



Mr. Somkiat Chayasriwong, Permanent Secretary of MOL jointly listened to the viewpoints of representatives from fishing and seashore fishing-related industries toward the problems of the registration of migrant workers; namely Burma, Lao, and Cambodia, and labour shortage in fishing industries since Thai and foreign workers have refused to work in this sector due to the harsh condition which includes long period of working in the sea and high pressure. Regarding the current solution, employers have to rest on foreign workers by employing these workers both legal and illegal migrant workers

Mr. Mongkol Sukchareounkana, President of Samut Songkhram Double Tugboat Fishery Association presented the problems of using foreign workers in fishing and seashore fishing-related industries that the problems have remained unsolved until present and no matter how often the registration was undertaken, the crux of the problem could not be untangled. In addition, there were many government agencies having responsibilities on this matter; however, he was appreciated with the performance of MOL as it worked closely and paid attention to systematic arrangement of foreign labour, and was well aware of the actual problems. Additionally, there were some critical problems that employers often faced with. Namely, due to the nature of fishery works, workers always had to move and sometimes after registration, these workers had escaped when they got back from the sea. While there was only one time registration a year and therefore, this led to the labour shortage and subsequent problems such as employment of illegal migrant workers, labour bribes. More reflected, even the BOI-promoted enterprises must employ foreign workers and the problem of human trafficking which affected fishing industries and overall country's economic stand. Therefore, he called on the government to consider the alternative labour replacement which was the key to move forward the business operation consecutively since there was no one willing to act against the law.

Mr. Kitti Kosolsakul, president of Trad Fishery Association, added some points regarding the period of registration between 2-3 months which was inadequate for fishing operators as the nature of fishing work routinely went out far from the shoreline and some ships faced with the storms causing them to be unable to register in times. Therefore, he proposed 2 ideas; first, the registration should be undertaken at any time throughout the year and the government would get more payroll tax and reduce employment of illegal migrant workers. Another idea, operators that currently hired illegal migrant workers should be exempt from the penalty in

order to reduce labour bribe and illegal patronage and the suppression unit must inspect and seriously compel. No matter how seriously pushed them off, if these workers were willing to work, they will also illegally enter into country. Hence, appropriate means should be carried out to render a lawful track.

Mr. Somkiat underlined regarding the expired period of registration as of 14 July that in fishing industry, there were some document submitted to register and the government allowed employers to bring their employees to process the registration service within 150-day grace period. Therefore, he called on the National Fisheries Association of Thailand to raise awareness of the extension period to its members as each registration must pass proposing and consideration processes which must strictly carry out in order to reorganize foreign worker employment, and to solve a labour shortage in the key sectors to move forward country's production mechanism and economy. In addition to the discussion on labour shortage solution, MOL was willing to hear every viewpoint in order to seek for the solution as well as recognizing their current difficulties, therefore, fishing sector, in particular, the National Fisheries Association of Thailand was requested to conclude the precise amount of labour demands and shortage in order to mutually seek for the solution. Moreover, country's security was also important to be considered simultaneously with driving country's economy, **as a result, MOL had adhered on the principle of opening the gate and closing the entrance in order to render sustainable reorganization of foreign labour**

by focusing on

how to legalize these workers that enabled the government to monitor and provide labour protection according to human rights basis. Likewise, the country must across the problem of "human trafficking

" by establishing a clear policy to show an appropriate and accurate foreign labour management. In this regard,

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proposed that there should design a clear employment contract as the previous pattern of employment contract or a payment form were often done by writing on accounting books which should be altered to a form of employment contract.

On 20 July, 2011, The National Fisheries Association of Thailand will hold its meeting and today's discussion issues will be proposed to the meeting such as a quota or a clear amount of labour demand in fishing and fishing-related industries, the means of labour replacement, and the interest of Thai workers if there is an implementation of government policy on 300-baht minimum wage.

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