

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2326
ANSWERED ON:05.02.2014
EXPLOITATION OF INDIANS ABROAD
Tandon Shri Lal Ji

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

- (a) whether there has been a rise in the number of cases of exploitation and harassment of Indian workers in other countries especially in Gulf countries in 2013 as against 2012;
- (b) if so, the country-wise and location –wise details of the same.
- (c) whether the Government proposes to amend the Immigration Act in order to check such cases;
- (d) if so, the details in this regard; and
- (e) the details of assistance provided by the Government to the persons who have been victims of exploitation?

Answer

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) & (b): No, Madam. The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs regulates the process of emigration clearance to the intending emigrants with ECR passports going to any of the 17 Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries under the provisions of the Emigration Act, 1983. There has not been any rise in the total number of cases of exploitation and harassment of Indian workers.

(c) & (d): No. Madam.

(e): For on-site welfare of emigrants in distress, Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) has been established in all the Indian Missions.

The assistance provided includes short-term boarding and lodging, medical care, providing air passage where essential, providing initial legal assistance in deserving cases, payment of penalties in respect of Indian nationals for illegal stay in the host country where prima facie the worker is not at fault, and providing the payment of small fines/penalties for the release of Indian nationals in jail/detention centre.

An Indian Workers Resource Centre (IWRC) has been established at Dubai, UAE as a one stop service outlet for addressing the information and assistance needs of emigrants. Other Missions also have helpline/helpdesk to attend to grievances of Indian Nationals.

More than 22,798 emigrants have been benefitted from the scheme under ICWF during the last three years and around Rs.50 crores have been utilized for the purpose.