

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1765

ANSWERED ON:27.07.2016

ICWF

Dhotre Shri Sanjay Shamrao;Mahtab Shri Bhartruhari;Shewale Shri Rahul Ramesh

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been an increase in the number of Indians emigrated on working visa during each of the last three years and the current year and if so, the details thereof, country-wise;

(b) the details of the funds spent out of the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) for carrying out welfare activities for overseas Indian citizens particularly for those who were in distress during the said period, country-wise; and

(c) the other steps taken by the Government to ensure safe working environment and to protect the rights of Indian workers in other countries?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) Information regarding Indian workers holding ECR Passports, going for overseas employment to 18 notified Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries (namely Afghanistan, Bahrain, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, Thailand, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Yemen), is maintained by this Ministry. Details of the number of Indians emigrated on working visa to these countries during each of the last three years and the current year (as on 30.06.2016) is at Annexure-I.

(b) A statement showing country-wise, in 18 ECR countries, details of the funds spent out of the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) for carrying out welfare activities for overseas Indian citizens is at Annexure-II.

(c) Whenever the Indian Missions are approached by any Indian national in distress, the same is followed up, at various levels, with the authorities concerned in the Governments of the respective countries.

Government of India has signed MoUs with 6 Gulf countries, namely UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Malaysia. As per these MoUs, the host country will take measures for protection and welfare of the workers in organized sector. The recruitment and terms of employment will be in conformity with the laws of both the countries.

These MOUs are renewed / signed afresh, from time to time, during which process any modifications are duly considered for inclusion.

The Government of India has set up Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) in all the Indian Missions/Consulates abroad to meet contingency expenditure incurred by them for carrying out various welfare activities for overseas Indian citizens who are in distress.

The Ministry has set up a 24X7 Helpline 'Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC)' in Gurgaon, Haryana which provides information and guidance on all matters and problems pertaining to overseas employment of Indian nationals. Indian Workers Resource Centre (IWRC) set up in Dubai by Embassy of India, in UAE, provides guidance and counseling on all matters pertaining to overseas Indian workers in UAE. Four new Indian Workers Resource Centres (IWRCs) have been approved for setting up in Riyadh, Jeddah, Sharjah and Kuala Lumpur. Shelter homes for distressed Indian nationals, have been set up in Malaysia, UAE, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. These shelter homes provide free boarding and lodging to overseas Indians in distress pending their repatriation.

Government of India have also started 24x7 Helpline-'Madad'- for lodging the grievances of the emigrants, which are attended to on priority basis.