

SHRI BIJU PATNAIK: Wrong or long?

### Employment Racket in Gulf Countries

124. SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBULLAH :†  
SHRIMATI LAKSHMI KUMARI CHUNDAWAT:  
SHRI PRAKASH MEHROTRA:  
SHRI GURUDEV GUPTA:  
SHRI SAWAISINGH SISODIA:

Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received complaints regarding the employment racket in the Gulf countries resulting in virtual robbery of helpless job seekers from India;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what remedial measures Government have taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VERMA). (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

### Statement

(a) to (c) Complaints were received by Government from time to time regarding recruiting agents charging money from job-seekers, exploitation/mal-treatment of Indian workers, appointments on lower posts than those selected for, unsatisfactory working/living conditions, low salaries etc. in the country of employment. There have also been complaints about unauthorised recruitment being done by unregistered recruiting agents and deployment of workers on forged N.O.Cs. The complaints received

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Hamida Habibullah.

are got investigated into through appropriate authorities and suitable action taken based on the result of investigation.

To regulate recruitment of Indians for employment overseas, Government decided in June, 1976 that the recruitment of persons for skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled work by private recruiting agencies for employment abroad will be regulated and that these agencies will be registered and approved by the Ministry of labour. Indian firms/organisations engaged in consultancy and/or execution of projects in foreign countries as prime or sub contractors are, however, allowed to recruit their genuine requirements of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers subject to the terms and conditions of employment offered to such workers being approved by the Ministry of Labour before they are actually deployed.

To ensure that the terms and conditions of employment of Indian workers going abroad are satisfactory, the recruiting agencies are required to enter, on behalf of their foreign employers into an employment agreement covering various aspects of employment.

Provisional registration of one recruiting agency was rescinded and permission for deployment of workers was withheld in another case. Grant of provisional registration has also been withheld in those cases where complaints are under investigation.

SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBULLAH: Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, I am sure the hon. Minister has read the clear views of many people who have complained about the unlawful and scandalous activities of unlicensed employment agencies exporting manpower to the Gulf countries and these agencies make a profit of about Rs. one crore each month. Thousands of people are being entrapped and left disillusioned by the false promises of the racketeers. Therefore, I would like to request the hon. Minister to please state how it is that the matter has grown to such enormous

proportions that at the moment there are 5,000 unauthorised agencies functioning in this country. As usual we shall expect to find two categories of people who are the greatest victims : firstly, those with skills but without a chance to utilise those skills for adequate remuneration in their own homeland; and secondly, those with education who, looking out into the world, see hopeless horizons. When such people grow into thousands, and in such desperation that they clutch at straws, then it is natural in any such situation that... (*Interruption*) I am coming to the question. Such a situation is more than horrible to contemplate. (*Interruption*) Will the hon. Minister tell us whether the bureaucratic and callous attitude has gripped those in chairs of offices to such an extent that they too have become crustaceous and callous Neros (*Interruption*) Therefore, I would like to know from the Government what foolproof and effective steps are being taken ? Sir, the point is, obviously whatever steps have so far been taken have had little or no effect. Therefore, my request is that whatever steps are to be taken in the immediate future may be placed before the House for its satisfaction.

**SHRI HAMID ALI SCHAMNAD:**

The reply should not be lengthier than the question.

**SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA:** I shall attempt to be neither as long nor as fast. Sometimes I experience this difficulty which the hon. Member is not aware of.

The Government is very much aware of the gravity of this problem. The hon. Member said that there are 5,000 unauthorised agencies. I have no means to understand how this census has been computed. As far as the Government is concerned, it has made every effort to see that recruitment of such personnel is done through agencies which are registered with the Labour Ministry. I agree that there is much to be done in

making this Overseas Employment Cell, which looks after this work in the Ministry, more effective in its functioning than it is today. The Government is considering all the steps that have to be taken to ensure that unauthorised agencies do not function as they have been functioning.

**SHRIMATI HAMIDA HABIBULLAH:**

What is the Government doing about it because the unauthorised agencies are functioning on a large scale ?

**SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA :** What the Government does in such cases is to seek information about such illegal activities and to see that nobody carries on such illegal activities.

**श्रीमती लक्ष्मी कुमारी चूंडावत :** मैं मन्त्री महोदय से जानना चाहती हूँ कि सरकार ने इसे रोकने के लिये कई प्रकार के कदम उठाये हैं लेकिन फिर भी अनश्रयोराइज्ड लोग इस तरह के लोगों को भेज रहे हैं तो ऐसे लोगों को जो रैकेट चला रहे हैं अभी तक सरकार ने किसी को पकड़ा है या नहीं और अगर पकड़ा है तो कितने लोगों को पकड़ा है ?

**SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA :** Sir, the question of unauthorised agents that the hon. Member has raised is only a question of tracking down people who stealthily function. It is not that they function in the open. They function stealthily circumventing the law. So the methods that have to be employed to track them down are to collect the information and to use such other methods as to track them down. Government is doing that as far as registered agencies are concerned. Government has put down certain conditions for registration. These conditions were laid down by me in the House and laid on the Table of the House last time in the last session. Some hon. Members have said that I give long answers and therefore I do not want to read all these conditions. But if the hon. Member wants, I will give her another copy of the terms and conditions of registration.

In answer to the last part of the question, I would say that in the case of certain companies which have been registered, when we have detected that they have violated or infringed, in some manner or the other, the terms and conditions of registration, we have cancelled their registration. In some cases we have taken steps to see that when we got information that some people who have been recruited through unauthorised agencies were expected to leave the country by a particular craft—aircraft or vessel—we have supplied the information to the port authorities or the airport authorities or the enforcement authorities to ensure that such people are affloated so that they do not go to the foreign countries to be victims of exploitation of these unauthorised agencies.

**श्री प्रकाश मेहरोत्रा :** मान्यवर, मन्त्री जी ने यह कहा कि रजिस्ट्रेशन की टर्मस एण्ड कंडीशन्स जो हैं, स्टीपुलेशन हैं, उसमें यह होता है कि जब किसी को एम्प्लाय किया जाता है और जब वह उस कंट्री में पहुँच जाता है तो वहाँ उसके कठिनाई होती है तो क्या टर्मस एण्ड कंडीशन्स में कोई ऐमा स्टीपुलेशन करेंगे कि रजिस्ट्रेशन का जो एग्सीमेंट हो उसकी एक कापी हमारी एम्बेसी में भी भेजी जाए और उनको अधिकार हो उसका निवारण करने के लिये, जो कठिनाई उनको वहाँ होती है ?

**SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA :** At present the terms of the agreement are submitted here. But the suggestion that the hon. Member has made is very good and we will act on it.

**श्री गुहदेव गुप्त :** मैं मन्त्री महोदय से जानना चाहूँगा कि श्रम मन्त्रालय द्वारा इस समय कितने ऐसे अधिकरण पंजीकृत किये गये हैं, अनुमोदित किये गये हैं और इस पंजीकरण और अनुमोदन की शर्तें क्या हैं अगर यह सदन को बता सकें या फटल पर रख सकें तो ज्यादा सुविधा होगी। दूसरे, खाड़ी

देशों के कुशल कामगारों की कुल संख्या कितनी है और कितने ऐसे असहाय लोग वहाँ पर हैं जिनकी शिकायतें प्राप्त हुई हैं और उन पर क्या कार्रवाई की गई है ?

**SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA :** What is exactly the question ? Is it about the number of registered agencies ?

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :** Can the contract be laid on the Table of the House ?

**SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA :** Yes, it can be laid on the Table of the House.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN :** About the complaints received from abroad about maltreatment of these people.

**SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA :** If I have understood the question correctly, it was about the terms and conditions of the agreement or the terms and conditions under which the registration is done. We can certainly lay them on the Table of the House. The second part of the question, as I understood it from you, is whether we have received reports of maltreatment of workers who are deployed from our country. In recent times there have been reports received from our embassies and we have taken immediate action in those cases.

**SHRI P. RAMAMURTI :** In order to minimise this wide-spread abuse, will the Government of India consider advertising in newspapers widely that people recruited by these unauthorised agencies will not be allowed to leave the country ? Therefore, in their own interest, they should go through the registered agencies and they should also advertise the registered agencies so that the people are not put to any difficulty.

**SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA :** Sir, this is a very good suggestion. When the honourable External Affairs Minister announced the relaxation of the rules regarding the issue of passports, it was made very clear that in spite of the relaxation the Government would make

every effort to see that this relaxation was not exploited or taken advantage of by those people who wanted to recruit the Indian workers for deployment elsewhere.

SHRI P. RAMAMURTI : My point is different.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA : The suggestion that the honourable Member has made that we should publish in the newspapers the list of the various agents as well as the fact that we do not want any unauthorised agencies to be taken recourse to by any prospective employee who seeks employment there is a suggestion that we will take action on.

SHRI HAMID ALI SCHAMNAD : Sir, has it come to the knowledge of the Government that the Governments of the Gulf countries like the UAE have issued notices to many Indians to quit their countries as their sponsors who have taken these Indians have not given them employment, but these people have been absorbed by some other employers and, as such, countries like the UAE have already issued notices to the Indian nationals to quit their countries? Is it also a fact that there are many Indians who are there in these countries without passports and they are also in great difficulties and that they have made a request to the Government to give them passports so that they can carry on with their work in the UAE? Has this matter also come to the knowledge of the Government and, if so, what steps has the government taken in this regard?

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI : How did these people go in the first place?

SHRI HAMID ALI SCHAMNAD : By boats.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA : Sir, if there is anything on which one honourable Member cannot give information to another honourable Member, I can give the answer. But it seems that the honourable Member is not aware of the

latest situation in this regard. The Government certainly knew that there were such instance. In fact, there were about 300 odd cases, if I am not mistaken; a few hundreds, any way—I cannot quote the exact figure—in which this problem arose in the UAE. But that problem has been sorted out entirely to the satisfaction of the Indian nationals concerned and there is, therefore, no question of any Indian national being either thrown out of employment for lack of a proper passport or any valid document or of any Indian national being asked to leave the country for this reason.

SHRI MARGARET ALVA : Sir, in view of the fact that this type of problem has been faced by the Government on account of the unauthorised people going to these countries, I would like to ask one thing : It has also happened that people with genuine job vouchers have been refused passports by the Ministry of External Affairs simply to avoid this problems which perhaps the Ministry of Labour is also facing. I would, therefore, like to ask the Minister as to what measures they would like to take to ensure that people with genuine job vouchers are not refused passports or are not put to any difficulty and are allowed to go and that they are not made to pay the price in the form of the problem which perhaps the Ministry of Labour is facing. I would like to know what steps they are taking in this regard in view of the assurance given by the External Affairs Minister that the rules have now been made easier for the people to get the passports and to go?

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN : Sir, on a point of order....(Interruptions).... Sir, the situation has been aggravated because of the refusal of passports by the Ministry of External Affairs.....(Interruptions).... and the consequent harassment caused to the applicants...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Order, please.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN : Sir, I have some personal experience in this and I have received letters from the Regional Passport Officer...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Order, please. Please sit down.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN : Some photographs were there and they were fresh. But they have refused them and they have said that these photographs should be certified by the Sub-Inspectors of Police. Sir, is it not an insult to the Members of Parliament who sign these papers ? ....(Interruptions).... Would you ask the External Affairs Minister to look into this ?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Order, order, please.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI : Sir, this matter should be looked into. ....(Interruptions)....

SHRI HAMID ALI SCHAMNAD : Sir, as far as the issue of passport is concerned, Sir, it is very very liberal these days....(Interruptions)....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Order, order, please.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA : Sir, I put the question and I must get the answer.

SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA : Sir, I shall answer the question that you permitted the honourable Member, Mrs. Margaret Alva, to ask. Sir, the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Labour are in constant touch on such questions. We are well aware that there are a number of employment opportunities in these countries and in our country there are competent people, skilled, unskilled and highly qualified people, who are in search of employment. Therefore, we do not want, through Rules, to come in their way for *bona fide* use of opportunities of employment or offers of employment that are received by them.

We are thus taking every care to see that where there is a genuine opportunity of employment, as the hon. Member said, no obstacles are put in their way in the matter of issue of passports to the persons concerned. The citizens may avail themselves of these opportunities of employment.

### Proposals to invite a Chinese Goodwill Mission to India

\*125. SHRI SITARAM KESRI :†  
SHRI BHISHMA NARAIN SINGH:  
SHRI DHARAMCHAND JAIN :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any proposals from certain quarters in Delhi to invite a goodwill mission from the Peoples Republic of China ; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE) : (a) Yes, Sir. A proposal has been received by the All India Dr. Dwarkanath Kotnis Committee to invite a Chinese goodwill delegation to visit India.

(b) The matter is under Government's consideration.

श्री सीताराम केसरी : उपसभापति महोदय, मैं आपके द्वारा विदेश मन्त्री महोदय की इस बात की तारीफ करता हूँ कि उन्होंने युनाइटेड नेशन्स में हिन्दी का सम्मान बढ़ाया है। मैं माननीय मन्त्री जी से यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि अक्टूबर, 1962 के बाद जब तिव्वत के मसले को लेकर चीन के साथ हमारा सम्बन्ध बिच्छेद हुआ और युद्ध भी हुआ, तो उस बारे में श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी की विचार-धारा मुझे आज भी याद है। तो मैं यह जानना चाहूँगा कि वे मसले, जिन मसलों को

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Sita Ram Kesri.