

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION- 2171**  
ANSWERED ON - 07/08/2025

**WELFARE OF INDIAN MIGRANT WORKERS STATIONED ABROAD**

2171. SMT. JEBI MATHER HISHAM

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:-

- (a) steps taken to ensure the welfare of Indian migrant workers stationed abroad;
- (b) whether government will revise and expand minimum referral wages in line with rising living costs, inflation, and migration expenses;
- (c) whether timely issuance of Non-Objection and experience certificates for Indian nurses abroad be ensured post-resignation;
- (d) whether monthly jail visits will be initiated to monitor Indian prisoners abroad and prevent human rights violations, including denial of legal aid; and
- (e) whether the Emigration Bill, 2021, will be expedited and whether regular consular visits to the Caribbean Islands will be initiated to address issues faced by Indians in countries without resident missions?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) The Government accords the highest priority to the safety, protection and well-being of all Indian nationals abroad, with various mechanisms in place to address such issues. It has established such mechanisms to enable Indian nationals abroad to reach out to the Indian Missions in case they need any assistance. Indian nationals can contact the Missions/Posts through various channels like walk-in, email, social media, multilingual 24x7 emergency numbers and also grievance redressal portals like MADAD, CPGRAMS, eMigrate etc. In addition, Indian Missions/Posts abroad have established toll-free helplines, Whatsapp numbers and have launched mobile apps to enable Indian nationals contact concerned Indian Missions/Posts when in distress or in emergency situation. To ensure safe and orderly emigration for Indian emigrant workers, the process of recruitment is done through eMigrate portal. The web-based application makes the process of emigration fully digital, transparent, safe, legal, humane, efficient, convenient and faster. A dedicated helpline and support system is also available to assist emigrants and other stakeholders to address any query/issue.

Moreover, Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendras (PBSK) have been set up in New Delhi, Dubai (UAE), Riyadh and Jeddah (Saudi Arabia) and Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) and Kshetriya Pravasi Sahayata Kendras (KPSKs) in Kochi, Hyderabad, Chennai, Lucknow, Patna and Chandigarh to provide assistance, guidance and counseling to Indian nationals in distress.

Our Missions/Posts abroad also utilize the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) to provide the following assistance to the Indian nationals in distress on a means-tested basis:

- (i) Transportation of mortal remains to India or cremation with the consent of the family;
- (ii) Emergency medical care;
- (iii) Legal assistance;
- (iv) Boarding and lodging; and
- (v) Air passage for stranded Indians.

Besides, the Missions in Gulf Countries have provisions for shelter home to assist Indian women in distress by providing boarding and lodging, medical treatment and arranging for their repatriation. Female workers who are stranded and are in distress can approach the Embassies at any time of the day and they are accommodated and provided all facilities till they are repatriated to India.

Further, the Government has taken several initiatives such as Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojna (PBBY) and Pre-Departure Orientation Training (PDOT) in ensuring that Indian migrant workers undertake safe migration, have decent working and living conditions in destination countries, are aware of their rights and have access to various welfare schemes of the Government.

Based on MoUs signed with the GCC countries, matters related to welfare and protection of workers are taken up during regular meetings of Joint Working Groups with concerned countries. In addition, such matters are also regularly taken up with respective host governments through diplomatic channels. Further, Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreements have been signed with seven countries, which seek to enhance global employment opportunities for Indian workers while protecting their labour rights, preventing irregular migration and supporting skill development.

(b) Government accords utmost priority to the welfare, protection and ease of living of Indian nationals working abroad. To prevent exploitation of Indian workers by Foreign Employers (FEs), the Government has fixed the Minimum Referral Wages (MRW) to regulate the wages of Indian migrant workers seeking employment in the Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries.

The details of MRWs so fixed are available on the eMigrate portal as well as the websites of the Missions/Posts in ECR countries. This has also been conveyed to the host Governments in ECR countries.

Ministry enforces the MRW through the offices of Protector of Emigrants (POEs). The POEs while granting the mandatory Emigration Clearance (EC), in accordance with Section 22 of the Emigration Act 1983, read with Rule 15 of Emigration Rules, to the Indian nationals holding Emigration Check Required category passport and proceeding to any of the ECR countries for employment purposes, checks wages offered by the Foreign Employers (FEs) and deny the EC if wage so offered is below the prescribed MRW.

Ministry revises the MRW from time to time to keep it relevant in light of the rising cost of living and inflation in destination countries and in India. The last revision of MRW was undertaken in 2021-2022.

(c) No-Objection and Experience Certificates are issued by the Foreign Employers. Whenever any complaints regarding delay or non-issuance of such certificates are received, our Missions/Posts take up the issue with the Foreign Employers/local authorities on case-to-case basis.

(d) The Government attaches high priority to the safety and well-being of Indians in foreign countries, including those lodged in jails abroad. Indian Missions / Posts abroad remain vigilant and closely monitor the incidents of Indian nationals being lodged in jails in foreign countries for violations/alleged violations of local laws. As soon as the information about the detention / arrest of an Indian national is received by an Indian Mission / Post, it immediately gets in touch with the local Foreign Office and other concerned local authorities to get consular access to the detained / arrested Indian national to ascertain the facts of the case, confirm his / her Indian nationality and ensure his / her welfare.

Missions / Posts remain observant to ensure that rights of the Indian prisoners in foreign jails are protected. While Missions / Posts conduct regular visits to the prisons to meet the Indian nationals in jail, the frequency of such visits depends on the local laws. Due to strong privacy laws prevailing in many countries, the local authorities do not share information on prisoners unless the person concerned consents to the disclosure of such information. Even countries which share information do not generally provide detailed information about the foreign nationals imprisoned.

Apart from extending all possible consular assistance to Indian nationals imprisoned abroad, Indian Missions and Posts also assist in providing legal aid, whenever needed. Missions and Posts also maintain a local panel of lawyers where Indian community is in sizeable numbers. No fee is charged from any Indian prisoner for extending facilities by the Indian Embassy concerned. The Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) is set up in Indian Missions / Posts abroad for assisting overseas Indian nationals in distress situations on a means-tested basis in deserving cases. The support extended under ICWF includes financial assistance to Indian prisoners for legal aid.

(e) The draft Emigration Bill is under consideration in the Ministry.

Heads of Indian Missions and consular officials of the Indian Missions in the Caribbean region regularly visit the countries concurrently accredited to the resident Indian Missions to address any issues faced by Indians. During such visits of Heads of Mission and consular officials to the concurrently accredited countries, consular camps, meetings and open houses are organized with Indian community members.

Moreover, Missions maintain direct communication with Indian community members of these accredited countries through WhatsApp groups where they are encouraged to reach out to the Mission officials directly for any assistance or consular support. Additionally, the Missions have also established a 24x7 emergency contact number for Indian community, displayed on their websites, to ensure prompt assistance to Indian nationals in distress.

Missions also provide consular services through courier/postal services to the Indian applicants of these countries, wherever applicable.

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