

# Poor countries need to allow more immigration, too

The governments of poor countries are right to complain about the West's restrictive immigration policies. But they are often guilty of the same

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A POLITICAL brain teaser: which party in which country has promised “punitive measures” against illegal immigration, has threatened to disenfranchise people who arrived half a century ago and has told migrants to “be prepared with their bags packed”?

The answer is not the National Front of France, the United Kingdom Independence Party, Jobbik of Hungary or indeed any other insurgent political party in the West. It is the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party of India. The BJP and its leader, Narendra Modi, rail against immigrants from Bangladesh, of whom there might well be more in India than there are Mexicans in America. This nativist ranting is evidence of a nasty strain of developing-world demagoguery.

Pakistan is currently trying to evict hundreds of thousands of Afghan immigrants, some of whom have lived in the country for decades. Gabon and Equatorial Guinea are expelling migrants from central Africa. Mexico, which complains bitterly (and rightly) about the treatment of its people in America, does far too little to prevent the mass kidnapping and murder of immigrants from Central America.

All political leaders, even dictators, must take some note of how their people feel, and the citizens of poor and middle-income countries are often no better disposed to immigrants than are voters in the rich world. Besides, a government that threatens to shut its refugee camps or uproot millions of migrant workers from their homes might be able to extort some money out of Western donors. But the treatment meted out to immigrants in developing countries is nonetheless dismal—futile, illiberal and economically ruinous.

Even in rich countries, where most workers have formal jobs and are known to the authorities, illegal immigrants are hard to catch. In poorer countries, where the state is weak and almost everybody works informally, it is close to impossible. National boundaries tend to be porous. At about 4,100km (2,500 miles), the border between Bangladesh and India is longer than the border between Mexico and the United States. It is so thinly policed that cattle can be trafficked across it. Like migrants everywhere, the people who cross into developing countries are nearly always trying to better themselves and their families. Unlike the migrants who make it to the West and the Gulf states, they are frequently very poor indeed. When America and Europe tighten their borders, middle-class Indians and Nigerians lose out; when India and Nigeria crack down, some of the world's most desperate people suffer.

### **A populist boomerang**

The astounding success of the south Asians who were booted out of Kenya and Uganda in the 1970s and ended up in Britain suggests that Africa would have done well to keep them. Migrants bring dynamism and fresh ideas to poor and middle-income countries as well as rich ones; the lump-of-labour fallacy is just as fallacious in the developing world. Sometimes governments realise this and pull back. In 2014 South Sudan unveiled a mad plan to force companies to sack their foreign workers within a month. It backtracked when firms and charities pointed out that they could not function without Kenyans and other immigrants. South Sudan is not exactly overflowing with skilled graduates who can keep the lights on.

It would be far better for the immigrants and for the countries where they fetch up if governments widened the legal routes for settlement. At present some of the world's least appealing places have the toughest visa requirements and expect economic migrants to jump through the tiniest hoops. You would think their streets were paved with gold.

譯文：

貧窮國家也須允許更多移民

貧窮國家的政府埋怨西方國家的限制性移民政策雖然並無不妥，但他們也常犯下相同的錯誤。

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有一則關於政治的腦筋急轉彎是這樣的：哪個國家的哪個政黨承諾採取「懲罰性措施」來對抗非法移民，威脅已居住半世紀的移民，剝奪他們的權利，他們還被告知「要打包行李準備離開」？

答案並非法國國民陣線(the National Front of France)、英國獨立黨(Independence Party)、匈牙利尤比克黨(Jobbik)，更絕非其他西方國家的反對政黨，而是印度執政的人民黨(BJP-Bharatiya Janata Party)。該黨和其政黨領導者納倫德拉·莫迪(Narendra Modi) 斥責孟加拉移民，其住在印度的人數量可能比住在美國的墨西哥移民人數還多。本土人士的激烈言論顯示開發中國家惡劣的煽動行為。

巴基斯坦目前設法驅逐數十萬阿富汗移民，一些人在當地已居住了數十年。加彭和赤道幾內亞也正在驅逐中非來的移民。墨西哥抱怨(有其正當性)其人民在美國所受到的遭遇，但它在防止中美洲移民被大規模的綁架和屠殺的事情上卻無作為。

所有的政治領導人，甚至獨裁者，必須注意人民的感受。中低收入國家的國民在處理移民的問題上，通常不比高收入國家的國民來的更寬容大度。此外，當一個政府要脅要關閉難民營或是將百萬移工逐出其家園時，還可能向西方捐助者敲詐一筆錢財。但如果以同樣的手段對待開發中國家移民時，結果卻令人傷心，既徒勞，又狹隘，還會毀滅經濟。

高收入國家大部分人都有正式工作，受到主管機關監管。即使在這樣富裕的國家，非法移民仍然抓不勝抓。而貧窮國家，國力衰弱，幾乎人人都非法工作，因此要逮捕非法移民幾乎不太可能。國家邊境管制向來有漏洞。

孟加拉和印度邊境比美墨邊境還長，約4,100 公里長（2,500英哩）。邊境巡防鬆散，可輕易地穿越邊境走私牛隻等牲畜。和各地移民一樣，人們來到開發中國家無非是想為自己和家人尋求更好的生活，但跟西方國家和波灣國家的移民不同的是，來到開發中國家的移民通常非常貧窮。美國和歐洲各國嚴加管制邊境後，印度和奈及利亞的中產階級受到損失；而當印度和奈及利亞兩國對移民採取嚴厲管制時，受到損失的是世界上最絕望無助的人民。

### 自食其果的民粹主義

南亞人在1970年代遭到肯亞和烏干達兩國政府驅逐，最後他們來到了英國，創造驚人的成就。如果當初這兩個非洲國家把南亞人留下，他們本該享有更好的發展。外來移民能帶給中低收入國家和高收入國家注入活力和新的想法。勞動合成理論的謬誤，在開發中國家也同樣是一種錯謬（譯者註：勞動合成謬誤認為社會中需要做的工作總量是固定的）有時一些政府意識到這一點，會停止它們的計畫。2014年，南蘇丹揭露一項瘋狂的計畫，逼迫企業在一個月內解僱外籍勞工。但是當企業和公益團體表示，如果沒有肯亞和其他國家的移民，他們的組織便無法運作，因此這項計畫最終被取消。更確切地說，南蘇丹技術人才不足，難以確保國家能正常運作。

如果政府放寬移民合法居住的管道，對移民和其所到的國家會更好。目前最不吸引人的地方有著最嚴苛的簽證要求，並指望著經濟移民要通過最嚴苛的管道。你可能會以為這些國家的街道鋪滿了黃金。

（摘自經濟學人雜誌）

譯者註：勞動合成理論謬誤認為社會中需要做的工作總量是固定的。