

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4644  
ANSWERED ON:22.04.2015  
INDIA CENTRE FOR MIGRATION  
Chavan Shri Harishchandra Deoram

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

- (a) the aims and objectives of the India Centre for Migration (ICM) and the e-Migrate Project;
- (b) whether any evaluation has been undertaken to assess the functioning of ICM and if so, the details and findings thereof;
- (c) the extent to which the e-Migrate Project has ensured safe, quick and legal emigration to foreign countries for the Indian workers;
- (d) whether any mechanism is in place to create awareness regarding the various aspects of migration among the uneducated labour willing to migrate abroad particularly to Middle-East and if so, the details in this regard; and
- (e) the various other steps taken by the Government to encourage legal migration to countries offering safe employment opportunities for Indian workers?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS GENERAL V.K. SINGH (RETD.)

(a) As this Ministry's research think-tank, India Centre for Migration (ICM) provides inputs to MOIA for devising long term strategies on emigration of Indians overseas; monitor, study and analyze the trends in the international labour markets; devise strategies to facilitate legal and safe migration of Indians overseas, and partner with organizations to undertake collaborative work on matters relating to international migration. e-Migrate project is designed for facilitating emigration of ECR category emigrants going to notified countries for employment purpose. The project

will help in making the recruitment of workers a hassle free process and curtail malpractices adopted by Recruiting Agents and employers. The objective is to provide efficient, convenient, cost-effective and reliable emigration services in a transparent manner. The project aims at net-working all the stakeholders like Recruiting Agents, Foreign Employers, Protector of Emigrants (POE) offices, PGE office Bureau of Immigration offices, and Indian Missions.

(b) ICM has a Governing Council and a Research Committee which assess on-going research activities and ensure that its functioning is in alignment with the priorities of the Ministry. MOIA also undertakes periodical evaluation of the functioning of ICM. Following a recent assessment by MOIA, ICM's ongoing research work has been realigned with the priority areas of MOIA, through which ICM will provide inputs to MOIA on all matters related to migration and overseas employment of Indian workers.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for each of the ICM's staff are identified at the beginning of the year to assess the performance of the staff on a monthly/quarterly/yearly basis.

(c) e-Migrate is integrated with Passport Seva Project (PSP) of Ministry of External Affairs for online validation of passport details of the ECR category workers being registered. This integration helps in detecting fake passport cases and checking data entry error at registration stage itself. e-Migrate is also integrated with Bureau of Immigration system of Ministry of Home Affairs, used at Immigration Check Post (ICP) at airports for online validation of the emigration clearance granted by POEs. Integration with Bureau of Immigration system enables e-Migrate system to record departure details of the ECR category workers.

e-Migrate provides Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs a comprehensive and online database of emigrants, Recruiting Agents, Foreign Employers to make the whole emigration cycle faster and authentication of credentials of above mentioned stakeholders quicker. The database will also detect any foreign employers with complaint cases pending against them and alert POE officials at the time of clearance of new recruitment for these foreign employers.

The Ministry has already rolled out e-Migrate project for all POE offices. Emigration clearance are being granted through e-Migrate system w.e.f. 25th September, 2014.

d) Yes, Madam.

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs regularly carries out multi-media awareness campaigns to educate intending emigrants about emigration procedures, pitfalls of illegal emigration, precautions to be taken during recruitment and overseas employment welfare schemes being implemented by this Ministry for migrant workers and toll-free help lines which provide information and advice for

intending migrants. The campaign is in regional languages also and is focused in those States, where the problems of migrant workers are predominant.

(e) This Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs regulates the overseas employment of ECR category workers going abroad for employment to any of the 18 ECR countries namely Afghanistan, Bahrain, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, North Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, Thailand, The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen. These are the following steps for such regulation:-

(i) India has signed Labour agreements/MOUs with the major receiving Countries for ensuring protection and welfare of our emigrants. Agreements with Jordan and Qatar were signed in 1980s. MoUs were signed with United Arab Emirates (2006), Kuwait (2007), Oman (2008), Malaysia (2009), Bahrain (2009) and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (2014).

(ii) To ensure implementation of the MoUs, Joint Working Groups (JWGs) have been constituted with Bahrain, UAE, Kuwait, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and to discuss issues arising with these countries for protection and welfare of Indian workers. Meetings of these JWGs are held regularly.

(iii) For emigration clearance required category, the Agreement/ Employment Contract containing detailed terms and conditions of employment including the wages to be paid have been prescribed. These are required to be signed by the Foreign Employer and intending emigrant and produced before the competent authority in India before emigration clearance is granted. In the case of domestic workers, attestation from Indian Embassy is also necessary for getting emigration clearance. In case of women domestic service workers, a security deposit of \$ 2500 is also required to be deposited by the sponsor in the Indian Mission of the concerned ECR countries.

(iv) To ensure that an Indian emigrant worker is not put to a disadvantageous position by the Foreign Employer (F.E.) by unilaterally fixing wages, which might be much less than the prevailing wages in the host country as well as in India, the concept of Minimum Referral Wage (M.R.W.) has been put in place. Heads of Missions/Posts review the minimum wage of Indian migrant workers in their jurisdiction, from time to time and fix an appropriate minimum wage, without which being offered, the emigration clearance is not granted.

(v) A comprehensive Insurance Scheme, viz. Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana is in place for those going abroad which is mandatory for grant of emigration clearance.

(vi) This Ministry has set up the Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) to provide information and assistance to intending emigrants, overseas workers as well as their family members on all aspects of overseas employment.

OWRC is operating a toll free 24 hour helpline on all days of the year in 11 languages (1800 11 3090) to provide information to emigrants and their families on all aspects of overseas employment. The workers can also access the helpline from anywhere in the world at 91-11-40503090.

(vii) The Ministry has also set up Migrant Resource Centres (MRC) at Kochi in Kerala, Hyderabad in Andhra Pradesh and Gurgaon in Haryana to provide information and counselling for intending migrants on all aspects related to overseas employment.

(viii) Indian Workers Resource Centre (IWR) has been established at Dubai, UAE for providing information and guidance of emigrants. Several Missions have also reported to have set up such facilities for addressing the information and assistance needs of emigrants.

(ix) For redressal of grievances of workers abroad, the Indian Embassy contacts the Foreign Employer/ Recruiting Agency for redressal of the issue. If the foreign employer is not resolving the problems of the emigrant, then Embassy recommends putting them in the Prior Approval Category (PAC) of this Ministry and action is taken accordingly.

(x) Indian Community Welfare Fund has been established with funds at the disposal of the Indian Mission to help the workers in distress.