

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1496
ANSWERED ON- 28/07/2023

SAFETY OF MIGRANT WORKERS

1496. SHRI JAGANNATH SARKAR

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

(a) whether the Government has taken any steps to proactively engage with the Indian diaspora particularly in the powerful countries like USA and UK, considering their growing influence in the domestic politics of their respective countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof, if not, the reason therefor;

(c) whether the Government has taken steps to ensure the safety of the migrant workers, especially in the Gulf countries; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a & b) The Indian Diaspora has played an important role in shaping the cultural, economic, and political landscape of their domiciled countries as well as strengthening bilateral ties with India. The Diaspora serves as an invaluable bridge between India and the rest of the world, acting as an influential global network promoting India's interests and strengthening bilateral relations. Indian-origin individuals have also risen to prominent positions in politics, society public administration, and international organisations, which has helped shaped policies benefiting both India and their respective countries.

In recognition of the immense potential and significance of its diaspora, Government of India has implemented various schemes to engage with the diaspora, and to leverage its expertise, resources and goodwill. These initiatives are aimed at strengthening our bond with diaspora, and encouraging diaspora members to be an active partner in India's growth and development in 'Amrit Kaal.' Some of the key diaspora engagement schemes include Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards, Know India Programme, Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children, Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora, and Pravasi Rishta portal. The Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN) and VAIBHAV fellowship schemes facilitate engagement with diaspora academicians and scientists. Proactive engagement with the Indian Diaspora in all countries including UK and USA is a priority for all Indian Missions and Posts abroad. The Missions and Posts organize various outreach activities to engage with Indian Diaspora and Diaspora Associations.

(c & d) The Government has established various mechanisms to ensure welfare and safety of Indian workers such as Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF), Dedicated Community Welfare / Labour Wings in the Missions with large number of Indian workers, 24x7 helplines in Missions and at PBSK, New Delhi, Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY), Open Houses in Mission/Posts abroad. Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendras (PBSK) have been set up in Dubai, Jeddah, Kuala Lumpur and Riyadh to provide guidance and counselling on all matters pertaining to Overseas Indian Workers. Kshetriya Pravasi Sahayata Kendras (KPSK) have also been setup in Kochi, Hyderabad, Chennai and Lucknow to assist emigrants and their relatives to redress their problems/ complaints regarding overseas employment. The online MADAD Portal created by the Ministry enables the emigrant workers and their family members to register their consular grievances online and track their redressal. Apart from that, India has signed bilateral labour agreements with all Gulf Countries to safeguard Indian workers and also follow-up the issues of the migrant workers in the Joint Working Group Meetings at regular intervals.

Apart from above, prospective Indian emigrant workers are imparted a Pre – Departure Orientation Training (PDOT) to sensitize them about culture, important labour laws and Dos & Don'ts about the destination country. They are also made aware of the welfare schemes like ICWF and Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana (PBBY) and grievance redressal mechanisms established in the Ministry and Missions / Posts abroad.
