



جمعية حماية العمال الوافدين
Migrant Workers Protection Society
[MWPS]

MIGRANT VOICE

EMPOWERING COMMUNITY

NEWSLETTER | VOLUME 01 | EDITION 10 | OCTOBER 2024

MISSION STATEMENT

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

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FROM THE CHAIRPERSON...

In life, there are times when everything seems overwhelming and insurmountable. During such challenging moments, it's often our families that become our anchor, providing unwavering strength and comfort. The little moments—sharing a meal, a reassuring hug, the knowing smiles—remind us that we are not alone in our struggles.

This understanding deepens my empathy for our migrant workers in Bahrain. Many of them are far from their families, facing their own set of challenges in a foreign land. The absence of familial support can weigh heavily on their hearts, making their struggles even more daunting.

I pledge my solidarity with the migrant workers, acknowledging their resilience and strength. We must come together as a community to offer them the support and companionship they need. Let's create a network of care that extends a sense of belonging and security to those who are away from their loved ones.

To all the migrant workers, I want to say: You are not alone. We stand with you, and together, we can navigate through the tough times. Your contributions to our society are invaluable, and your well-being is a shared responsibility.

Let's reach out, lend a hand, and build a community where everyone feels supported and valued.

In solidarity,

MONA ALMOAYYED

CHAIRPERSON, MIGRANT WORKERS PROTECTION SOCIETY

As a global community, we face a choice. Do we want migration to be a source of prosperity and international solidarity, or a byword for inhumanity and social friction?

ANTÓNIO GUTERRES
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS





SPOTLIGHT

MEET THE TEAM

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



#teamwps

A STEADFAST VOLUNTEER

CAROLYN LUNT-BELL

Carrie is originally from the UK, although has been travelling, living and working overseas for the last 40 years in countries such as Mongolia, Botswana, Yemen, Sudan, Myanmar and Ghana, meeting her husband and having their two amazing daughters along the way. On arrival in Bahrain 17 years ago, Carrie worked with a local research centre in communications and PR before deciding a few years ago, at the tender age of 60, to try something new, and now runs her own freelance proofreading and copyediting company.

Having worked in international development for over 20 years with vulnerable communities and refugees, Carrie was quickly drawn to the work of the Migrant Workers Protection Society and started off volunteering in the local shelter for domestic workers in distress; she is now more involved with the social media aspects of the MWPS.

She strongly supports the MWPS's advocacy work and believes access to information and knowledge is crucial to empowering vulnerable individuals and communities.

EDITORIAL

As October unfurled its hues, it was heartwarming to witness numerous initiatives across the country marking this month as 'Pink Month.' The drive to spread awareness and the collective action taken during this pink month reflects a unified front against a common enemy—breast cancer.

Bahrain Cancer Society marked its annual walkathon, emphasising community involvement and raising awareness. Think Pink Bahrain celebrated 20 years with its gala dinner, successfully raising funds for the cause. The 973Lounge hosted an art workshop for women, a poetry majlis, and a live painting event at The Avenues, enriching the community with creative expressions and solidarity.

These dedicated focus on breast cancer awareness were not just a testament to the nation's commitment to health but also a profound gesture of care towards our diverse community, which includes a significant expatriate population.

The message of "prevention is better than cure" resonated powerfully throughout the month. Various awareness sessions were conducted, targeting a large number of female expatriates. These sessions were not only informative but also essential, providing much-needed guidance on early detection and preventative measures.

In a community where the expat population is substantial, such initiatives are invaluable. They underscore the inclusiveness and compassion that binds us together, regardless of where we come from. These efforts ensure that everyone, especially those far from their home countries, feels supported and informed.

As we look back on this month, we carry forward the hope and knowledge imparted through these initiatives. Let us continue to champion health awareness and support each other in every way possible. Here's to a community that stands strong together, united in care and compassion.

Happy reading!

RAJI UNNIKRISHNAN

EDITOR - MIGRANT VOICE

BULLETIN

CRACKDOWN ON UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS

Between October 27 and November 2, Bahrain conducted 1,344 inspection campaigns and joint visits across its four governorates, detaining 30 irregular workers and deporting 197 violators, according to the Labour Market Regulatory Authority's (LMRA) report. Legal actions were taken for multiple breaches of regulatory and residency laws.

This year, 46,489 inspection campaigns and 693 joint visits have identified 2,427 violations and resulted in 5,889 deportations. Government entities, including the Interior Ministry, Industry and Commerce Ministry, and Bahrain Tourism and Exhibitions Authority, participated in these efforts.

The LMRA emphasises ongoing coordination with government agencies to intensify inspections and address violations. The public is urged to report illegal labour practices via the LMRA website, call center, or Tawasul.

CONT'D ON PG04



OUTREACH

As always, MWPS addressed numerous cases in October. This month's highlighted cases include four involving Sri Lankan nationals.

Case 01

A Sri Lankan national encountered difficulties in extending his visa and sought assistance from MWPS. With legal support, his visa extension was successfully resolved. However, he faced another hurdle when he was unable to secure a job due to his former company's insistence that he send his wife and child back to their home country, as the company's CR had been blocked. The latter had warned of potential legal action. MWPS intervened once more, securing the necessary air tickets to ensure his wife and daughter could return home safely.

Case 02

A Sri Lankan domestic worker faced harsh conditions, working in three houses daily and enduring rude treatment from her sponsor's children. After seeking help at the police station, her sponsor denied having her passport. MWPS intervened and is now providing her with legal assistance.

Case 03

A Sri Lankan national, currently unemployed and unable to meet basic needs, is struggling with pending rent and school fees due to his wife's unpaid salary since July. His lawyer has been unresponsive, so MWPS extended legal assistance and paid for two months' rent to prevent eviction.

Case 04

A Sri Lankan domestic worker, living in Bahrain for 15 years without a visa after her sponsor's death, urgently needed to return to Sri Lanka due to her critically ill son. MWPS discovered she had a case at Budaiya police station and intervened, resolving charges and completing immigration clearance. Although sentenced to 10 days in jail, the judge granted immediate repatriation upon request. With MWPS assistance, she returned home on 14 October 2024.

Case 05

A woman, living in Bahrain for 21 years without a visa, sought MWPS's help to legalise her status after her father's death in 2016. She lives with her siblings, who also faced challenges in legalizing their status. She has a prospective employer but needed to regularize her visa situation. MWPS submitted a request letter to immigration to facilitate her legal status, after which it was discovered that there was a BD675 penalty to enroll her in the system. Given her current unemployment and lack of stable income, it was difficult for her to cover this amount. Fortunately, a church stepped forward and agreed to provide a BD400 loan, and MWPS provided the remaining BD275. This support has enabled her to pursue employment.



On October 2, 2024, MWPS held a board meeting chaired by Ms Mona Almoayyed. The discussion covered recent activities, future initiatives, and key community issues, reinforcing their commitment to the organization's mission and goals.

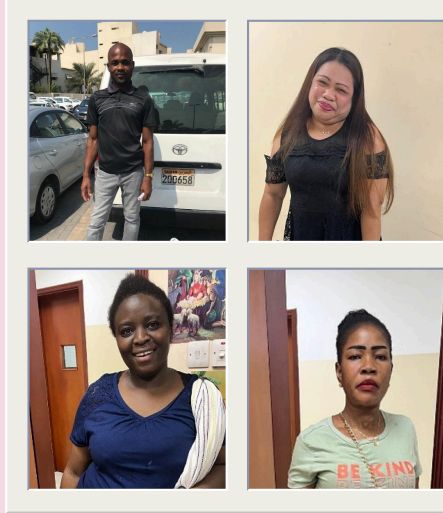
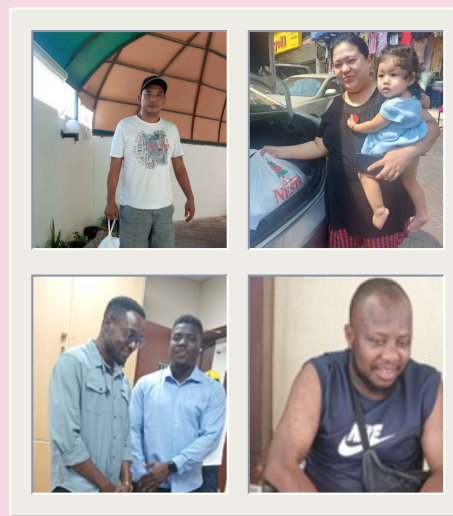
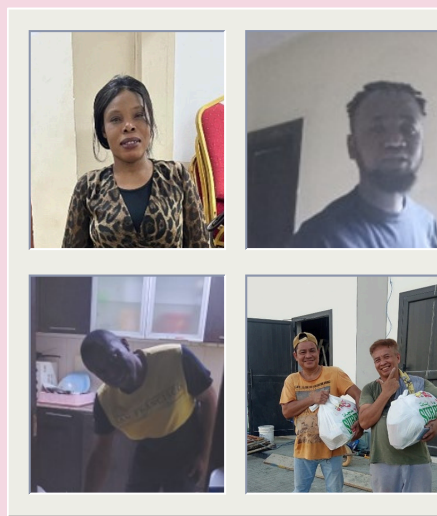
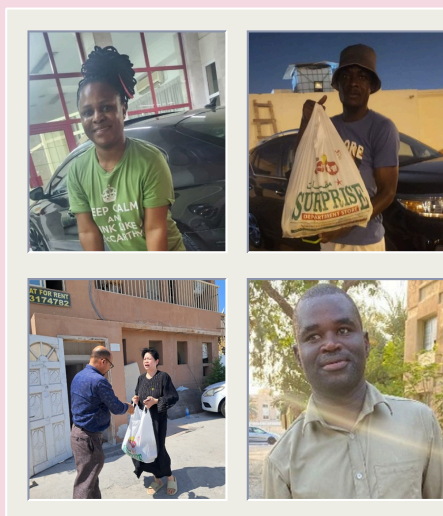
Sitting (left to right) Beula Timothy, Evone Bhaskaran, Mona Almoayyed, Kavithasree Suvarna, Carolyn Lunt-Bell
Standing (left to right) Karthikeyan Arumugam, Mohamed Gayaz Ullah, Madhavan Kallath, Ayuk Arre Ndimne, Daniel Ambrosio, Santanu Chowdhury.
(Inset) Joseph Mulleaghe



IN FOCUS

DONATIONS AND DISTRIBUTIONS

The Migrant Workers Protection Society gratefully acknowledges the generous donations of both cash and in-kind contributions from our supporters. These donations play a crucial role in enabling us to provide essential services and support to those in need within our community. Livintis WLL generously donated cash, while the Salvation Army Church contributed dry rations. The dry ration was distributed to various members of the community, including nine Philippine women, 27 individuals from the South African community, one Sri Lankan, and three Cameroonians. These contributions have significantly supported and uplifted those in need.



CONTD FROM PG02

CRACKDOWN ON UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS

Recent amendments to the 2006 Labour Market Regulatory Law reduced penalties for employers hiring expatriates illegally, replacing jail terms with fines. Bahrain has also enforced stricter regulations to prevent visa misuse and support local employment.

NEW REGULATION FOR MANPOWER AGENCIES

Labour Minister and Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) chairman Jameel Humaidan has amended the regulation of manpower agency licenses. It mandates licensed agencies deposit BD150 per work permit as insurance, in addition to the work permit fee. The LMRA clarified that this requirement applies solely to licensed manpower agencies offering labourers on a temporary contract basis, whether hourly, daily, monthly, or yearly. The collected insurance amount is intended to cover repatriation costs for foreign workers hired by these agencies.

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