

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE):

(a) About 41000 Indians, including a large number of artisans, who were illegally residing in Saudi Arabia returned to India under an amnesty declared by the Saudi Arabian Government between July 17 and October 16, 1997.

(b) About 13 lakh Indians continue to reside in Saudi Arabia, but no precise information is available as to how many of them are artisans.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The following guidelines and procedural safeguards are being implemented:

- (i) it is obligatory for all unskilled, semi-skilled and certain categories of skilled workers to get emigration clearance from the Ministry of Labour before proceeding abroad for employment;
- (ii) it is a cognizable offence for anyone to advertise in a newspaper, soliciting applications for employment abroad, without quoting the Ministry of Labour's licence number;
- (iii) as the immigration authorities act on behalf of the Protector General of Emigrants, the Protectors of Emigrants are under instructions to conduct surprise checks to see that the clauses of the Emigration Act 1983 are strictly implemented and persons are not allowed to travel without emigration clearance;
- (iv) Indian diplomatic missions abroad are under instructions to intimate the names of fraudulent recruiting agents/employers to the Protector General of Emigrants, Ministry of labour to prevent recurrence of such malpractices;
- (v) complaints received against recruiting agents by the Ministry of Labour are examined in consultation with the concerned Indian diplomatic missions abroad and action for suspension/cancellation of their registration certificates is taken according to the merits of the cases under the Emigration Act, 1983.

#### **Visit to Religious Places in Pakistan**

3222. SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether pilgrims especially the Sikhs from Jammu & Kashmir are not being allowed by Pak authorities to visit Nankana Sahib and other holy places in Pakistan for the past three years like other Indians;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to persuade Pak authorities to see that pilgrims from Jammu & Kashmir could visit to their holy places in Pakistan/ POK; and

(c) the number of Pakistani pilgrims visited different religious places in India and vice versa during the past three years as also the current year?

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(a) to (c) Government understand that Pakistan has denied visas to Sikh pilgrims from Jammu & Kashmir who wished to visit Pakistan as part of the Sikh Jathas under the Bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines, 1974.

Government believes that Pakistan's actions are contrary to the Bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines. This has been conveyed to Pakistan through diplomatic channels.

During the past three years as also the current year, the number of pilgrims of one country visiting the agreed shrines located in the other, are as follows:

	Indian pilgrims to Pakistan	Pakistani pilgrims to India
1995	5210	Nil
1996	5085	Nil
1997	5110	1140
1998 (upto 30th June)	2830	180

#### **Population of Livestock**

3223. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the current population of livestock in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether the total land capacity of the country is enough to support grazing for livestock;

(c) the dry and green fodder requirements for the livestock and its availability at present;