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Targeted training programme to retain manpower sought

FE Report

Migration of semi-skilled and skilled workers will cause substantial loss of human capital and might affect production in Bangladesh if replacement is not found easily and timely.

This was told at a regional dialogue titled 'Impact of Migration on Industrial Sectors in South Asia', held at a city hotel Wednesday. The Bangladesh Employers' Federation (BEF) organised the dialogue attended by delegates of employers from the South Asian region.

In the programme, Associate Professor of Department of Economics and Social Sciences Farzana Munshi of the Brac University while placing a preliminary assessment report on 'impact of labour migration from South Asia on the South Asian Employers' suggested arranging of targeted training programmes in order to attract and retain qualified workers.

She said evidence from Nepal indicated that migration caused severe localised shortages and unreliable supply of labour. "This acted as constraints on competitiveness in Nepalese industries since employers were less interested to invest in skill development of workers."

Ms Munshi said migration raises both hopes and concerns in developing countries. "Its negative effects (brain drain) cannot be ignored but by designing appropriate set of policies, positive effects can outweigh the negative ones."

She referred to various studies and said in Bangladesh remittance, which comes from migration of a large number of people, has a significant positive contribution in case of poverty reduction. Migration is believed to be one of the most popular ways to have a better life for many Bangladeshis.

Ms Munshi said in Nepal, remittance has reduced poverty by 4.0 per cent. In Sri Lanka, it is benefiting relatively poor households while in India it is considered as an addition to total domestic income and is used as investment only after consumption needs are met. Considering the total positive impacts of migration on individuals and on the country as a whole, she suggested that the government and the employers should follow a policy to promote international migration.

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