

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) As per reports received from Indian Missions/Posts in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries in July 2015, it is seen that the practice of keeping the passports of Indian workers by the employers is quite prevalent, though some countries have enacted laws against this, as shown below:

- (i) Saudi Arabia has enacted a law which provides that the passports of the workers should be in their possession.
- (ii) As per Qatari Labour laws sponsors/employers have no right to seize/retain the passports of expatriate workers in their custody.
- (iii) Bahrain Labour laws do not permit employer to retain the passports of their employees.
- (iv) UAE Government has given standing instructions about holders being allowed to retain their passports.

(b) Labour complaints received in such Indian Missions/Posts also relate to the passport being held by their sponsors. These Missions/Posts issue identity documents to those workers who do not possess their passports with them for returning to India. All the Indian Missions/Posts in GCC countries do not maintain State-wise data of such victims.

(c) The Government has signed MoUs on labour with major labour receiving countries including UAE, Qatar, Oman and Bahrain. Under these MoUs/Agreement, Joint Working Groups are constituted to find solutions to bilateral labour problems.

(d) The Ministry operates a 24x7 helpline (1800 11 3090) in 11 languages where all emigrants and prospective emigrants can have their doubts/queries related to overseas employment clarified.

Also, Migrant Resource Centres have been set up in Cochin, Hyderabad, Gurgaon and Chennai for providing information, guidance and counseling for intending migrants on overseas employment.

#### **Duping of people in the name of jobs abroad**

1197. DR. K.V.P. RAMACHANDRA RAO: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has seen reports that many people from Hyderabad, some of them middle aged women, are duped in the name of job offers in the Gulf and that they often end up doing menial jobs and household jobs for long hours;

(b) if so, what steps Government proposes to take to check these rackets; and

(c) whether Government conducts a survey through our missions in the Gulf on the number of such victims and help them to return home?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has received reports from persons, including from Hyderabad, alleging duping in the case of job offers in the Gulf Cooperation Council countries.

(b) The Ministry operates a 24x7 Helpline (1800 11 3090) in 11 languages where all emigrants can have their doubts /queries related to overseas employment clarified.

In case a complaint is received against an unregistered Recruiting Agent, the matter is referred to the State Government for taking action under the Emigration Act.

In case complaints are against registered Recruiting Agent, action is taken by the Protector General of Emigrants under the Emigration Act.

(c) The Indian Missions abroad have welfare sections to address the grievances brought to them by Indian expatriates.

Further, the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) also provides assistance for meeting contingent expenditure for carrying out on-site welfare activities for overseas Indian workers in distress.

ICWF also provides air passage to stranded overseas Indians in need.

#### **Victimisation of Indian doctors in UK**

1198. SHRI PAUL MANOJ PANDIAN: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that the Indian doctors in UK have alleged victimization and racism;

(b) whether Indian doctors working in UK have also urged the Indian Government to take up their issue with the UK Government; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (c) As reported by the High Commission of India (HCI) in London (in early June 2015), a group of three doctors of Indian origin brought such allegations to the attention of the High Commission. They also informed that it was not just specific to them and that doctors from other South Asian countries, East Europe, Africa, Caribbean and China were equally subject