

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION DIARY NO-551
ANSWERED ON- 24/07/2025

CONDITION OF INDIAN WORKERS IN GULF REGION

551. SHRI M. MOHAMED ABDULLA

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

- (a) the measures Government is taking to address the exploitation of millions of Indian workers in the Gulf, especially in construction and domestic work, where they face degrading conditions;
- (b) whether Government has engaged with Gulf countries to improve labor law enforcement and protect Indian workers from abuse, wage theft, and unsafe conditions; and
- c) whether it is a fact that nearly 3,000 deaths of Indian workers took place in the Gulf in recent years, and the steps Government is taking to provide legal support and ensure emergency repatriation for those at risk?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

- (a) The Government of India accords highest priority to the safety, protection and wellbeing of Indian workers abroad, including those engaged in construction and domestic work in the Gulf countries.

The Government has established various mechanisms to enable Indian workers to reach out to the Indian Missions in case they need any assistance. Indian workers 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 etc. In addition, Indian Missions/Posts abroad have established Toll Free Helplines, WhatsApp numbers and have launched mobile Apps to enable Indian nationals contact respective Indian Missions/Posts in case of need.

On receipt of complaints of exploitation from Indian workers our Missions abroad, including in the Gulf countries, promptly take action including reaching out to the foreign employers/sponsors/local Government authorities as well as the Recruiting Agents for redressal of the complaint.

The Missions in Gulf Countries have provisions to assist Indian women in distress by providing boarding and lodging, medical treatment and arranging for their repatriation. Female workers who are stranded or distressed, can approach the Embassies at any time of the day and are provided all necessary facilitation till their repatriation to India.

Besides, Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendras (PBSK) have been set up in New Delhi and at Dubai (UAE), Riyadh & Jeddah (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) to provide assistance, guidance and counselling to Indian nationals in distress.

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.

Indian Missions/Posts regularly organize Open Houses and Consular Camps in remote areas to get feedback from Indian workers residing in such areas and to address their grievances, if any. On receipt of complaint from or on behalf of the emigrant, the same is taken up pro-actively with concerned Foreign Employer (FE) and the work place of the aggrieved worker is also visited, if required. The complaints pertaining to employment issues are also taken up with the local labour department and other relevant authorities of the host country for prompt redressal.

Further, as additional safeguard for protection and safety of the Female workers (including domestic sector workers), Government has authorized only State run Recruiting Agencies (RAs) to recruit Indian female workers holding ECR category passports for overseas employment in Gulf and other notified ECR Countries through the e-Migrate Portal. Moreover, there is a minimum age criteria of 30 years for female workers holding ECR category passport for overseas employment to protect them against exploitation.

(b) Labour and Manpower Cooperation Agreements are in place with the Gulf countries Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Jordan, that provide bilateral framework for cooperation on labour and manpower issues. These MoUs and Agreements have provision of implementation through a Joint Working Group where matters related to welfare and protection of workers are taken up during regular meetings of Joint Working Groups with concerned countries.

(c) As per the data available, a total of 7,001 and 3,723 death cases of Indian nationals (including Indian workers) from various causes in the Gulf countries were reported in 2024 and 2025 (till June), respectively.

The Missions/Posts utilize the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) from time to time to provide financial and legal assistance to Indian nationals in distress abroad including workers in Gulf countries on a means-tested basis. Under ICWF, the major assistance/facilitation like Boarding & Lodging, Air Passage to India, Legal Assistance, Emergency Medical Care, Transportation of Mortal Remains to India, etc., are rendered on priority basis.
