

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:364

ANSWERED ON:19.12.2012

EXPLOITATION OF INDIAN LABOURERS

Gorakhnath Shri ;Nishad Capt.(Retd.) Jainarayan Prasad

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

- (a) whether certain cases of exploitation or harassment/ill-treatment of Indian workers including women have been reported from various countries;
- (b) if so, the number of such complaints received during the last three years and the current year, gender and nature-wise;
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to follow up these complaints for redressal of grievances;
- (d) whether the Government has signed agreements with foreign countries on the welfare of migrant labourers from the country; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof including the steps taken to review such agreements from time to time in the interest of Indian workers abroad?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement as referred to in reply to the LOK Sabha Starred question no. 364 for reply on 19.12.2012 regarding Exploitation of Indian Labourers

(a) & (b) : The cases of employer-employee disputes are received from time to time with complaints such as non-payment/delayed payment or underpayment of salaries, non-renewal of visa and labour card on time, unsatisfactory living conditions including sub-standard food at the camp site, refusal to pay for the medical treatment of the worker, denial of leave and air ticket to the hometown on completion of 2 years period of contract, physical assault/sexual harassment, etc. The information on complaints received from the Indian Missions in major labour receiving countries are given in the Annexure.

(c): As and when complaints regarding exploitation, ill-treatment, non-payment of salaries/dues, etc. are received, the Ministry through the Indian Mission takes up the matter with the foreign employer, or the authorities concerned, for redressal of the grievances. The Government has also taken several initiatives to protect the welfare of overseas Indian workers, as follows.

(i) India has signed Labour Agreements and MOUs with major Labour receiving countries.

(ii) The Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) in all the Indian Missions for providing onsite support and financial assistance to Indian workers in distress.

(iii) Indian Workers' Resource Centre (IWRC) is functioning in UAE for counseling and emergency calls of Indian workers.

(iv) Indian Missions issue Emergency Certificates(EC) when they are required for workers being repatriated for one reason or the other.

(v) Following are the special safeguards for women :-

(a) Application of the age restriction of 30 years to all women emigrating on ECR passports to ECR countries.

(b) Defining a minimum referral wage for emigrants(fixed by Mission)

(c) Stipulation of a security deposit per worker from the foreign employer directly hiring Indian women workers. (US \$ 2500)

(d) Compulsory attestation of employment documents for all women emigrants with ECR passport going to ECR countries.

(d) and (e):Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with the major Labour receiving Countries for ensuring protection and welfare of our emigrants have been signed. MoU were signed with United Arab of Emirates (UAE), Jordan, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Malaysia and Bahrain.

The following broad principles have been built into the MoUs:

- (i) Declaration of mutual intent to enhance employment opportunities and for bilateral cooperation in protection and welfare of workers.
- (ii) The host Country to take measures for protection and welfare of the workers.
- (iii) Statement of the broad procedure that the foreign employer shall follow to recruit Indian workers.
- (iv) The recruitment and terms of employment to be in conformity of the laws of both the Countries.
- (v) Setting up a Joint Working Group(JWG) to ensure implementation of the MOU and to meet regularly to find solutions to bilateral labour problems, including application of labour laws to domestic workers.