

Defaulting agents sending people abroad

62. SHRI MIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cases that were detected during 2008 about the defaulting agents sending people abroad relating to mal-treatment or working in inhuman conditions;

(b) whether any institutional steps have been codified to specifically and effectively deals with such cases; and

(c) whether these agents of Indian origin or foreign nationals have also found either doing this in connivance with Indians or they are indulging in such activities independently depending upon their sources?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (c) During 2008, action on 118 cases against Registered Recruiting Agents and 93 cases against Unregistered/Unauthorised Agents have been initiated for offences committed under Emigration Act.

Instances of complaints of exploitation of Indian emigrant workers by Recruiting Agents, Foreign Employers and unscrupulous middlemen are received by the Ministry and the Indian Missions abroad from time to time. These complaints mainly pertain to cheating, overcharging, contractual violations by employers such as non-payment/delayed payment of salary, non-availability of medical facilities and proper food, unhygienic living conditions etc. Such harassment include withholding of passports and even physical abuse by the employers.

On receipt of such complaints this Ministry swings into action against such elements.

In the case of Registered Recruiting Agents (RA), on receipt of a complaint, a show cause notice is issued. If the RA fails to redress the grievances of overseas Indian workers, action is taken to suspend/cancel his registration and forfeit his Bank Guarantee.

Complaints against Unregistered/Unauthorised Agents are referred to the concerned State Police authorities for investigation and action under the law. Concerned Protector of Emigrants (POEs) are also instructed to initiate due action.

State Governments and Union Territory Administrations have been advised to instruct all Police Stations to keep a strict vigil on the activities of unscrupulous agents.

Foreign Employers (FEs) who are found to be harassing the Indian Workers, are placed in the Prior Approval Category.

Demand of Indian workers

†63. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.