

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1180
TO BE ANSWERED ON 25.07.2018

VIOLATION OF LAW IN IGNORANCE

†1180. SHRI RAHUL KASWAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state

- (a) whether the Indian labourers who were working in Gulf countries and who did not know the Arabic language are serving in jails there, as they failed to follow the oral instructions of their Arabi masters and violated law in ignorance;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether these Indian nationals are imprisoned in the jails of Gulf countries for a long time;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) whether the Government proposes to formulate a foreign policy to get them released and bring back to India; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

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

(a) & (b) The Ministry has not come across any case of Indian labourers serving prison sentence in Gulf countries due to not following the oral instructions of their employers or violation of law in ignorance.

(c) & (d) As per the information available with the Ministry, the number of Indian nationals imprisoned in the jails of Gulf countries, for varying periods of sentences, is 4604 as of May 2018. Detailed country-wise list is given at Annexure.

(e) & (f) As soon as Indian Missions and Posts abroad receive information from the local authorities about Indian nationals who are arrested or convicted after due process of law, the Missions/Posts seek consular access and visit them and renders all possible assistance including legal assistance through empanelled law firms. In addition, Mission officials visit the prison every month and meet Indian prisoners to look into their welfare, provide basic needs like toiletries and phone cards to enable them to speak to their families, assist in dispatch and receipt of their personal mails, advice them in respect of mercy petitions, etc. If any mercy petition for remission of sentence is received from family members of Indian prisoners, the Mission recommends them to the local authorities for consideration. In addition, the Mission regularly requests the local authorities for their early release and royal pardon. On their release, prisoners are issued travel documents by the Mission. Their repatriation is facilitated by the Mission at the Airport to enable their smooth return. Air tickets and financial assistance /payment of fines are facilitated by the Mission on a case to case basis.

ANNEXURE

S. No.	Name of Country	Number of Indian nationals imprisoned in Gulf countries
1	Bahrain	97
2	Iraq	NIL
3	Kuwait	484
4	Oman	113
5	Qatar	210
6	Saudi Arabia	2060
7	Syria	NIL
8	United Arab Emirates	1640
Total		4604
