since 7 October 2023, Palestinian workers are furthermore explicitly banned from entry into Israel. While categorically refusing to work towards a peaceful resolution to the conflict, Israel seeks to fulfil its labour shortage by recruiting workers from Nepal, thereby putting their lives and limbs in jeopardy.

Along with the right to life of Nepali workers, the attempt to send them to Israel at this time raises the question of whether the Nepali state is aiding and abetting Israel's genocide of the Palestinian people.

Jobs must not be used as an excuse to push Nepali citizens into a war zone. For the security of Nepali workers, the Foreign Employment Department of the Government of Nepal Ministry of Labour, Employment and Social Security must immediately annul the recruitment of caregivers to work in Israel's 'Long-term Care Centres' (Advertisement No. 1/2080/2081).