

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1487
ANSWERED ON 10/02/2023

WORKING LABOURERS IN ABROAD

†1487. SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH PATEL

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

- (a) the number of skilled labourers going abroad for private jobs;
- (b) the details of assistance being provided by the Government to give employment to skilled labourers going abroad; and
- (c) whether any committee has been constituted by the Government to help them out while abroad and if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a to c) As per data available with the eMigrate portal, the number of Indian workers (category wise and country wise) having ECR category passports, who traveled to ECR countries for employment during the year 2022, is 3,73,429.

To facilitate the process of safe and legal migration and make it simple and hassle free, Emigration Clearances are being granted online through a comprehensive eGovernance portal 'eMigrate' since year 2014. This initiative was taken to make the emigration process fast and transparent and to address various complaints. The project was operationalized in a phased manner from 26th May 2014 onwards for various Protector of Emigrants (POE) offices and the process of granting of Emigration Clearance (EC) through all POE offices was made completely online w.e.f. 25th September 2014. At present, approximately 1000 Emigration Clearance applications are processed daily through 13 POE offices. The e-Migrate portal has registered more than 36 lakh Indian migrant workers employed with more than two lakh registered Foreign Employers(FEs) world-wide through around two thousand registered Recruitment Agents(RAs) in India. The e-Migrate online portal (<https://emigrate.gov.in>) have been integrated with Passport Seva Project (PSP) of the MEA for validation of passport details of all emigrant workers registering on the eMigrate portal. The system is also integrated with the portal of the Bureau of Immigration (BoI) of the Ministry of Home Affairs that is being used at Immigration Check Posts (ICPs) and international airports across India for online validation of the Emigration Clearance granted by the POEs.

Pre-Departure Orientation Training (PDOT) programmes were started by the Ministry in 2018 with aim to enhance soft skills of Indian migrant workers in terms of culture, language, tradition and local rules and regulations of the destination country and to sensitize migrant workers about pathways to safe and legal migration and various government programmes to ensure their welfare and protection. The initiative is being expanded further.

As on date, 32 PDOT centres are operational in 29 cities. As on 31 January 2023, PDO Training to 1,24,633 prospective emigrants has been imparted.

The Government has taken several steps to safeguard the interests of Indian emigrants. These include:

(i) Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF): Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) has been set up in all Indian Missions and Posts abroad to assist Overseas Indian nationals in times of distress and emergency. Fund is used to provide legal assistance, Boarding & Lodging assistance, Emergency medical care, air passage to stranded Indians and transportation of mortal remains of Indian nationals.

(ii) Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana: Government has been effectively implementing Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY) as a mandatory insurance scheme for all Emigration Check Required (ECR) category workers going to ECR countries. The scheme provides an insurance cover of 10 lakh in case of accidental death or permanent disability.

(iii) Labor and Manpower Cooperation MOUs/Agreements that provide the overarching framework for cooperation on labour and manpower related issues are in place with the Gulf Cooperation Council countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirates) and Jordan. Further, to safeguard the specific interest of domestic workers in GCC Countries, agreements on Labor Cooperation for Domestic Sector have been signed with Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait.

(iv) In addition, there are various other mechanisms in place for the welfare and protection of Indian nationals abroad like MADAD, eMigrate portal, Pravasi Bhartiya Sahayata Kendra (PBSK), etc. Dedicated Labour / Community Welfare wings have been established in Indian Missions and Posts in the countries with large number of Indian workers. Missions have also established 24x7 Helplines and Toll Free Helplines for the benefit of Indian workers to seek help.
