The social impact of mothers with young children going abroad for work is high – discussed in the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Children, Women and Gender

Date : 18-12-2023

- **The absence of a specific body for the regulation and supervision of daycare centers and the fact that daycare centers are not properly registered is problematic.**

The report to be submitted to the Parliament regarding the issues and recommendations related to the safety and care of children between the ages of 0-5 years of working women in Sri Lanka was considered in the Sectoral Oversight Committee on Children, Women, and Gender. It was discussed in the Sectoral Oversight Committee that the impact on the growing child of 0-5 years of age without mother's care will have a huge social impact in the next 20-25 years.

The Sectoral Oversight Committee on Children, Women and Gender met on 08.12.2023 at the Parliament Premises under the chairmanship of the Member of Parliament Hon. Talatha Athukorala.

According to Ministry Circular No. 02/2023, permission has been given for mothers with children aged 02 and above to go abroad, thereby the child loses the ability to receive breast milk, and the bond between mother and child is also lost, the committee emphasized.

Furthermore, it was discussed that the loss of the mother from a young age is likely to result in a very violent generation in the future, and because the children are deprived of care from a young age due to the mother moving abroad and there is a tendency for those children to be involved in drugs and other criminal activities in the future. It was also discussed that since children are under someone else's care, they can be molested not only by neighbors, but also by close relatives such as fathers and grandfathers.

It was emphasized that there is a strong need for daycare centers that operate based on safe and formal recommendations for children in early childhood.

It was further discussed that there is no specific institution for the regulation and supervision of daycare centers that daycare centers are not properly registered and the data related to daycare centers is very deficient.

The committee was of the opinion that the above problems can be avoided by following the provisions of the National Guidelines for Child Day Care Centers in Sri Lanka compiled and published by the National Child Protection Authority.

Accordingly, it was recommended by the sectoral Oversight Committee on Children, Women, and Gender relations to regulate the quality of daycare centers in Sri Lanka and to re-enforce the law that prevented mothers with children under the age of 05 from leaving for foreign employment.

The members of the Sectoral Oversight Committee, Hon. Muditha Prishanthi, Hon. Dullas

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Alahapperuma, Hon. D. Weerasinghe, Hon. Manjula Dissanayake, and with the permission of the Committee Chair Hon. J. C. Alawathuwala were present at the Committee.

Furthermore, officials representing the Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment, National Child Protection Authority, Department of Probation and Child Care Services, National Secretariat for Early Childhood Development and a group of youth representatives appointed to the Sectoral Oversight Committee also participated in this meeting.