

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA**

**MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA**

**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-1917**

**ANSWERED ON- 02/08/2024**

**DETENTION OF INDIANS IN GULF**

**1917. SHRI VIJAYAKUMAR ALIAS VIJAY VASANTH**

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

- (a) the diplomatic efforts being undertaken to address the detention of Indian nationals in Gulf countries and other countries;**
- (b) whether the Government has made any recent agreements or held discussions with Gulf countries/other countries aimed at securing the release of Indian prisoners and if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) the measures being taken to ensure that Indian prisoners in Gulf countries/other countries receive fair trials and are treated humanely;**
- (d) the manner in which the Government of India addressing reports of human rights abuses involving Indian nationals detained in Gulf countries/other countries;**
- (e) the number of prisoners who have completed their jail terms abroad, country-wise; and**
- (f) the steps taken by the Government for their release?**

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)**

**(a) Indian Missions/Posts abroad regularly take up the matter with concerned law enforcement agencies through local Foreign Office for expediting the investigation/trial and early release/deportation of detained/arrested Indian nationals. Matters related to Indian nationals including detentions and related issues are also taken up with the host government during the bilateral Joint Committee meetings on consular affairs and such other institutional mechanisms.**

**(b) India has signed Agreement on Transfer of Sentenced Persons with 31 countries including Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates. The transfer of a sentenced person to his country of nationality under the TSP Agreement is dependent on completion of various formalities such as prisoner's willingness to be transferred, consent of the transferring and the receiving country, availability of complete documentation necessary for processing the request, clearance from appropriate agencies etc.**

**(c to f) The Government attaches high priority to the safety, security and well-being of Indians in foreign countries, including those in foreign jails. Indian Missions/Posts abroad remain vigilant and closely monitor the**

**incidents of Indian nationals being put in jail in foreign countries for violation/ alleged violation of local laws.**

**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. Missions/Posts remain vigilant to ensure that rights of the Indian prisoners in foreign jails are protected.**

**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 in countries where Indian community is in sizeable numbers. No fee is charged from any Indian prisoner for extending such 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 for issuing travel documents / air tickets during repatriation.**

**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. Missions/Posts abroad also approach the law enforcement agencies to complete the investigation and judicial proceedings at the earliest possible. The Government also follows up this issue during consular and other consultations with foreign 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. When these imprisoned Indians get released, they are facilitated in getting travel documents for early repatriation.**

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