

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-2276
ANSWERED ON- 15/12/2023

ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

2276. SHRI PRADYUT BORDOLOI :
SHRI RAHUL KASWAN :

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of the fact that people are being cheated in the name of sending them abroad by unscrupulous travel/placement agents running illegal business in the country, if so, the details thereof, State-wise including Rajasthan;
- (b) whether the Government has any data on the number of Indian nationals who have been identified as illegal immigrants in other countries;
- (c) whether the Government has any data on the number of illegal immigrants from India thus deported from other countries;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, country-wise and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (e) whether the Government has diplomatic or consular measures in place to assist Indian nationals facing deportation due to illegal immigration issues, if so, the details thereof;
- (f) whether the Ministry of External Affairs has undertaken any initiatives to raise awareness among Indian citizens about the legal requirements and consequences of immigration policies in various foreign countries; and
- (g) if so, the details of the awareness programs conducted along with their impact during the last three years?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a) It has been noticed that several unscrupulous agents/travel agencies are illegally involved in the business of manpower recruitment for overseas employment. Information about illegal agents is uploaded and updated on regular basis on the eMigrate Portal. As on 30 October 2023, 2925 illegal agents have been notified through eMigrate portal. Details of State-wise numbers of such illegal agents notified till date, including from Rajasthan, are enclosed as Annexure A.

(b to d) Many foreign countries do not provide information on illegal stay in their countries, except when they are under orders of deportation and travel document/nationality verification is required. As such, our Missions and Posts do not have any reliable data on the number of Indians staying or working illegally in foreign countries. The procedure followed for deportation

of foreign nationals also varies from country to country. Some countries do not arrest the deportee and keep them in detention/deportation centers until deportation. Moreover, the information about arrest/detention and deportation is not shared with Indian Missions/Posts and the deportation is done directly by the host Government if the deportee has valid travel document. Indian Missions/Posts are contacted by the host Governments only in such cases where the nationality verification and issuance of Emergency Certificate (EC) to the deportee is required. Since all foreign countries do not share details of all Indian deportees, the exact number of Indians deported from foreign countries is not available with the Ministry of External Affairs.

(e) Indian Missions/Posts regularly organize Open Houses and Consular Camps to get the feedback from the Indian workers abroad and address their grievances. As soon as the information about the detention/arrest of an Indian national is received by an Indian Mission/Post, it immediately gets in touch with the local Foreign Office and other concerned local authorities to get consular access to the detained/arrested Indian national to ascertain the facts of the case, confirm his or her Indian nationality and ensure his or her welfare. Apart from extending all possible consular assistance to Indians imprisoned abroad, Indian Missions and Posts also assist in providing legal aid wherever needed. Missions and Posts also maintain a local panel of lawyers where Indian community is in sizeable numbers. No fee is charged from any Indian prisoner for extending facilities by the Indian Embassy concerned. The Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) is set up in Indian Missions & Posts abroad for assisting overseas Indian nationals in distress situations on a means tested basis in deserving cases. The support extended under ICWF includes financial assistance to Indian prisoners for legal aid as well as travel documents / air tickets during repatriation, on a means tested basis.

The issue of release and repatriation of Indian nationals in foreign prisons is regularly pursued by Indian Missions and Posts abroad with the local authorities concerned. The Government also follows up such issues during consular and other consultations with other countries. In addition, the Government, through its Missions/Posts abroad and during high level visits, also takes up and pursues grant of amnesty/commutation of sentences of Indian prisoners in foreign countries. India has also entered into prisoner transfer treaties with many nations that allow a person convicted of a crime to be transferred to his or her home country to serve the prison sentence.

(f & g) As part of the Government's continuous efforts to raise awareness on safe & legal migration, a commemorative postal stamp 'Surakshit Jaayen, Prashikshit Jaayen' was released by Prime Minister during the 17th Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas(PBD) Convention on 9th January 2023 at Indore. Further, Ministry's outreach activities have regularly been covered by media. The Ministry as well as Indian Missions/Posts abroad regularly issue advisories on risks of illegal migration to make emigrating youth aware of the false job offers.

To raise awareness among prospective workers about legal requirements and working and living conditions in destination countries the Ministry organizes Pre-Departure Orientation & Training (PDOT) so as to ensure that Indian migrant workers undertake safe migration and are aware of their rights and have access to GoI welfare schemes. PDOT is a one-day training programme on soft skills imparted by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in collaboration with National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), State Governments and other stake holders. As on 30 November 2023, over 1,35,000 prospective migrant workers have benefited from the program in physical and online formats.

State-wise count of illegal agents

(as per data available till 30 October 2023)

Sr. No.	State	Count
1	Delhi	292
2	Punjab	190
3	Tamil Nadu	360
4	Maharashtra	309
5	Uttar Pradesh	400
6	Andhra Pradesh	471
7	Kerala	189
8	Telangana	113
9	Haryana	35
10	Gujarat	56
11	West Bengal	127
12	Karnataka	80
13	Rajasthan	61
14	Bihar	54
15	Madhya Pradesh	16
16	Puducherry	6
17	Uttarakhand	13
18	Goa	13
19	Himachal Pradesh	10
20	Jammu and Kashmir	11
21	Chandigarh	31
22	Odisha	11
23	Chhattisgarh	4
24	Assam	60
25	Jharkhand	5
26	Tripura	7
27	Nagaland	1
Total		2925
