

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:252
ANSWERED ON:09.07.2014
INDIAN AFFECTED BY NEW LABOUR POLICY IN SAUDI ARABIA
Biju Shri Parayamparanbil Kuttappan

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

- (a) the number of Indians working in Saudi Arabia who have been adversely affected after implementation of the new labour policy 'Nitaqat' there;
- (b) the number of Indians who have come back to India after implementation of the said policy, State-wise including Kerala;
- (c) whether the Government has held any talks with the Saudi Arabian Government in this regard;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the steps being taken for the rehabilitation of such people?

Answer

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS General(Retd.) V.K. Singh

(a) & (b): In Saudi Arabia, 'Nitaqat' was implemented in order to streamline their labour market and identifying illegal workers. As per figures received from Saudi Arabia, more than 14 lakh corrected their status and remained in Saudi Arabia. About more than 1,40,000 left for India without facing any penal action in Saudi Arabia. Most of these workers were staying illegally and returned with the help of Emergency Certificate (EC) issued by the Embassy. It is reported by the Embassy of India, Saudi Arabia that the number of Indians in Saudi Arabia has increased during the Nitaqat/grace period. Hence, it may be stated that Nitaqat has not adversely affected Indian workers.

A statement showing state-wise break-up of ECs (as on January, 2014) Issued by the Indian Embassy is annexed.

(c) & (d): The Government of India and Embassy of India In Saudi Arabia had regular engagement with Saudi Arabia including a Ministerial level delegation and was followed up by the Minister of External Affairs to, Saudi Arabia. Our Ambassador regularly met the concerned Ministers and Governors in the Kingdom. A Joint Committee was also established to discuss all issues of welfare of Indians in Saudi Arabia which met regularly.

(e): The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs had called meetings of Ministries/ representatives of major labour sending States twice, the first on 09-04-2013 and the second on 25-06-2013. The State Governments were requested to formulate rehabilitation programmes for returnees from the Gulf, using existing State and Central Government programmes /schemes.