

**Labour Cooperation agreement with Saudi Arabia**

2398. SHRI T. M. SELVAGANAPATHI:

DR. CHANDAN MITRA:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has signed a labour cooperation agreement with Saudi Arabia, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the said agreement would cover about a quarter of the 28 lakh Indian expatriates working in Saudi Arabia; and

(c) whether it is also true that the said agreement could be the stepping stone for a more comprehensive pact covering all Indian workers in the Gulf Kingdom, if so, the details there of?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes Sir, India has signed labour cooperation for domestic service workers recruitment with Saudi Arabia. The agreement aims to protect the rights of employer and worker and regulate contractual relations between them. The agreement provides for standard employment contract, disposal of contractual disputes in fixed timeframe, fostering friendly relations between employer and the worker, and controlling recruitment cost in both countries. The agreement also defines responsibilities of both parties to the agreement, settlement of disputes and a Joint Committee for periodical review, assessment and monitoring of its implementation.

(b) The agreement would cover about 6 lakh workers.

(c) It is hoped that, the agreement will help in negotiating a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding on manpower covering all categories of Indian workers in Saudi Arabia.

**Illegal labourers in Middle East countries**

2399. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether thousands of illegal labourers are still working in Middle East countries and some of them are inside the jail; and

(b) the strategy of Government of India to convert them as listed regular migrant labour and release those who are in jail?