

The Government has launched the Slum free City Planning Scheme during 2009-10 under which an amount of ₹ 60 crores allocated in the revised budget of 2009-10 has been fully released to 20 States for the preparation of State/City Slum-free Plans under Rajiv Awas Yojana. The parameters of the proposed Scheme have been formulated and the same, along with observations by the Planning Commission thereon, have been considered by the Expenditure Finance Committee on 27.10.2010. The Government is in the process of moving the Cabinet for approval of the Scheme parameters based on the observations by the EFC. It is not possible to indicate a time-frame for utilization of allocated funds at this point of time.

**Bilateral agreement for workers**

391. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) after UPA Government came to power whether Government of India has already sign Bilateral Agreement with some countries regarding the working condition and social security of Migrant Professionals and Workers working in different countries; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. To protect the interests of Indian workers, after the UPA Government came into power, the Government has signed bilateral Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with UAE, Kuwait, Oman, Malaysia and Bahrain. Similar MoUs have been proposed with Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Libya and Maldives. The broad principles of the MoUs are: (i) Declaration of mutual intent to enhance employment opportunities and for bilateral cooperation in protection and welfare of workers; (ii) the host country to take measures for protection and welfare of the workers in organized sector; (iii) statement of the broad procedure that the foreign employer shall follow to recruit Indian workers; (iv) recruitment and terms of employment to be in conformity of the laws of both the countries; and (v) a Joint Working Group (JWG) to be constituted to ensure implementation of the MoU and to meet regularly to find solutions to bilateral labour problems.

Government has also entered into bilateral Social Security Agreements (SSAs) with Belgium, France, Germany (Agreement on Social Insurance), Switzerland, Netherlands, Luxemburg, Hungary, Denmark, Czech Republic, Republic of Korea and Norway. Negotiations are underway on SSAs with Portugal, Finland, Sweden, etc. Bilateral social security agreements protect the interests of Indian professionals by providing them exemption from payment of double social security contribution, exportability of benefits in case of relocation to India or any other country after having made social security contribution and totalisation of the periods of contribution. Such agreements also make Indian companies more competitive since exemption from social security contribution in respect of their employees substantially reduces costs.

#### **Fifteenth Know India Programme**

392. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Fifteenth Know India Programme was held in the recent past;
- (b) if so, the details of the content of the Programme;
- (c) the names of the countries that participated in the said programme;
- (d) the details of the areas in which participants of such countries visited;
- (e) the details of the expenditure incurred in organizing the said programme; and
- (f) the extent to which India has been benefited by the said programme?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir. The 15th Know India Programme (KIP) was held from 6th to 26th September 2010.

- (b) The content of the programme broadly is as follows:
  - (i) Presentations on India, its constitution, political process etc;
  - (ii) Interaction with the Faculty and students of a prestigious University / College / Institute;
  - (iii) Presentation on the industrial development in the country and visit to some of the Industries;