

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

STARRED QUESTION NO:351

ANSWERED ON:17.12.2014

INCREASE IN EMIGRATION OF UNSKILLED WORKERS

Biju Shri Parayamparanbil Kuttappan;Joshi Shri Chandra Prakash

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

- (a) whether there has been a sharp increase in the emigration of semi-skilled and unskilled workers to foreign countries recently and if so, the details thereof during the last three years, State and year- wise along with the countries of emigration;
- (b) whether several complaints have been received on the alleged cheating by recruitment agencies/ agents offering placements abroad and if so, the details thereof during the last one year, State-wise;
- (c) whether the Government has any plans/schemes to impart training to these workers within the country and if so, the details thereof including the key features of the training programmes; and
- (d) the mechanism put in place in various Indian embassies/missions abroad for the timely redressal of complaints of the workers?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS SMT.SUSHMA SWARAJ

(a) to (d): A Statement is laid in the table of House

Statement referred to in reply to the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 351 for 17-12-2014 regarding 'Increase in Emigration of Unskilled Workers'

(a) No Madam. There is no sharp increase in the emigration clearance granted to semi-skilled/unskilled workers during the last three years i.e. 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 which was 55949, 60501 and 57085 in those three years, respectively.

(b) Complaints have been received from Indian workers on the alleged cheating by recruitment agencies/agents offering placements abroad from time to time. Complaints received are generally in the nature of non-providing the promised employment/change of employment or condition of employment to the disadvantage of emigrants unilaterally by the Foreign Employer, non-payment/ delayed payment or underpayment of salaries, long working hours, inadequate living conditions, physical harassment, non- renewal of visa and labour card on time, refusal to pay for the medical treatment, denial of leave and air-ticket to the hometown on completion of contract period, forcible custody of Passport and Visa, refusal of leave or 'exit/re- entry permits'/final exit visa' etc. Details of complaints received on the alleged cheating by recruitment agencies/ agents offering placements abroad during the last one year, State-wise is at Annexure.

(c): Ministry of overseas Indian affairs has introduced a plan scheme on skill development for overseas employment, namely, Swarnpravas Yojana in the current 12th Five year Plan. The scheme has been formulated to imbibe skill and expertise to potential migrants to prevent exploitation of these workers in the destination countries. The scheme will adhere to the broad objectives of skill development in India, as envisioned by the National Skill Development Policy, 2009. For the 12th Five year Plan the

total project cost envisaged is Rs137 crores and budgetary allocation for 2014-15 is Rs. 20 crore. MOIA has been mandated to train 5 Million people by 2022 under this scheme.

The key objectives of the scheme are as under:

# Position India as a preferred source country for skilled and trained workers in select sectors that face skill shortages in the international labour market, and in which India enjoys competitive advantage # Diversify destination-country base with focus on geographies/countries that will experience significant labour supply gaps & skill shortages and are of strategic interest to India  
# Enhance employability of Indian Youth abroad and move them up the wage-chain by providing training and certification which will be internationally recognized

(d): Indian Missions have an exclusive wing to look into matters relating to Indian workers. Whenever a complaint is received from any Indian worker abroad or his family in India or any other source, the Indian Mission immediately initiates action to resolve the issue by getting in touch with the foreign employer/ local authorities and emigrant worker concerned, if required visit labour camps and actively pursue the matter to its logical conclusion. Whenever necessary, the complainant is also provided counseling and accordingly referred to concerned labour office/court, Immigration and Police authorities etc. The Missions also provide interpreting services to the Indian complainants.

For redressal of grievances of emigrants, Indian Workers Resource Centre (IWRC) at Dubai, UAE, has been established which is a

24X7 toll free multilingual helpline and also provides free legal, psychological and financial counseling to distressed Indians. Other Missions also have helpline/help desks to attend to grievances of Indian nationals. Indian Missions also actively interact with local Indian Communities in their socio cultural programmes so as to seek their help in times of emergencies and to redress the grievances of Indian workers.

Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) has been established in the Indian Missions for on-site welfare of emigrants, which include offering food and accommodation like shelter for short term to Indian workers in distress, air-ticket at Government cost for repatriation to India, transportation of the mortal remains, initial legal assistance and emergency medical help and organizing awareness camps at prominent worker accommodation sites.

Ministry has launched a soft-ware module in the Ministry's website in which dependents of deceased emigrant can make entries relating to deceased emigrants and the concerned Indian Mission immediately acts on such requests in order to facilitate transportation of mortal remains. The Ministry has also been keeping a close watch over this issue through this module.