

(c) There are specific directions to the Passport Authorities whenever approached for revocation of passports of Indian nationals against whom cases under Section 498A of Indian Penal Code have been filed. According to this, the Passport Authority has to weigh the merits of each case where a non-bailable warrant u/s 498A of the IPC has been issued, and use their discretion to impound/revoke the passport based on the explanation given by the passport holder in response to the show cause notice. Passports, in such cases, may be impounded/revoked if there is a specific order to this effect by the court in India.

Problems of Indian overseas workers

†2074. SHRI NATUJI HALAJI THAKOR: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that thousands of Indians and other overseas workers had registered their protest against their employees over under payment of wages, forcing to work and exploitation by their employees;

(b) whether many of those workers were arrested and detained illegally and not provided with any legal aid; and

(c) whether the Indian embassy in Dubai had talked to the concerned officials regarding the plight of Indian workers, and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI):

(a) In the last two (2) years, in a few cases, employees, including Indian workers, of some companies reportedly went on strike briefly against non-payment of wages, or adverse working conditions.

(b) Striking work is illegal under the UAE labour laws. A few striking workers, including Indians, were briefly detained in accordance with the local regulations. The Indian Missions provided them required consular assistance.

(c) Issues raised by the Indian workers are appropriately taken up with the employers and local authorities for resolution. But in cases involving illegal acts like strikes, the role of the Indian Mission becomes limited.

Brides married to overseas Indians

2075. SHRIMATI VASANTHI STANLEY: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by the Ministry to safeguard the interest of brides getting married to Overseas Indians;

(b) whether these women are being utilised for home chores and other abuses in foreign countries in the guise of marriage;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (c) the number of such cases those were reported in the last three years; and
- (d) the countries from which cases are reported to indulge in such activities more?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI):

(a) The Ministry has taken several steps to safeguard the interest of Indian women from fraudulent marriages with overseas Indians. The steps taken in this direction, *inter-alia*, include providing legal/financial assistance to the Indian women who are deserted/divorced by their overseas spouses. Twenty seven Non-Government Organizations/legal organizations are empanelled in 7 countries.

The Ministry implements a Scheme for legal assistance to Indian women deserted by their overseas husbands. Under the Scheme, assistance of US\$ 3000 in developed countries and US\$ 2000 in developing countries is given through local Indian Missions. An amount of Rs. 75 Lakhs has been provided in BE 2013-14 for this purpose.

The Ministry has launched an awareness-cum-publicity campaign to educate and sensitize prospective brides and their families with regard to problems arising out of marriages with overseas Indians and how due diligence can be exercised before entering into marital alliance with overseas Indians.

The Ministry has brought out information pamphlets in English, Hindi, Punjabi, Malayalam and Telugu to make Indian women aware of their rights and responsibilities and the precautions that could be exercised before entering into marital alliance with overseas Indians.

The Ministry has also brought out a guidance booklet on 'Marriages to Overseas Indians'. This booklet contains information on safeguards available to women deserted by their NRI spouses, legal remedies available, authorities that can be approached for redressal of grievances and Non-Governmental organizations.

The Hon'ble Supreme Court in the case of Mrs. Seema Vs. Ashwani Kumar has held that registration of marriages of all persons who are citizens of India should be made compulsory and directed the Union Government and the State Governments to frame suitable rules and procedures for it. Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has drawn the attention of the States/UTs to the aforesaid judgement of the Supreme Court and requested them to make registration of marriages compulsory.

National Commission for Women (NCW), New Delhi was authorised as a coordinating agency by the Government at the national level to receive and process all the complaints related to Indian women deserted by their overseas Indian husbands. NCW has launched an NRI cell on 27th August, 2009. NCW renders all possible assistance to the complainants. NCW looks in to complaints and take *suo-moto* notice on any issue brought to the notice of NRI Cell.

(b) to (d) During the last three years complaints of varied nature were received in the Ministry and in National Commission for Women are as under:—

Period	No. of complaints received in MOIA	No. of complaints received in NCW
2010-11	15	343
2011-12	31	328
2012-13	56	386

Decision of Air India on transporting of dead bodies of Indians abroad

2076. SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has noted the new decision of Air India to transport dead bodies of Indians from abroad, especially West Asia only Seventy two hours after death takes place;

(b) whether Government would give strict directions to Air India not to introduce such draconian measures; and

(c) whether Government would accept as a guideline that public sector concern such as Air India has a bounden duty to serve people of the country then to make profit by putting people to disadvantage?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI):
(a) to (c) Information is being collected, and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan

2077. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan being implemented by Government is up to the satisfaction, and if so, the details thereof;

(b) the list of Panchayats that have brought under Broadband; and

(c) the details of the list of Panchayats that will be brought under this scheme by 2014?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA DEO):
(a) The Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA) a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) was launched in March, 2013. The scheme is demand driven and the financial assistance is provided to the States for the activities selected by them for strengthening their Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). The scheme has received a good response and the perspective plans and annual plans proposals of eight States have been considered and approved by the Central Executive Committee (CEC) of the scheme.