

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:681
ANSWERED ON:27.02.2013
HARASSMENT OF INDIAN LABOURERS ABROAD
Patel Shri Devji;Semmalai Shri S.

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

- (a) whether a number of cases of exploitation and harassment of Indian workers abroad especially in Maldives and Gulf countries have come to the notice of the Government during the last three years and the current year;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the efforts taken by the Government to check such ill-treatment and protect the interest of migrant workers?

Answer

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) Complaints from Indian workers pertaining to contractual violations such as non-payment of salaries; long working hours; inadequate living conditions; physical harassment; refusal of leave or 'exit/re-entry permits' or 'final exit visa' or air tickets to return home; lack of medical benefits etc. are received from time to time.

(b) Complaints pertaining to the Gulf Countries and Maldives during the last three years are furnished below.

Country	2010	2011	2012	2013
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Bahrain	1386	1158	825	110
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Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Riyadh+Jeddah)	5250	3656	4292	563
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Kuwait	4373	2854	3399	185
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Oman	2151	2766	2310	132
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Qatar	3034	3186	3087	NA
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Abu Dhabi, United Arab of Emirates	1036	1588	491	NA
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Maldives 180 226 484 79
(Not an
ECR country)

NA- Not available

- Upto November, 2012

(c) As and when complaints regarding exploitation, ill-treatment, non-payment of salaries/dues, etc. are received, the matter is taken up through the Indian mission concerned with the foreign employer, or the authorities concerned, for redressal of the grievances.

If a recruiting agent is involved and if it is required, action against recruiting agent is also taken in order to redress the grievance/settle the issue. In order to safeguard the vulnerable categories (unskilled workers and women emigrant workers) pre-attestation of the employment documents by Indian Mission abroad is required.

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) Establishment of the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) 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 for employment.

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