

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 56
ANSWERED ON 04.12.2025

THE STATUS AND MONITORING OF INDIAN WORKERS RESIDING ABROAD

*56. # SHRI SANJAY SINGH:

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Indian workers who went abroad for employment purposes during the last three years, year-wise and country-wise;
- (b) whether Government has conducted any assessment to estimate the number of Indian workers migrating abroad illegally and to monitor their welfare and legal status and if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the concrete steps taken by Government for identification, assistance, and repatriation of such Indian migrants who are distressed, exploited or stranded?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR]

(a) to (c): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) to (C) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 56 FOR REPLY ON 04.12.2025 REGARDING THE STATUS AND MONITORING OF INDIAN WORKERS RESIDING ABROAD ASKED BY SHRI SANJAY SINGH.

(a) to (c) Data of all Indians travelling abroad is captured by the Bureau of Immigration at exit points. Insofar as travel to 19 Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries is concerned, a record is maintained in respect of migrant workers. The Government has established a mechanism to record the travel of migrant workers holding ECR Passport and traveling to ECR countries for employment purpose, through e-Migrate portal. The portal is operational since its launch in 2015 and provides for registration of Recruitment Agents (RAs), Foreign Employers (FEs) and issue of Emigration Clearance (EC) to prospective emigrants. It is a comprehensive online system developed to facilitate safe and legal migration of Indian workers to 19 ECR countries. The initiative was conceptualized to make the emigration process transparent and also to address various complaints. Year-wise and country-wise details of total number of ECs granted to Indian workers during the last three years are at **Annexure-A**.

Similarly, many Indians travel to ECNR (Emigration Check Not Required) countries for employment. However, there is no mechanism to capture their data. The e-Migrate portal can collect data of those ECNR passport holders who have registered themselves on voluntary basis. Since 2018 more than 46 thousand ECNR passport holders have registered themselves on voluntary basis.

Most of the foreign countries do not provide information on persons illegally emigrated or staying in their countries, except when they are under orders of deportation and travel document/nationality verification is required. As such, Indian Missions/ Posts abroad do not have any reliable data on the number of Indians illegally emigrated or staying in foreign countries.

The Government of India accords highest priority to the safety, security, protection and wellbeing of Indian workers abroad. There are established channels to enable them to reach out to the Indian Embassy/Consulate abroad in case they need any assistance. They can contact the Embassy/Consulate through walk-in, email, multilingual 24x7 emergency numbers, Whatsapp number, grievance redressal portal like MADAD/CPGAMS/eMigrate, and social media etc. There are dedicated Labour Wings in Indian Missions/ Posts abroad for handling such matters. Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendras have been set up in key locations such as New Delhi, Dubai, Riyadh and Jeddah to provide guidance and counselling to Indian workers.

On receipt of any complaint or grievance from Indian nationals including labourers, the Indian Embassy/Consulate pro-actively takes it up with the concerned Foreign Employer (FE) and, if needed, the work place of the aggrieved worker is also visited. The issues are also taken up with the local Labour Department and other concerned authority of the host country for redressal.

Indian Missions/Posts abroad 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 the 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.

The Embassy/Consulate also utilizes the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) from time to time to provide financial and legal assistance to Indian nationals in distress on a means-tested basis. Under ICWF, the major assistance provided includes Boarding & Lodging, Air Passage to India, Legal Assistance, Emergency Medical Care, Transportation of Mortal Remains to India, and Payment of Small Fines and Penalties.

Annexure – A

Total no of ECs granted during the last three years (01.01.2022 to 20.11.25), year-wise & country-wise				
Country	2022	2023	2024	2025(Upto 20.11.2025)
BAHRAIN	10,232	7,376	8,607	6,076
INDONESIA	3	0	3	8
IRAQ	1,430	1,599	2,761	1,201
JORDAN	2,487	1,187	3,137	1,774
KUWAIT	71,432	48,212	39,862	41,633
LEBANON	282	200	130	27
MALAYSIA	12,836	15,319	5,606	2,658
OMAN	31,994	21,336	24,258	26,009
QATAR	30,871	30,683	23,785	18,999
SAUDI ARABIA	178,622	200,713	167,598	1,23,310
SOUTH SUDAN	1	0	0	61
SUDAN	0	0	2	0
THAILAND	3	4	10	0
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	33,233	71,688	111,308	1,77,747
Total	373,426	398,317	387,067	3,99,503
