

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:848
ANSWERED ON:16.07.2014
FUND FOR INDIANS ABROAD
Maragatham Smt. K.

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

- (a) whether the Government has set aside a separate fund for the welfare of Indians abroad:
- (b) if so, the details thereof,
- (c) whether the Government proposes to augment the fund meant for the purpose; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

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

- (a) Yes, Madam. Government has set up the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) at the Mission level for welfare of Overseas Indians.
- (b) The Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) is aimed at providing the following services on a means tested basis in the most deserving cases:
 - (i) Boarding and lodging for distressed Overseas Indian workers in household/ domestic sectors and unskilled labourers; (ii) Extending emergency medical care to the Overseas Indians in need;
 - (iii) Providing air passage to stranded Overseas Indians in need; (iv) Providing initial legal assistance to the Overseas Indians in deserving cases;
 - (v) Expenditure on incidentals and for airlifting the mortal remains to India or local cremation/burial of the deceased Overseas Indians in such cases where the sponsor is unable or unwilling to do so as per the contract and the family is unable to meet the cost;
 - (vi) Providing the payment of penalties in respect of Indian nationals for illegal stay in the host country where prima facie the worker is not at fault;
 - (vii) Providing the payment of small fines/ penalties for the release of Indian nationals in jail/detention centre. The fund is raised by the Indian Missions by levying additional charge on consular services. According to the information received from the Missions, during 2010-11, 2011-12 & 2012-13, the total fund raised by Missions was about INR 300 crore (Three Hundred Crore).
- (c) & (d) Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs provides budgetary support for setting up ICWF to the tune of Rs. 5 lakh per year. This contribution is initially for a period of 3 years or till the period fund become self sustaining, whichever is earlier