

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-2105
ANSWERED ON- 15/12/2023

INDIAN WORKERS IN GULF COUNTRIES

2105. SHRI CHANDRA PRAKASH CHOUDHARY

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

(a) whether Indian workers working outside the country particularly in gulf countries were not paid wages/salaries between March 2021 and December 2023, if so, the details thereof indicating the number of such workers;

(b) whether the Government has provided economic assistance to Indian workers who were not paid their wages, if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government has taken cognizance of reports that Indian migrant workers suffered the highest losses because of non-payment of wages or benefit-related violations in gulf countries between March 2021 and December 2023, as per the Migrant Forum in Asia;

(d) if so, the details thereof and remedial measures taken thereon;

(e) whether the Government received any SOS call from 5 migrant labourers in Jeddah working in a company in Saudi Arabia; and

(f) if so, the details thereof along with the action taken thereon?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a to d) As per data available with Indian Missions/Posts in Gulf countries, 33,252 complaints were received from Indian workers during the period March 2021 to December 2023. These included grievances related to delay in payment/non-payment of salaries, retention of passports, unfair working conditions, sub standard accommodation, extended working hours, ill treatment/harassment etc. Country-wise break up is given below :

Country	Number of complaints received (March 2021 – December 2023)
Bahrain	245
Kuwait	16436
Oman	3953
Qatar	891
Saudi Arabia	2967
United Arab Emirates	8760
Total	33,252

Government of India has robust mechanism to monitor working conditions and grievance redressal of all Indian workers abroad. Our Missions and Posts abroad remain vigilant and actively monitor and follow each type of complaint received from Indian nationals in foreign countries. The grievances are received and responded through various channels i.e. emergency telephone number, Walk-ins, e-Mails, Social Media, 24x7 Multilingual Helpline and Open Houses etc. To enable the aggrieved Indian national to online register his/her grievances, the Government has established portals such as MADAD and e-Migrate. Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendras (PBSK) have been set up in Dubai (UAE), Riyadh, Jeddah (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) and Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) to provide guidance and counseling to Indian workers on all matters. There are dedicated Labour Wings in all Indian Missions in Gulf Countries.

Indian Missions/Posts regularly organize Open Houses and Consular Camps in remote areas to get feedback from Indian workers residing in such areas and to address their grievances, if any. On receipt of complaint from or on behalf of the emigrant, the same is taken up pro-actively with concerned Foreign Employer (FE) and the work place of the aggrieved worker is also visited, if required. The complaints pertaining to employment issues are also taken up with the local labour department and other relevant authorities of the host country for prompt redressal.

Indian Missions/Posts abroad also utilize the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) to provide necessary assistance, on means tested basis to Indian citizens abroad and their dependents in times of distress including in the process of transportation of mortal remains to India or local cremation with consent of the family and settlement of death claims. During the period from 2014 to September, 2023, an amount of INR 626 crores of ICWF fund has been utilized for assisting 3,42,543 Indians in distress in foreign countries. Since the year 2014 till September, 2023, legal assistance by Indian Missions/Posts abroad was extended to 3321 Indian nationals, Boarding & Lodging assistance was provided to 1,70,402 Indian nationals, Emergency medical care provided to 10,515 distressed Indian nationals, air passage to 37,459 stranded Indians, and 3,461 mortal remains of Indian nationals were airlifted.

Based on MoUs signed with the GCC countries, matters related to welfare and protection of workers are taken up during regular meetings of Joint Working Groups with concerned countries. In addition, such matters are also regularly taken up with respective host governments through diplomatic channels.

(e & f) The Consulate General of India (CGI) in Jeddah received a request through email on 01.12.2023 from the helpline of State Migrant Control Room, Government of Jharkhand regarding 5 Indian workers, hailing from Jharkhand, who had been working with M/s Al Muraba Al Hadi Contracting Est. Jeddah. On perusing the matter, it was found that these 5 workers have been declared absconded by their employer. CGI Jeddah is in the process of arranging their final exit and repatriation to India through deportation centres under the CGI/Embassy of India in Riyadh.
