

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1588
TO BE ANSWERED ON 27.12.2017**

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN EMERGENCY CONDITIONS

†1588. SHRI GOPAL SHETTY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Indian citizens going abroad for earning livelihood have to face difficulties due to shortage of money in emergency situations;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) whether the Government has taken any step to provide financial assistance to Indian citizens living abroad in emergency conditions and to set up any fund in this regard; and**
- (d) if so, the details thereof?**

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) Indian nationals going abroad for overseas employment are at times caught in emergency situations ranging from countries getting affected by internal conflicts, natural disasters, other challenging circumstances like employers getting insolvent or facing financial difficulties leading to delayed/non-payment of salaries, difficulties in provisioning of food and shelter etc., exigencies related to emergency medical assistance and legal help.

Cognizant of these difficulties, the Government has set up the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) since 2009 with the overarching objective of assisting Overseas Indian nationals in times of distress and emergency in the 'most deserving cases' on a 'means tested basis'. Initially the Fund was set up in select 18 countries that are home to a vast majority of Indian emigrant workers. In view of its immense utility, ICWF has been subsequently extended to all Indian Missions and Posts abroad.

The ICWF guidelines have been further revised this year with the approval of Cabinet with a view to make them more broad-based and expand the scope of welfare measures that can be extended through the Fund. The revised ICWF guidelines have become operational w.e.f. September 1st, 2017. They are expected to provide Indian Missions and Posts abroad greater flexibility in

swiftly addressing to requests for assistance by Overseas Indian nationals. There are around 110,000 beneficiaries of the Fund.
