



**TAKING BACK WHAT'S OURS: ACHIEVING JUSTICE IN
THE TIME OF COVID-19**
**Stories of Success and Empowerment of Migrant Workers
who experienced Wage Theft during COVID-19**

10 DECEMBER 2021 (HUMAN RIGHTS DAY) | 6:30PM-8:00PM MANILA (GMT+8)

BACKGROUND

In June 2020, a coalition of civil society organizations and trade unions launched the Justice for Wage Theft campaign working towards establishing an urgent justice mechanism for migrant workers who experienced wage theft during COVID-19. This is after the volume of wage theft cases drastically increased following forced terminations and repatriation of workers without being paid their due salaries, allowances, and end-of-service benefits.

One of the major gaps within this issue is the lack of documentation both in the countries of origin and destination, in which there were no measures in place to monitor and record the situation of migrant workers being repatriated, such as rights violations and abuse, including non-payment of wages. As part of the campaign, the co-launchers, together with its key partners at the national and regional level have been consistently documenting cases of wage theft as part of its evidence-based advocacy. These documented cases are being consolidated and further developed into reports that aim to reflect and analyze situations of wage theft experienced by migrant workers during COVID-19 and recommend solutions such as measures and mechanisms that can further expedite and leverage migrant workers' access to justice during this time.

Alongside the development of analysis reports, partners of the campaign provide further support to migrant workers who have come forward to report their cases, to assist in reaching out to companies and claiming back their wages through the necessary legal processes. While achieving justice during the pandemic has been a difficult feat for migrant workers, there are still a number of successes among workers who have been able to claim back the wages and benefits they were owed despite the challenges confronted. In commemoration of Human Rights Day, Migrant Forum in Asia as part of the Justice for Wage Theft Campaign's series of December activities, is organizing a session highlighting migrant workers and advocates stories of success in claiming back their wages as well as stories of workers' empowerment in their journey towards achieving justice amidst the pandemic.

OBJECTIVES

1. Have an experience sharing among migrant workers and advocates on their success stories and other stories of empowerment to identify common experiences and learn possible strategies that can be used in taking up issues of wage theft.
2. Empower migrant workers and advocates (such as from civil society, trade unions, and community organizations) in pursuing cases of wage theft and claiming what is owed to them.

REGISTRATION:

TENTATIVE PROGRAM AGENDA

TIME (Manila time, GMT+8)	AGENDA	SPEAKER
6:30PM-6:35PM (5 minutes)	Opening remarks and Introduction	Ayessa Nilong , Program Assistant, Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA)
6:35PM-6:45PM (10 minutes)	The Struggle towards Justice: The Case of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) from Malaysia	Sumitha Kishna Our Journey, Malaysia Lawyers Beyond Borders
6:45PM-7:00PM (15 minutes)	Strength in Unity: The collective mobilization of migrant workers from Kerala	Parvathy Devi Researcher, Center for Indian Migrant Studies (CIMS, Kerala) Gopakumar Subramanian Namboothiri NSH Ex-Employees Action Council , Protest group of former employees of NSH Saudi Arabia
7:00PM-7:10PM (10 minutes)	Empowered in Advocacy: The Story of Returning Filipino migrant workers from Macau	Rowena Lagman Documenter, Center for Migrant Advocacy (CMA, Philippines) and returnee migrant worker from Macau
7:10PM-7:20PM (10 minutes)	An Unexpected Triumph: Overcoming Injustices during the Pandemic	Bikash Dhungana Project Coordinator Pravasi Nepal Coordination Committee (PNCC, Nepal) Nandalal Subedi Returnee migrant worker from Qatar
7:20PM-7:55PM (35 minutes)	OPEN FLOOR and Q&A	Moderator: Ayessa Nilong , Program Assistant, Migrant Forum in

		Asia (MFA)
7:55PM-8:00PM	CLOSING REMARKS	TBC