

Title : Problems being faced by Indian workers in Saudi Arabia.

SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN (NAGERCOIL): Sir, Saudi Arabia is said to be a foreign country where a large number of Indian nationals are working. Approximately 17 lakh Indians are employed there. Of them, majority workers are from Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Almost all are employed in the fields of construction, fishing, agricultural farms, hospital, menials in Government offices, household labourers, etc. and they belong to below poverty line strata.

Unmindful of scorching sun and freezing cold they continue to perform hard duties. However, innumerable problems confront them in their day-to-day discharge of their duties. More often than not, those employees meet with accidents and succumb to them. In such cases, it takes many months to bring the dead bodies to India. Further, as per agreement they are not being paid by their employers. Owing to terrible workload or not in possession of valid travel documents or landing in foreign soil through fraudulent are some of the reasons with which many work with constant fear. A good number of such workers were apprehended by police and ultimately they land in jail.

For going to their rescue and bringing them out from prison, or to help them in labour litigation, or to extend legal help in wage settlement, there is neither a proper mechanism nor welfare officers to effectively intervene in their problems.

Similarly, Indian Embassy in Riyadh or Consulate General Office in Jeddah is not so powerful enough to effectively handle the problems of those workers. Further, workers are also ill-afford to travel a distance of 500 km or 1,000 km to reach this office for lodging a complaint. Therefore, the Government of India should sanction more manpower to those offices in Saudi Arabia with specific purpose to affording all possible and effective help to the Indian workers when they are in need of any urgent help.

Similarly, a Consulate General Office should be opened at Dammam in Saudi Arabia.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Hannan Mollah – not present.

Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan.

18.17 hrs.