

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ
السلام علیکم ورحمۃ اللہ وبرکاتہ

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The phenomenon of migration is as old as the hills. It has evolved through history and generations to its present form in modern age. Migration implies contribution and thus progress and we need to manage it, not deter it.

Migration management has become complex and dynamic owing to the dynamic and complex nature of crime – crime has become transnational as well as organized.

Pakistan is a source, transit, and destination of migration – both in legal as well as illegal sphere; owing to its geo-strategic position. Whilst, Pakistan encourages legal migration and travel abroad; Pakistan has laid special emphasis in administrative, legislative and law enforcement sphere to stop illegal movement of people from and to Pakistan, in unison with other countries and international/UN organization at all levels.

The steps taken by Pakistan to address the issue of illegal immigration are :

MRP

Pakistan has instituted Machine Readable Passports (MRPs) and most of the passport holders of Pakistan, possess MRP. This is in line with The International Standards of Permit Regimes. Pakistan Embassies abroad have also been authorised to issue MRPs and about a dozen of them even have the capacity to issue MRPs on the spot.

PISCES

Personal Identification Secure Comparison and Evaluation System (PISCES) has been installed by Government of Pakistan at all entry/exit points in Pakistan to record the movement of people.

IATF

Pakistan has established the Inter-agency Task Force, comprising of the law enforcement agencies, dealing with border management in different aspects. The Inter-agency Task Force intercepts and apprehends the intending migrants, ready to cross Pakistan's borders illegally. It was created in 2006 and in the year 2007 and 2008, more than 10,000 such intending migrants have been apprehended each year.

PACHTO

Pakistan was earlier regulating the immigration issue under an Act Promulgated in 1979. However, in year 2005, "Prevention and Control of Human Trafficking Ordinance" (PACHTO) was promulgated. The ordinance addresses the issue of trafficking in persons. The traffickers/agents are penalised, whilst, the trafficked persons are treated as victims.

NAP

Pakistan formulated a National Action Plan (NAP) in 2005. It considers three Ps, as given below :

1. Prevention;
2. Prosecution; and
3. Protection

Whilst, the first two Ps are dealt with, by the administrative and legislative measures; the protection part is covered under the NAP. On this area, the government of Pakistan has established shelter homes for women and children across Pakistan. Such shelter homes are operated by Government of Pakistan, itself as well as with assistance from IOM.

Pakistan has also initiated many bilateral and multilateral initiatives. Pakistan, Iran, Turkey and Greece have a quadrilateral agreement in illegal immigration. Pakistan, Iran, and UAE have a tri-lateral group to deal with this menace. "Dubai Process" and UNODC initiated "Triangular Initiative" are some of the international measures to this effect. In "Dubai Process", Canada and G-8 countries have vowed to provide Afghanistan and Pakistan necessary

assistance in setting up bio-metric system, replicating and compatible to Pakistan's biometric border control system at Pakistan-Afghanistan border. This will, definitely reduce/check illegal immigration from this region.

There is an incident worth quoting; in which over 100 Afghanistan nationals crossed (2200 long and porous) Pakistan-Afghanistan border in a container and 45 of them lost their lives due to suffocation. They were bound for Malaysia, Indonesia and Australia. They were treated and handed over to Afghanistan Government on their request.

For Pakistan the area of concern is Pakistan-Iran-Turkey-Greece-Spain region as 60% of illegal immigration from Pakistan has taken place from this route.

Recently the Indonesia, Malaysia, Australia region has been a target/route of the traffickers. These traffickers take illegal intending immigrants to some transit country on valid/genuine travel documents. From there, they go to country of destination, illegally by sea or air.

Since push factors like poverty, illiteracy, natural calamities, law and order situation, health problems, war, etc, force people to go for greener pastures abroad where the pull factors like better pay, health, social and educational opportunities attract them; there is a need to invest in such sectors in developing and least developed countries.