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The journey for work

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Staff union: Providing a helping hand to flood victims



Staff union members distribute essentials to flood victims in Matara district.

Office and project staff from the Colombo office joined in relief efforts in Matara district in late May following the worst floods in the country for 50 years, which claimed the lives of 265 Sri Lankans.

The floods brought misery to an estimated 150,000 families in a country that is usually more prone to serious drought than floods.

Although the flooding eased in a matter of days, the damage inflicted on the country was enormous. Although relief efforts by the government and aid agencies started quickly, there were numerous reports that some of the worst affected areas were not receiving assistance.

In response to this news, the staff union decided to raise some funds and move to participate in relief efforts. By heading to worst affected areas, the staff union felt sure they could provide some valuable assistance.

'Mission flood relief' set off early on a Sunday morning with supplies that were provided through generous donations of practical supplies, such as household utensils and cleaning agents. The aim was to help around 80 of the worst affected families.

The journey took about five hours, passing through what were previously among the most scenic areas of the country.

Close to the final destination, the team

boarded four-wheel drive vehicles, which were necessary for reaching Pittabedara, close to the town of Deniyaya.

Pittabedara lies in a region known for its diverse ecology. On arrival, the team found foul-smelling muddy tracks and mud marks on trees up to 20 feet high.

The local people were desperately trying to piece together their broken lives amid silent suffering, and were in a 'state of shock' at how swiftly their fortunes had changed.

The team split into two, with one group visiting households to deliver coupons, while the other team distributed the goods fairly when people arrived with their coupons.

The team from the Colombo felt proud to have been part of such an effort, through which it was clear that the local people appreciated our efforts.

As well as helping people to rebuild their lives, it strengthened unity among staff through teamwork.

Gender: Call for new laws to protect women workers

Speakers at a recent roundtable discussion said that the existing laws in Bangladesh were not enough to ensure social security of women workers.

They also stressed the need for formulation of new laws to protect the rights of female workers and their proper implementation while addressing a roundtable discussion on 'Social Security System in Bangladesh and Women Workers' held at the CIRDAP auditorium.

The Bangladesh Institute of Labour Studies (BILS) organized the discussion.

Aman Ullah Aman, State Minister for Labour and Employment, was present at the discussion as chief guest.

Shenjee Lee, chief technical advisor of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Dhaka; Kazi Saifuddin Ahmed, labour advisor to the Bangladesh Employers Federation; M Nuruunabi, Secretary, the Labour and Employment Ministry; AM Abdul Jabbar, Secretary the Social Welfare Ministry and Wazedul

Islam Khan, Secretary of BILS, also attended. Nazrul Islam Khan, Secretary General of BILS, and Mohammad Ahsan Ullah, MP, addressed the roundtable. Presided over by Professor Jahanara Begum, Chairperson of BILS, the discussion was conducted by Shirin Akhter, member secretary of BILS.

Professor Dr. Nasrin Khandakar of the Economics Department of Dhaka University (DU), presented the keynote paper.

They also said that although the constitution is the main safeguard of the rights of women, it has failed to do so due to lack of proper implementation.

Aman Ullah Aman said that the social security of our women workers has not been properly ensured.

Terming gender discrimination as the 'main cause of the sufferings of women workers' he said that the process of women empowerment has not yet been completed.

"To ensure the social security of the women

workers the Government has undertaken a plan to reform the labour laws," he added. In her keynote paper, Professor Dr. Nasrin Khandaker said that social security in the private sector as well as the informal sector is not enough to protect the rights of women workers.

She also said that no appointment letters were issued to any worker in the garments sector, where most of the labourers are female.

"Because of this, workers in this sector did not get provident fund, gratuity and other facilities," she added.

"The women will be the worst victims of globalization," she said adding that the government should take proper steps immediately to face the problem. She also made seven recommendations including implementation of the different factory laws to improve the environment of work introduction of death and disability insurance, loan facilities as social safety net and creation of alternative employment to face the challenges of globalization.

Office opening: Flying the flag

The International Labour Organization (ILO) officially opened its Hanoi office in February, pledging to work closely with its tripartite constituents from Government, employer and worker groups to promote decent work in Viet Nam.

Key officials from the Government of Viet Nam's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Investment, Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) and from the employers' and workers' organizations, Ambassadors and representatives of the United Nations and major development agencies operating in Viet Nam and ILO officials attended the opening.

"The promotion of decent work is the overarching mission of our organization," said Yasuyuki Nodera, Regional Director of ILO in Asia and the Pacific.

"The action plan for decent work will identify priority areas for joint action and provide guidance for ILO technical cooperation and fund-raising activities, while serving as a basis for consultations between the ILO, its constituents, and other relevant governmental bodies and development partners." Nodera said.

The action plan will use Viet Nam's Ten Year National Development Strategy as a key reference point, while supporting the country's implementation of its Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy, along with its commitment to the United Nations' (UN) Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Viet Nam Development Goals.

The level of technical cooperation between ILO and Viet Nam has grown progressively since 1992 in response to increasing demands from constituents.

The basic thrust of the ILO's presence in Viet Nam is to provide assistance and advice to the Government, employer and worker groups on employment-related issues.

ILO's main partners in Vietnam are MOLISA, the Viet Nam General Confederation of Labour, the Viet Nam Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Vietnam Cooperative Alliance.



ILO's Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific Yasuyuki Nodera raises the flag at the opening of the Hanoi Office

The ILO's projects in Viet Nam are grouped within four main areas:

- Institutional Capacity Building
- Labour Markets, Employment and Income
- Social Protection
- Social Dialogue

Viet Nam resumed its membership of the ILO in 1992 and an agreement on opening an office in Hanoi was signed in February 2002.

Also in 2002, the Government of Viet Nam was elected to serve a three-year term as a deputy member of the ILO's Governing Body.



Nguyen Thi Hang, Viet Nam's Minister of Labour, delivers a speech during the inaugural session.

Photos/Brenda Sunoo

Regional Meeting: Challenges to Labour Migration Policy and Management



ILO Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific Yasuyuki Nodera, left, was joined by Minister of Labour, Royal Thai Government, Suwat Liptapanlop for the inaugural session.

Regional Director for Asia and the Pacific, Yasuyuki Nodera, the Regional Office, and the International Programme for Migration (MIGRANT) were joined by government, employer and worker groups from 21 countries in the region during 30 June - 2 July in Bangkok for the ILO Regional Tripartite Meeting on Challenges to Labour Migration Policy and Management in Asia.

Many countries readily acknowledge that without the work of migrants their business sectors, infrastructure and services would simply not have functioned effectively enough to ensure economic growth and social development.

In Asia and the Pacific, migrant workers have built vital transport infrastructure, including airports, railways, highways and mass transit systems. Local labour supply was simply insufficient to carry out such tasks. In some countries, it could even be argued that a steady supply of migrant domestic workers has brought about greater empowerment for women, allowing them to enter or re-enter the workplace.

While the demand for foreign labour continues to expand in the region, migrant flows have become increasingly diverse and complex. Delegates at this Regional Tripartite Meeting discussed ways in which migrant labour policies and management could be enhanced. Regulations need to

be well managed and allow easy access to legal migrant workers. Failure to do so could result in more migrant workers seeking to enter the country illegally, and therefore facing vulnerable and dangerous working conditions, with little chance of escape. While regulation is a necessary part of effective migration management, Manolo I. Abela, chief of the ILO's International Migration Programme, said the danger over-regulation posed was that

"Migrant workers are an asset to every country where they bring their labour. Let us give them the dignity they deserve as human beings, and the respect they deserve as workers."

Juan Somavia, director-general, ILO

it often created a situation in which unscrupulous recruiters and middlemen actually flourish.

Migrant workers, particularly undocumented or unregulated workers, can face a host of concerns during the process of migration, and during their time in receiving countries. Errant employers, recruiters and trafficking stand by to exploit their predicament. Many migrant workers, and women in particular, face greater vulnerability to HIV/AIDS.

Gunnar Walzholz, an HIV/AIDS specialist at the ILO's Subregional Office (SRO) for

East Asia in Bangkok, explained that a practice common in some Asian countries in forcing migrant workers to face mandatory HIV/AIDS tests is more likely to speed up the spread of the disease than curb it. Walzholz said such policies would create a climate of fear among an already vulnerable group of people. Sajida Ali of the Asian Migrant Centre (AMC), a Hong Kong SAR-based non-governmental organization (NGO) said that such policies also perpetuate discrimination, adding that migrant workers testing positive are sent home in some countries.

It is quite amazing how quickly trends and attitudes towards migrants

can change over a short space of time. IPS reports that overseas migrant workers from the Philippines are usually greeted with parties when they return follow-



Migrant workers face greater vulnerability to HIV/AIDS

ing years of absence and are welcomed as symbols of success. The emergence of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) in the region has revealed how fragile our place on this earth really is. In contrast to previous welcomes, overseas workers returning home over recent months have found nervous, mask-wearing relatives awaiting them at the airport.

Countries represented at the meeting face an extremely diverse set of situations as sending, receiving, sending and receiving countries, or transit countries. South Korea, once a major source of outgoing migrant labour now relies heavily on incoming migrant workers in important sectors of its economy. Rosalinda Baldoz, representing the Philippines' Overseas Employment administration, Department of Labour and Employment, said the Philippines considers overseas employment key to social development, empowering workers and their families both financially and professionally.

Jose Simeon, from the Employers' Confederation of Philippines (ECOP), urged sending countries to focus on using a comprehensive skills analysis system as

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an effective method of ensuring migrant workers meet the specific needs of receiving countries. A number of common myths were also shot down during the three-day event.

Daniel George Engles, Manager of the Business Visa Service for the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Melbourne, said that the idea that Australia was awash with overstaying migrant workers from Asia was untrue.

He pointed out that most visa overstays can be attributed to British and U.S. nationals. However, he added that these young people, many of whom uti-

lize a working visa programme, provide useful labour in areas of the economy that find it difficult to attract workers, such as the agricultural sector.

Regional Director of the ILO in Asia and the Pacific, Yasuyuki Nodera, said during his opening speech that the ILO's unique tripartite framework provided the ideal vehicle through which to develop and implement migration policy.

"The expertise and considerable experience of the ILO and its values and standards-based approach should be the basis for shaping national and regional labour migration management policy and practice in Asia," he said.

The ILO urged more countries in Asia and the Pacific to ratify the Migration for Employment Convention (Convention 97), Migrant Workers' Convention (Convention 143) and the Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention (Convention 19), along with the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, which came into force during the life of the meeting.

Delegates ended the meeting by agreeing upon a summary of conclusions, which can be found at www.ilo.org/asia. The issue of migration will be discussed in detail at next year's International Labour Conference in Geneva.

World Day Against Child Labour - 'Football Fun Day'

Over sixty girls and boys from Father Joe Maier's Mercy Centre and the Foundation for Child Development (FCD)'s Duang Khae Children's Centre in central Bangkok joined the International Labour Organization (ILO) at the Dhephassadin Stadium on June 7 for a football coaching and awareness-raising activity to mark World Day Against Child Labour (June 12).

The ILO's International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO/IPEC) launched a campaign called 'Red Card to Child Labour' at the African Nations Cup in Mali in 2002, while Real Madrid dedicated its centenary game last year to the campaign.

The ILO and the Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA) have also formally signed an agreement to cooperate on the campaign to end child labour and trafficking.

In the rules of Association Football, a red card represents dismissal for a player who oversteps the mark. Likewise, ILO/IPEC's 'red card' message represents a dismissal - a rejection of the worst forms of child labour, including trafficking.

In Southeast Asia, the ILO has been implementing a Mekong sub-regional project to combat trafficking in children and women (TICW), which is operational in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Thailand, Viet Nam and China's Yunnan province. TICW focuses on traf-

ficking prevention through employment creation, education and skills training in trafficking source areas, using a participatory approach that engages government authorities and other stakeholders at various levels.

TICW also explores legal labour migration alternatives to trafficking in collaboration with worker and employer organizations.

The TICW project has led to a reduction in trafficking in target communities as a result of carrying out awareness-raising activities, village mobilization, income-generation initiatives and capacity building of local, district and provincial authorities.

Another project, Combatting Trafficking in Children for Labour and Sexual Exploitation (TICSA), aims to strengthen the capacity of country-level partners to prevent child trafficking within countries and across borders, and to rehabilitate child victims of trafficking.

TICSA activities include research, prevention, policy development, capacity building, rescue, rehabilitation and reintegration.

TICSA is currently operating in Bangladesh, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Thailand.

Players from BEC-Tero Sasana and the

Thai national teams* joined the group of girls and boys aged 8-13 in a series of mixed fun activities delivered by a team of football coaches from JWFD (Jason Withe Football Development).

The venue, near to Supachasalai Stadium, was kindly provided by the Football Association of Thailand (F.A.T.)'s President Vijit Getkaew and Secretary-General Worawi Mukadi.

Clown Eckie (Eddie Haworth) ensured sideline awareness-raising sessions stayed fun, while facilitators turned to art and group teamwork activities to get the day's message across.

Many of the activities were translated versions of popular ILO/IPEC-generated educational materials, including awareness-raising tools, quizzes and games on child labour and trafficking.

Khun Worawi from the F.A.T. and Jason Withe presented the girls and boys with certificates, ILO goodie bags and Colgate-Palmolive personal hygiene kits once the sessions had come to a close.

The day finished with participants raising a 'Red Card to Child Labour'.

* Including Dasakorn Thonglao (BEC Tero-Sasana and Thailand), Peerapat Poruendee (BEC Tero-Sasana and Thailand), Attaphol Busapakom (coach, BEC Tero-Sasana), and Somjai Punetining (BEC Tero-Sasana and Thailand U-18s).

Shelf Life



Rediscovering the cooperative advantage

Poverty reduction through self-help

Johnston Birchall

ISBN 92-2-113603-5

This publication examines the role and potential of cooperatives in reducing poverty. It includes an analysis of what we understand by the terms poverty and cooperatives and discusses in detail the poverty-reduction policies of international organizations and how cooperatives could help achieve their objectives.

The historical record of cooperatives in poverty reduction is considered and eleven case studies from different fields of cooperative activity are presented.

A key conclusion of this study is that self-organization by the poor is a pre-condition for successful anti-poverty work and that cooperatives can play an important role in this struggle. For cooperatives to play this role, a number of conditions must be met: there must be an appropriate environment that enables cooperatives to be true to their principles; there must be a serious promotional effort by the different social actors; and there must be a strong focus on human resource development.

In this context, the new ILO Promotion of Cooperatives Recommendations, 2002 (No. 193) is of particular relevance.

The report has three key aims: to provide direction and focus to the ILO's own work

in the field of poverty reduction through cooperatives; to inform other international agencies and development partners about the real potential of genuine cooperatives; and to encourage cooperatives themselves to develop a more coherent and dynamic approach to poverty alleviation.



Gender Equality and Decent Work in Thailand

A country report for ILO/ADB RETA Project 5887

Pawadee Tonguthai, Associate Professor, Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University

ISBN 92-2-113534-9

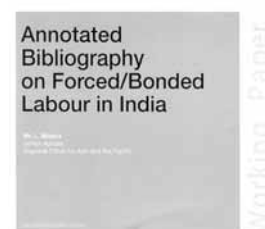
This working paper is part of a joint regional technical assistance project of the ILO and the Asian Development Bank (ADB), which aims to strengthen the role of labour standards as means of reducing poverty and promoting sustainable economic and social development.

The project supported research in Bangladesh, Nepal, the Philippines and Thailand focuses on three areas: child labour, gender equality and occupational safety and health. This working paper hones in on gender equality in employment.

The four countries selected are at different stage of economic development and display a wide range and varying rates of women's participation in the labour market. They have different ratification rates of ILO Conventions relevant to the

promotion of gender equality and have different levels of legal protection against gender discrimination in employment and occupation. This group of reports offer the ILO and ADB a full range of relevant issues and information on the position of men and women workers, the pressing equality and discrimination issue confronting women in the labour market and recommendations for improvements in laws, policies and practices of various interested parties.

The four national studies on gender equality form the basis for the preparation of a regional report to be discussed at a regional meeting organized by the ADB under the ILO/ADB RETA project.



Annotated Bibliography on Forced/Bonded Labour in India

InFocus Programme on Promoting the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work

Dr L. Mishra, Senior Adviser, Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

ISBN 92-2-113567-5

In June 1998, the International Labour Conference adopted a Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up, through which member States are obliged to respect, promote and realize freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour, the effective abolition of child labour, and the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment or occupation.

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The InFocus Programme on Promoting the Declaration is responsible for the reporting processes and technical cooperation activities associated with the Declaration, and it carries out awareness-raising, advocacy and knowledge functions, of which this working paper is an example.

Author Dr L. Mishra was formerly a high-level official of the Government of India, and dealt for a significant period with questions of bonded forced labour, including work he carried out for the country's Supreme Court that involved interviews with large numbers of bonded labourers working in brick kilns and quarries. After elaborating a long-term plan to spur the elimination of bonded forced labour in India, Dr Mishra was tasked with going through his extensive personal document collection, a number of university libraries, research institutes, government and non-government offices to collect and summarize the many books, articles, monographs and reports that have been issued in India on questions of forced or bonded labour. Before this wealth

of information gets lost or forgotten, this volume of work documents its existence and provides value for future generations of policy makers and researchers.



Towards a Strategy for SME Cluster and Network Development in Thailand

A Discussion Paper for Stakeholders

C. Richard Hatch

ISBN 92-2-112907-1

This Discussion Paper is aimed at supporting the preparation of an effective national strategy for 'business-to-business networking' in Thailand in order to both improve the competitiveness of the small and medium enterprise (SME) sector and increase job opportunities and employment.

The study draws on previous experiences of the ILO in conducting action-research and in identifying appropriate approaches, policies and programmes for developing small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Prepared by the ILO in collaboration with the Institute for Small and Medium Enterprise Development of Thailand (ISMED), the finalization and implementation of this strategy are beyond the scope of the initial phase of the project, however, it could realistically be part of the ILO's ongoing SME development assistance programme to Thailand, in continuing collaboration with ISMED and other key stakeholders in business-to-business networking.

Evans-Klock leads SRO

The Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific would like to warmly welcome Christine Evans-Klock to Bangkok, where she has taken over as director of the ILO's Subregional Office for East Asia.

Chris has a depth of experience in the world of development, and previously served as director of the ILO's InFocus programme on boosting employment through small enterprise development (IFP/SEED). She was also a labour market economist in the employment and training department's labour market policies branch.

Chris has also worked in other areas of the United Nations, serving as a technical officer at the World Health Organization in Geneva and as an assistant industrial development officer for the UN Industrial Development Organization.

Chris was also a research economist at the National Commission for Economic Conversion and Disarmament in Washington DC. She holds degrees in both International Affairs and Political Economy.

Governing Body: Chung elected Chairman

The Governing Body of the International Labour Office (ILO) elected H.E. Eui-Yong Chung, Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, as Chairman for its 2003-2004 Session.

The 287th session of the Governing Body also considered a range of other business including a report of the ILO Committee on Freedom of Association.

Ambassador Chung replaces Lord Bill Brett of the United Kingdom, who served as the Governing Body Chairman during the 2002-2003 Session.

In June 2002, Chung had already been elected Government vice-chairman of the Governing Body.

He is also an ex-officio member of the ILO's World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization and played a leading role in WTO negotiations.

Before arriving in Geneva in 2001 as an ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Chung served as a Deputy Minister for Trade.

Sir Leroy Trotman, the general-secretary of the Barbados Workers' Union and also spokesperson of the Workers' Group in the Governing Body, was elected by the Governing Body as the Workers' Vice-chairperson.



Chung

Daniel Funes de Rioja, president of the Social Policy Department of the Argentinian Industrial Union and Chairman of the Employers' Group of the Organization of American States during the period 1995 to 1998, was re-elected as Employer Vice-chairperson.

Eui-Yong Chung, Sir Leroy Trotman and Daniel Funes de Rioja will serve as Officers of the Governing Body during its 2003-2004 Session.

India: ILO's tripartite action on HIV/AIDS

India had an estimated 4.24 million People Living with HIV/AIDS at the end of 2001.

The maximum number of infections (89 per cent) have been reported from the most productive 15-49 age group. HIV/AIDS, therefore, has emerged as a major threat to the world of work.

This highlights the need for immediate efforts to protect some 400 million workers in India from the deadly virus.

The main challenge is to reach out to the more vulnerable informal sector labour, which forms more than 90 per cent of the total workforce in India.

The ILO, in consultation with its Indian tripartite constituents and the National AIDS Control Organization (NACO), has developed a three-phased programme, aimed at establishing sustainable national action on HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support in the world of work.

The first phase of the project, implemented with financial support from the US Department of Labor (USDOL), aimed at mobilizing the ILO's tripartite partners (government, employers' and workers' organizations) and developing a Plan of Action for the Phase-II. The Phase-I was implemented from June 2001 till the end of 2002.

V.V. Giri National Labour Institute (VVGNI), NOIDA, which also houses the Technical Resource Group for workplace interventions under the National AIDS Control Programme, is the nodal implementing agency.

The project is now embarking on the second phase, also supported by USDOL with a comprehensive Plan of Action for implementation in Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal, the three selected states of India.

Notable features of the ILO-India HIV/AIDS Project:

- Guidance to the project by a high level Project Management Team, comprising representatives from the Ministry of Labour-Government of India, NACO, employers' and workers' organizations, VVGNI, Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), PLWHA and ILO;
- Mainstreaming HIV/AIDS within the

Ministry of Labour (MOL), GOI. This involves collaboration with the National Labour Institute, the Central Board for Workers' Education (CBWE) and other key institutions/programmes of MOL;

- Mobilization of partners through stakeholders' meetings, consultations and seminars, in order to sensitize the social partners on HIV/AIDS in the context of the world of work;
- Research based advocacy: documentation of corporate responses to HIV/AIDS, compilation and dissemination of existing research studies on HIV/AIDS in the world of work, and initiation of action research projects;



- Facilitate closer collaboration between action undertaken at enterprise level and State/ District AIDS Control Societies (SACS);
- Technical support to partners (MOL, trade unions, employers' organizations, enterprises, NGOs, SACS) to strengthen their response capacity for developing and implementing an expanded world of work response to HIV/AIDS;
- Developing and demonstrating an expanded world of work response to HIV/AIDS in West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Jharkhand;
- Promote the adoption of the ILO's Code of Practice on HIV/AIDS and the world of work and promote an improved policy framework;
- Coordinate with UNAIDS and NACO in setting up state level business coalitions; and
- Collaboration with networks of People Living with HIV/AIDS.

Tata group making strides

Recognizing the importance of tackling Human Immuno deficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) in organizations, proactive companies have now started drawing up Workplace Policies on HIV/AIDS. Taking the lead are Tata group companies, Reliance Industries, Ranbaxy, Indian Oil Corporation, Escorts, Apollo Tyres, RPG Enterprise and Modicare, according to a recent article in *The Financial Express*.

About 88.6 per cent Of those living with HIV/AIDS in India, about 88.6 per cent are reportedly from the most productive age group of 15-44, which is a major concern for Indian companies.

According to a list prepared by Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (Ficci), at least 30 Indian companies are active in implementing workplace policies on HIV/AIDS. The list also includes Godrej, Larsen & Toubro, Glaxo India, Mukund, Mahindra & Mahindra, Eveready, Hero Honda Motors, Krupp Industries, Hindustan Construction, Castrol India, ICCL, Cadbury India, Marico and ABB.

Modicare is another company that has set an example. It has established the Modicare Foundation to spread awareness amongst companies. "We have conducted workshops for organizations like Surya and Parkroyal hotels and Nike, motivating them to implement the policy. A similar project for Delhi Transport Corporation (DTC) has been undertaken by the Foundation recently," said Modicare managing director Samir Modi.

Further, Tata Tea Ltd, which has already put in place a policy on HIV/AIDS, plans to take the lead to start the Indian Business Council of AIDS, which will involve the non-Tata group companies. According to a World Economic Forum (WEF) case study of Tata Tea (as an example of global health initiative), the Tata group plans to standardize the various workplace interventions on HIV/AIDS within its five top group companies.

Tata Tea Ltd, which owns 55 tea estates with a workforce of 59,000, has a model 'Workplace HIV/AIDS Policy.' The policy has been adopted keeping in view the future impact of HIV/AIDS on its huge manpower resources. Tata Tea, being an agro-based industry, is dependent on its huge manpower to sustain its operations. Some Indian companies have also joined hands at the global level to tackle the issue. Ranbaxy, Bajaj Auto, Modicare, RPG Enterprise, SRF and TISCO are amongst 50 members of the Global Business Coalition (GBC) on HIV/AIDS.

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GBC advocates implementation of comprehensive workplace programmes covering, non-discriminatory policies, prevention education, access to voluntary counselling, care, support and treatment.

GBC chairman and the chairman of the board of management of DaimlerChrysler Juergen E Schrempf believes that the efforts of corporate world is significant in containing HIV/AIDS menace.

"I have no doubt that we are best able to meet this immense challenge through dynamic and effective workplace programmes such

as those developed and promoted by the GBC in concert with its members," he said in a recent message to GBC. Ranbaxy, which has a comprehensive HIV/AIDS policy, is also involved in developing and marketing HIV/AIDS-related medicines.

"Ranbaxy has always been at the forefront in addressing the healthcare needs by providing cost-effective and quality medicines. To address the growing menace of HIV around the world, Ranbaxy has pledged to serve a large part of the global demand of Anti-Retrovirals [ARVs]," according to an official from Ranbaxy. Ficci's Socio-Economic Development Foundation in association with the ILO organized a one-day

workshop on 'Sensitization of Industrialists/CEOs on HIV/AIDS as a Workplace Issue' in the Capital on May 27, 2003.

"Apollo Tyres will make a presentation on its experience on implementation of the policy in the company," a Ficci official said.

For more info on the ILO's efforts on HIV/AIDS in India, contact: Mr. S.M. Afsar, National Project Coordinator, ILO, New Delhi, Tel: +91-11-24602101/2/3 Extension 241, fax: +91-11-24602111, email: safsar@ilodel.org.in

In brief

Vanuatu becomes ILO member State

AUSTRALIA - Vanuatu has become the seventh Pacific Island country to become a member of the International Labour Organization.

Vanuatu's membership was apparently granted quickly by virtue of its membership of the United Nations since 1981.

Vanuatu now joins Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea and Kiribati as Pacific nations with ILO membership. - ABC News

Singapore commended on handling of Sars crisis

SINGAPORE - Singapore's acting Manpower Minister Ng Eng Hen met Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Juan Somavia during the International Labour Conference (ILC) in Geneva and briefed him on what Singapore has done to help companies ride out the economic threat from Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (Sars), reported *Straits Times*.

Dr Ng told Mr Somavia that aside from nationwide measures to contain the outbreak, his ministry has also worked with various organizations to help companies cope with the business downturn and save as many jobs as possible.

Mr Somavia commended Singapore on its quick action against Sars and expressed interest in some of its more innovative measures.

Rally cry for labour unity in Pakistan

PAKISTAN - The ICFTU-APRO National Seminar on Responding to Challenges of Globalization Through Trade Union Unity with the All Pakistan Federation of Trade Unions (APFTU) was held in May in Lahore, Pakistan, attended by plant-level trade union leaders as well as other office bearers of the APFTU.

APFTU General-Secretary Khurshid Ahmed, taking part in one full session and also participating in the concluding session, strongly appealed to the participants to take the message of unity and merger to their respective plants/establishments and urge them to its dissemination.

The participants clearly realized the need for forging unity amongst the labour movement in Pakistan. All were of the view that this process can be greatly facilitated by the merger plan of the ICFTU-Pakistan Council (ICFTU-PC). - *ICFTU news*

OHSEI to hold conference on occupational diseases

THAILAND - The Asian Workers Occupational Health, Safety and Environment Institute (OHSEI) will conduct its third Theme Conference on Occupational Diseases: Regional, National and Workplace Strategies to Control Them from 3-5 December 2003 in Bangkok.

It is estimated that five times as many workers die from work-related occupational disease as from accidents, and more than two million workers die from

work-related causes each year. The conference is to provide the participants with information and knowledge to enable them to develop policies and strategies for addressing occupational diseases in a regional, a national and a workplace context.

Visit the OHSEI website (www.ohseinstitute.org) for more info about the Theme Conference of the OHSEI, the Global Unions agency on occupational health, safety and environment. OHSEI hosted an event to mark World Day for Occupational Health and Safety at Work, in collaboration with the ILO's Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. - *OHSEI*

Ageing population a worry in Australia

AUSTRALIA - The Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and the Business Council of Australia released a joint report "Age Can Work: The Case for Older Australians Staying in the Workforce", highlighting the potentially massive social and economic impact of Australia's ageing population.

It is said that while there are currently six working Australians supporting each retired person, the ratio will be one to three by 2025. The serious decline in the number of working Australians would put an enormous strain on the economy and public services. The report called on governments and companies to change perceptions about the benefits of older workers. It also recommended tough laws to prevent age discrimination in the workforce. - *ICFTU news*

ILO mourns Pekka Aro

The Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO) issued the following statement following the death in Beijing in April of Pekka Aro, a senior ILO official:

"The ILO is grieving today. Our colleague Pekka Aro died in Beijing early yesterday morning, while on official mission. In just a few days, Pekka was taken away by a sudden illness, which according to our latest information, was Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome [SARS]. We know little about this new and devastating illness, for which there is no vaccine, no cure. But for us it has truly hit home.

Pekka left for Asia to prepare for the China Employment Forum. On 28 March, he fell ill with symptoms of gastroenteritis. He was hospitalized on 2 April and later diagnosed with atypical pneumonia.

We immediately contacted the Chinese authorities and then organized an ILO task force to provide all possible support from Geneva, in close coordination with our colleagues in Beijing.

Dr. Rudy Wabitsch of the ILO Medical Service and Dr. Daniel Chin from WHO Beijing constantly monitored his health situation and worked to ensure that the best medical attention was being provided. Goran Hultin (Executive Director, Employment) led action to quickly bring Pekka back home.

We were very concerned when we learned that his condition was rapidly deteriorating.



"Pekka's kindness, humility and Finnish humour were complimented by his serious attitude towards his work, particularly on issues that brought people together within the work place to create better working relationships for all-government, employers and workers."

"Pekka will be remembered for his work with the trade unions in Finland and his intimate knowledge and work in Russia and Hungary and as the Director of IFP/Skills, where he developed a love for South East Asia and China."

We will remember him fondly.

Mr Ian Cummings, Senior Specialist for Vocational and Skills Training, Sub regional Office (SRO), Bangkok.

We were hopeful to the end. Yet all efforts were to no avail. A special thought goes to Djankou Ndjonkou and our colleagues in Beijing, who were close to Pekka through it all. They are now in quarantine and for them and their families, we know this is a most difficult time. My thanks to all who did everything possible for Pekka.

Today, I mourn with you our colleague and

friend. We knew Pekka as a hard worker, an effective mobilizer, a believer in excellence. We valued his loyalty and friendship, his dedication and commitment. He was generous with his time, his advice, and his support.

This is a great shock to us all and a terrible loss for our organization. We miss him already.

In this time of sorrow, our thoughts are with Pekka's wife and children. We share their grief."

A Finnish national, Pekka Aro was married and the father of three children.

In addition to his duties as director of the ILO department for skills development, Pekka did groundbreaking work on labour and employment issues in central and eastern Europe and was an acknowledged expert on employment issues. Prior to joining the ILO, he held a number of key positions in Finnish and international trade unions.

A China Employment Forum (CEF), convened by the Chinese Government and the ILO, was originally scheduled to take place on 7-9 April in Beijing. On 1 April the ILO informed the Chinese Government that ILO officials would not be travelling to Beijing for the event, as a precautionary measure for the protection of the health and safety of staff.

The Chinese authorities later decided to postpone the Forum, saying further information would be announced in due course.

JOBS provides technical support to ILO-WEEH

JOB Opportunities and Business Support (JOBS), a project funded by USAID Bangladesh, recently provided technical support to seven partner organizations of the ILO's Women, Empowerment through Employment and Health (WEEH) Project, the *New Nation* reported.

JOBS facilitated the training as a BDS (Business Development Support) facilitator while WEEH-ILO organized the event. Identifying the need of ILO-WEEH, JOBS

designed two training modules. The two-weeks Training of Trainers (TOT) course of Entrepreneurship Development and Business Management (EDBM) was for the staff of partner NGOs and the one-week EDBM course was for 4,000 women entrepreneurs of those NGOs who have experience in Income Generating Activities (IGA) and have potential for micro enterprise development.

This would help the women entrepreneurs to manage and expand their businesses

using local resources and by establishing market linkages. Before the induction of this programme, JOBS was involved in training employees of the partner NGOs and also provided other support required to train women entrepreneurs in the field. JOBS is working as a BDS facilitator to promote the capacity of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) by developing organizational productivity through human resource development using local resource and establishing sustainable market linkages, according to *New Nation*.

Asia Pacific Regional Meetings (August – December 2003)

18-21 Aug 03	(Bangkok Thailand) Asian Regional Workers' Seminar on Decent Work in Agriculture
15-17 Sept 03	(Bangkok Thailand) ILO Tripartite Regional Meeting on the Social Impact of the Economic Crisis in the Tourism Industry of Asia and the Pacific
24-26 Sept 03	(Bhubaneswar, Orissa) South Asian Sub-Regional Meeting on Showcasing Best Practices of Social Dialogue
6-8 Oct 03	(Auckland, New Zealand) South East Asian Sub-Regional Tripartite Forum on Decent Work
7-14 Oct 03	(Bangkok, Thailand) Technical Guidelines on Safety & Health in Ship Breaking
1st week of Nov 03	(Bangkok, Thailand) Sub-Regional Meeting on Labour Market Information
2-3 Dec 03	(Dhaka, Bangladesh) BEF/JBF/ILO/IOE 6th Asia-Pacific High-Level Employers' Conference
8-10 Dec'03	(Bangkok, Thailand) ILO/APSDEP Life-Long Learning Meeting

Sport for all

Sport teaches life skills, and remains the best school in life

H.E. Adolf Ogi, special adviser to UN secretary-general Kofi Annan, delivered a powerful message on the value of Sport for Development and Peace at a special address at Chulalongkorn University in March. The former president of the Swiss Confederation (on two occasions), who is also a former director of the highly successful Swiss National Ski Team, said that positive lessons and values of sport are essential for life.

"With sport, young people learn to manage victory, overcome defeat, become team players, respect opponents and the rules and understand that regular training is required for good results. It also teaches young people to know their limits and better understand themselves," Ogi said.

A UN system inter-agency task force is



Deputy-Director of ILO's Subregional office, Bangkok, Pongsri Phantumvanit, left, and H.E. Adolf Ogi, following a meeting with ILO's constituents in Bangkok.

exploring possibilities of forging partnerships and getting commitments for projects involving sports organizations and UN system agencies. There are already 130 projects in place worldwide with plans under consideration for developing sports infrastructure in Afghanistan and East Timor.

Ogi cited the ILO's involvement in a success story in Mozambique. Through dialogue with the minister of labour, employers and trades unions, innovative ways of creating jobs and developing vocational

training centers and small enterprises were realised through the development of a local industry manufacturing sports equipment.

ILO programme coordinator for Universitas Giovanni di Cola accompanied Ogi on his missions. Ogi and di Cola met with ILO constituents from employer and worker groups during the visit.

Deputy prime minister Korn Dabbaransi, President of the International Badminton Association hosted Ogi during his visit, and treated him to a programme of Thai boxing at Ratchadamnoen stadium. Ogi also enjoyed an introduction to Sepak Takraw.

The Magglingen Declaration, developed last month at a Sport and Development International Conference in Magglingen, Switzerland, states that sport is a human right, and an ideal learning ground for life's essential skills.

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Please note: KEIDANREN and

NIKKEIREN have merged under the name:
NIPPON KEIDANREN

NIKKEIREN International Cooperation Centre (NICC) has changed its name to:
NIPPON-KEIDANREN International Cooperation Centre

Its abbreviation remains NICC. Please note contact details remain the same.

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