



17 June 2024

Condolence Message to the families of fire victims in Kuwait

It is with deep sorrow that we received the news of the devastating fire in a migrant workers' accommodation building in the Mangaf area in southern Kuwait that resulted in the death of at least 49 migrant workers from India and the Philippines and injured more than 50 people. The Christian Conference of Asia (CCA) expresses its deepest condolences and sincere sympathies to the families of the deceased, while also praying for the speedy recovery of the injured.

We share the grief of the family members of the departed who are yet to reconcile themselves to the loss of their dear ones and of all those who are injured and struggling to recover from the physical and mental torment.

As of now, forty-two of the dead were reportedly Indians and three were from the Philippines; most of those who died were aged between 20 and 50. Among the Indians, 24 of were from the south Indian state of Kerala, seven from Tamil Nadu, two each from Andhra Pradesh and Odisha, and one each from Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, West Bengal, and Uttar Pradesh; they include engineers, accountants, supervisors, drivers, and other professionals. Filipino and Nepali workers are also among the injured.

The Mangaf tragedy in Kuwait is not an isolated event. These kinds of tragic incidents are the result of a protracted apathy towards protecting the rights of migrant workers, their safety, security and working conditions in destination countries. Although it is reported as an accidental blaze, and the investigation into its causes and details is underway, the Mangaf incident has once again underscored the need for ensuring safe working and living conditions for migrant workers in destination countries.

The international consultation organised by the CCA and held in Dubai, UAE recently (31 May to 3 June 2024) on Asian Diaspora in Transition: Migration and Human Trafficking to West Asia (Arabian Gulf), as part of its Asian Ecumenical Migrant Network, discussed the deplorable living and working conditions of the migrant workers in destination counties in West Asia including Kuwait. CCA has been expressing concerns over the living and working conditions of migrant workers on several occasions especially during several international conferences on advocacy on the rights and dignity of migrant workers.

The loss of the families of the victims of the Mangaf tragedy is heartbreaking and beyond words. Our thoughts and prayers are with all those who have lost their near and dear ones. We pray that the injured will recover at the earliest. May divine grace strengthen and console all family members, friends, and coworkers of those who lost their lives in the fatal outbreak of fire in Mangaf, Kuwait.

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General Secretary, CCA