

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1620
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.12.2018

DATA RELATED TO INDIAN WORKERS DUPED ABROAD

1620. Dr. VINAY P. SAHASRABUDDHE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Ministry has any data compilation mechanism of Indians who were duped by employers of agents promising jobs abroad and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the other Steps the Ministry is taking to tackle this problem in the Gulf countries and Malaysia; and
- (c) whether Government is coordinating with NGOs or law firms working to help these migrants?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) The Government has been receiving from time to time complaints/grievances from emigrants and their family members/relatives of being cheated by illegal agents. The Ministry of External Affairs, (MEA) has a robust grievance redressal mechanism including MADAD and e-Migrate portals for online registration of grievances of emigrants who have been subjected to cheating. Such complaints are forwarded to concerned State Governments and Police authorities urging them to apprehend illegal agents and prosecute them. Wherever required, such complaints are also referred to Mission/Posts abroad for providing relief/rescue. As per the available records, the number of complaints against unregistered agents received and referred to the State Government/Police during the period of 2016-2018 is as under:

Year	No. of Complaints	Cases referred to State Governments for action	Prosecution Sanction sought by State Government	Prosecution Sanction issued by Ministry of External Affairs
2016	231	231	42	42
2017	446	446	30	30
2018 #	322	322	15	15

(up to 30th November, 2018)

(b) In May 2016 Ministry of External Affairs issued a Standard Operating Procedure to be followed by States on receipt of complaints of cheating by illegal agents by emigrants. Visual and print media campaigns are also launched from time to time for promoting legal and safe

migration and encouraging emigrants to use the services of registered Recruiting Agents to avoid being trapped by illegal/fake agents.

In order to promote safe and legal emigration and to curb the activities of the overseas recruitment business being carried out by illegal agents, a high-level Conference of major labour sending States was convened on 10th January, 2018, in New Delhi, with External Affairs Minister as the chairperson during which, State Governments were, inter-alia, requested to pro-actively check the growth of illegal agents who indulge in overseas recruitment activities illegally and to take strict action against them. They were requested to launch awareness campaigns in vernacular medium for wider coverage and assimilation, which has been done.

(c) Government of India has revised the guidelines of the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) in the Indian Missions to enable Indian Missions to meet contingency expenditure incurred by them for carrying out various on-site welfare activities for overseas Indian Citizens who are in distress, on a means tested basis.

Under ICWF, Indian Missions and Posts abroad provide legal assistance, including legal advice and guidance, on request, to Indian nationals who have committed minor crimes, offences or have been falsely implicated by their employer and put in jails; fishermen/seamen/sailors/Indian students in distress; and Indian women abandoned/ cheated / abused by their NRI/PIO or foreign spouses (upto seven years after their marriage).

In accordance the revised ICWF Guidelines Missions/Posts in GCC countries may appoint on basis of GFR principles, on annual contract, a panel of 3-5 local lawyers/firms proficient in local language and law, and who enjoy credibility and have commitment and experience to assist deserving Indian nationals in distress. Details of the law firms hired and rates charged by them are generally available on the website of the concerned Mission/Consulate.
