

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1781
ANSWERED ON:04.08.2010
AGREEMENTS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES
Mani Shri Jose K.;Pakirappa Shri S.

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India has signed any bilateral agreements with foreign countries to protect the interests of expatriate Indian workers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the countries with whom India has already signed such agreements;
- (c) whether the Government intends to execute similar agreements with other countries also;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) the extent to which the Indian migrant workers have been benefited as a result thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b): Government has signed three kinds of agreements/ MOUs with foreign countries to protect the interest of expatriate Indian workers. Firstly, Labour Agreements/ MOUs have been signed with Malaysia, UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman, Kuwait and Jordan. These agreements lay down the framework for bilateral labour cooperation to secure protection and welfare of overseas Indian workers. Secondly, India has signed Social security Agreements with Belgium, France, Switzerland, Netherlands, Denmark, Hungary, Czech Republic and Luxembourg. These agreements provide for exemption of temporary detached workers from social security contribution in the host country, portability of social security benefit in case of relocation of the worker and totalization of contribution periods. These provisions protect the workers against double contribution, loss of benefit and loss of contribution. India has signed an agreement on social insurance with Germany which exempts detached workers from Social Security Tax. Thirdly, Government has signed a Labour Mobility Partnership with Denmark to facilitate legal migration with a view to address skill shortages and combat irregular migration.

(c) & (d): Yes Sir. The Government is pursuing bilateral labour MOUs with Yemen and Libya, Social Security Agreements with Norway, Canada, Germany, Korea, Australia, Japan and the United States and Labour Mobility Partnership with Netherlands, France, Belgium and the European Union.

(e): The bilateral labour agreements have enhanced the protection and welfare of Indian migrant workers on account of enhanced bilateral cooperation, standardization of labour contracts and sharing of data between the two sides. Joint Working Groups have been constituted under these agreements which meet regularly to discuss and resolve any problems relating to overseas Indian workers and devise practical means for improving the condition of overseas Indian workers. Labour Mobility Partnership will provide greater labour market access to Indian workers to address the skill shortages in the countries of destination.