

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2173
ANSWERED ON 06/08/2026

EXPLOITATION OF INDIAN WORKERS IN GULF COUNTRIES

2173. SHRI SANT BALBIR SINGH

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that in several cases, Indian workers, especially women, are compelled to sign two-year employment agreements against their will upon arrival in Gulf countries and face passport confiscation by employers, restriction of movement, non-payment of wages, physical or mental harassment and other forms of abuse;

(b) if so, the measures taken by Government to prevent such exploitation and safeguard the rights of Indian workers abroad;

(c) the number of complaints received during the last five years, year-wise and country-wise; and

(d) the number of such cases successfully resolved and repatriated safely to India during the last five years?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) Data of complaints received from Indian workers in the Gulf countries, including women, regarding various types of labour issues and the number of such complaints successfully resolved during the past five years is attached at **Annexure-A**. Government of India has taken concrete steps to address the grievances of Indian workers abroad. Established channels have been setup to enable them to reach out to the concerned Indian Missions/Posts for assistance, including walk-in appointments, email, multilingual 24x7 emergency numbers, WhatsApp numbers, grievance redressal portal like MADAD/CPGRAMS/eMigrate, and social media channels. Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendras have been set up in 3 locations in the Gulf, namely, Dubai, Jeddah, and Riyadh, to provide guidance and counselling to Indian workers. Indian Missions/Posts regularly organize Open Houses and Consular Camps in different cities to extend consular services and address any grievances. Dedicated Labour Wings in the Indian

Missions/Posts in most of the Gulf countries pro-actively take up grievances of emigrant workers with the concerned FE, inspect the work place of the aggrieved worker and also take up, where required, with the local Labour Department and other host country authorities. The Indian Missions/Posts also utilize the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) to provide financial and legal assistance to Indian nationals in distress abroad on a means-tested basis. Under ICWF, the major assistance/facilitation like boarding & lodging, air passage to India, legal assistance and emergency medical care are rendered to Indian nationals.

Special provision has been made for the protection and welfare of Indian women workers. Women workers holding ECR passports and emigrating to ECR countries to pursue any jobs other than nursing must be at least 30 years of age. Recruitment can only be through State-run RAs or directly by a foreign employer (FE) that is registered with the concerned Indian Mission/Post. An FE hiring women workers is required to deposit a financial guarantee of US\$ 2,500/- with the concerned Indian Mission/Post abroad and the contract between the worker and the employer must be duly attested by the Indian Mission. 7 One Stop Centres have been established in the Gulf (in Manama, Muscat, Doha, Riyadh, Dubai, Jeddah and Kuwait) especially to provide timely, comprehensive and coordinated assistance to Indian women in distress. These One Stop Centres have dedicated helpline, facilitate access to medical and police assistance, extend legal aid and counselling and provide psycho-social support.

To further safeguard the interests of Indian emigrant workers, Government backed Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY) is available to all Indian emigrant workers and is mandatory for all ECR category workers going to ECR countries. The scheme provides insurance cover of INR 10 Lakhs in case of accidental death or permanent disability due to accident at the workplace and other benefits at a nominal insurance premium of INR 275/- for two years or INR 375/- for three years coverage.

With the view to promoting safe and legal migration while ensuring welfare and safety and preventing exploitation of Indians abroad, including Indian workers, Government has signed MoUs/Agreements with various countries. Labour and Manpower Cooperation MOUs/Agreements that provide the overarching framework for cooperation on labour and manpower related issues have been signed with the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates) and Jordan. Further, to safeguard the specific interests of domestic workers in the GCC countries, Agreements on Labour Cooperation for Domestic Sector Workers (DSWs) have been signed with Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait.

Annexure-A

Sl. No.	Name of the Country	Name of the Mission/ Post	Number of complaints received/resolved									
			Complaints received	Complaints resolved including those repatriated to India	Complaints received	Complaints resolved including those repatriated to India	Complaints received	Complaints resolved including those repatriated to India	Complaints received	Complaints resolved including those repatriated to India	Complaints received	Complaints resolved including those repatriated to India
			2021	2021	2022	2022	2023	2023	2024	2024	2025	2025
1	Bahrain	EOI, Bahrain	335	327	612	579	711	649	603	594	345	341
2	Kuwait	EOI, Kuwait	4339	2910	5660	3820	7820	4517	3728	2055	4081	2608
3	Oman	EOI, Muscat	1401	1391	2478	1927	4281	4111	3114	3035	2345	2241
4	Qatar	EOI, Doha	1551	1552	436	568	139	121	162	334	135	257
5	Saudi	EOI,	1128	1122	1989	1983	2329	2300	2246	2022	2218	1680

	Arabia	Riyadh										
6	Saudi Arabia	CGI, Jeddah	650	650	456	456	798	798	630	615	679	665
7	UAE	EoI, Abu Dhabi	902	902	907	907	651	651	417	417	433	433
8	UAE	CGI, Dubai	2303	2046	2859	2798	3383	2998	3265	3126	3948	3530
