

Media Release

Minister Dinesh Gunawardena explores possibilities to assist Sri Lankan Migrant workers

Minister of Foreign Relations, Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations, Dinesh Gunawardena met with the Secretaries and senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Relations, the Ministry of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations and the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE), today (10 April 2020), at the Ministry of Foreign Relations, to discuss ramifications emanating from the present Coronavirus pandemic to Sri Lankan migrant workers abroad and to explore possible mechanisms to assist these Sri Lankans.

Minister Gunawardena referring to approximately over 1 million Sri Lankan migrant workers, who are employed largely in the Middle East, South East Asia, East Asia, Europe, and Africa regions stated that the interests of these Sri Lankans need to be looked into by the two Ministries. During the meeting, he specifically drew the attention of the senior officials to the needs of the migrant workers, who are employed in the Gulf region. Minister Gunawardena said that measures taken by the host countries in this region to curb the spread of the Coronavirus has adversely affected the migrant workers and instructed senior officials to explore solutions to these implications.

The issues of unregistered migrant workers under the SLBFE, those who have recently lost their jobs and issues relating to remittances, were discussed at the meeting, to explore practical solutions, so those migrant workers of Sri Lanka could be assisted well during this challenging time. The Foreign Minister also said that the Government of Sri Lanka would take every possible step to assist and safeguard the rights and wellbeing of Sri Lankan migrant workers all over the world.

Foreign Secretary Ravinatha Aryasinha, Secretary to the Ministry of Skills Development, Employment and Labour Relations, D.M. Sarath Abayagunawardana and other Senior Officials who attended the meeting shared their views and insights on the current situation of migrant workers and emphasized that the two Ministries will work closely for the betterment of the migrant workers.

Ministry of Foreign Relations
Colombo

10 April 2020