

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
LABOUR
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:7899
ANSWERED ON:17.05.2000
RESTRICTION ON VISAS BY GULF COUNTRIES
K. KARUNAKARAN

Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken any diplomatic initiative with the Gulf countries, especially the Saudi Arabia, in respect of restriction of visas to unskilled and semi-skilled Indian labourers to those countries;
- (b) whether the Indian missions situated in Gulf Countries, especially Saudi Arabia, provide language translation services in Indian languages and English;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Indian missions abroad have any machinery to constantly monitor the well-beings of Indian citizens in these countries; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR LABOUR AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI MUNI LALL)

(a): Due to economic slow down in Gulf Countries including Saudi Arabia many expatriate workers have become redundant. The government of the Gulf Countries are, therefore, temporarily going slow on recruitment of foreign labour. It is hoped that the situation will improve as and when economic conditions improve and redundant workers are absorbed.

(b) & (c): In Saudi Arabia language interpretation service is provided by the Mission, inter alia, in the following circumstances:

(a) In the Labour Courts at the Investigation level, Primary Commission level and Higher Commission level, at Riyadh and Jeddah where the Indian Missions are located;

From Hindi/Urdu/English/Malayalam into Arabic and vice versa;

(b) At police stations in Riyadh and Jeddah from Hindi/Urdu/English/Malayalam into Arabic and vice versa;

(c) In settlement of disputes between workers and sponsors at the premises of Missions or at the Sponsors' offices-
From Hindi Urdu/English/Malayalam/Tamil/Telugu/Bengali into Arabic and vice versa;

(d) At Shariat courts located in various parts of Saudi Arabia

From Hindi/Urdu/English/Malayalam into Arabic and vice versa.

In UAE, to the extent possible officials having knowledge of Indian languages and local language (i.e. Arabic) are deployed at the receptions and counters. The interpreter of the Embassy provided assistance in translation from Indian languages to English/local language for settlement of Labour disputes between Indian workers and the local employers. Authorised legal translators are available locally for undertaking legal translations of documents from English to Arabic and Arabic to English.

(d) & (e): The Indian Missions/Posts are fully sensitized to the problems of Indian citizens, including Indian workers, and render the required assistance, in the framework of the laws of the host countries. Labour sections in Indian Missions/ Posts in the Gulf countries (with large Indian workforce) specifically focus on employment related problems of Indian workers and render assistance on a whole range of issues including non-payment of dues, harassment, arrests, death, death compensation and repatriation.