

if the concerned Mission/Post is not contributing to social security. Free return passage to India is granted to those locally recruited employees who have put in 25 years of service.

(c) Any inhuman handling of such employees has not been brought to the notice of this Ministry including with regard to Consulate General of India located in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.

(d) Local employees in Indian Missions/Posts abroad are not governed by stipulations for workers engaged by foreign private companies or persons. Services of local staff are subject to terms and conditions contained in the employment contract prescribed by the Ministry of External Affairs, local laws as and where applicable and Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1963 and Vienna Convention on Consular Relations 1963.

#### **Setting up of international maritime boundary**

3877. DR. K. P. RAMALINGAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Sri Lanka are considering to set up an International Maritime Boundary Line between India and Sri Lanka, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government has received widespread protest against this move from the State of Tamil Nadu, if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH]: (a) and (b) Under the 1974 Agreement on the boundary in historic waters between India and Sri Lanka and the 1976 Agreement on the maritime boundary between the two countries in the Gulf of Mannar and the Bay of Bengal the International Maritime Boundary Line between the two countries has been demarcated. However, writ petitions have been filed on the issue of Katchatheevu Island in various courts.

#### **Strengthening of ties with Nepal**

3878. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Nepal have agreed to review the ties between the countries, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether in this direction both the countries have agreed to update the treaty of Peace and Friendship 1950 to implement bilateral investment promotion and protection on agreement (BIPPS); the details thereof?