

[Dr. K. Keshava Rao]

Anganwadi centres and even houses for the people to stay. Will the Minister think of helping us where we have increased the salaries from ₹ 4000 to ₹ 8300 for each Anganwadi worker and ₹ 14000 to a Supervisor?

SHRIMATI MANEKA SANJAY GANDHI: Sir, it is true that the budget for the ICDS is less this year than it was for the last year. That is because now there is a different way of dispensing the money in the ratio of 60:40. The State now will have to give 40 per cent rather than what they were giving before which was nothing. It was a top up which was given willingly. If the Telangana State has increased the salaries of Anganwadi workers from ₹ 4000 to ₹ 8000, it is wonderful. I would urge all the hon. Members in the House to ask your States to do accordingly, especially Uttar Pradesh which is now giving ₹ 100.

The hon. Member has asked how does a social worker gets promoted. We have specifically made a provision in which first preference will be given to Anganwadi workers if they apply for the post of Supervisor.

SHRI D. BANDYOPADHYAY: Sir, though they are called part-time workers, they are made to work whole-time – and everybody knows it; there is nothing secret about it – but, they are paid part-time wages. Does the Government know that they are being paid less than the minimum wages prescribed for them in the country? Is this not violating the Minimum Wages Act in every State? What is the reply of the Government?

SHRIMATI MANEKA SANJAY GANDHI: Sir, the Point is, we have one anganwadi worker per 800 people. Out of those 800, it would be difficult to have more than a small number of children and pregnant women being catered to by one person. As soon as it crosses 800, they get a helper. In the hilly regions, it is one per 300. So, it is part-time work, simply the giving of food which is already prepared by somebody else. This is what they are supposed to do. It is true that they are being used full-time, but they are not being used legally full-time. They are being used for other reasons, which we have completely banned now.

Indian labourers arrested in Kuwait

*123. SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether 1,500 Indian labourers have been arrested in Kuwait recently;
- (b) whether nearly 200 of them are from Telangana; and
- (c) if so, the steps taken by the Ministry to get them released and bring back to India?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ):

(a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) As per information provided by the Kuwaiti Authorities, 1700 Indian nationals were arrested and deported during a security campaign carried out by the Director General for Residency Affairs Investigations during the period from 01.12.2015 to 21.02.2016. Kuwaiti Authorities started a security campaign in December, 2015 to deport expatriates found violating visa residency laws. This campaign is in addition to the regular security checks carried out from time to time. We do not maintain State-wise data of the workers who were arrested and deported.

(c) Steps taken by our Missions include requesting local authorities for speedy trials, seeking remission of sentences, providing advice and guidance in legal and other matters, ensuring fair and humane treatment in foreign jails, issue of emergency certificates and repatriation to India of those who are released. Our Missions/Posts are in regular touch with local authorities in detention centres in various countries, to ensure that Indians awaiting deportation are sent back to India at the earliest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 123.

SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.: Sir, the life of Indians working in Gulf countries has become miserable. They are at the mercy of the companies in the country in which they are working. If their visa or work permit expires, they have to be sent back. Instead of that, they are arrested and put in jails. Sir, I would like to ask the Minister how they plan to ensure the safety of the Indians when they don't have the valid documents and they are sent back.

GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government of India is equally concerned about the safety of Indian citizens abroad, whether they are working or have gone there for any other purpose. Our Missions have been sensitized on this. Our problem comes when workers go there illegally, through illegal touts, and they land up in situations which are unwarranted or where they suffer problems. In the same breath, I would like to say that the moment our Missions come to know that an Indian worker or anybody who is in that area suffers, or is in distress, they take the following actions :- They approach the local authorities to contact and seek Consular access to the person if he is in jail. They ensure that he is provided shelter and he is provided assistance in dealing with a legal matter if he gets into a problem. They also provide emergency certificates to send him back in case he has to be sent back through the welfare funds which are at the disposal of the Consulate. They also see to it that they are housed or they are given necessary expenditure for the duration that they are there.

SHRI DEVENDER GOUD T.: Sir, the problem is, in Kuwait, most of the workers are engaged in construction work and oil companies. But after reaching the companies, the companies keep the passports in their custody and treat Indian workers like slaves. When the workers leave the company, they are supposed to return the passport. But they don't return it. I would like to know whether the Minister and the Government of India have got any measures to ensure that the passports of the workers are returned when they leave the company. Sir, recently I was told about the Pravasi Bharatiya Suraksha Yojana. I would like to know from the Government how many people are protected under this scheme.

GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH: Sir, first let me clarify once again, we have MoUs with Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf countries, where conditions have been laid down as to how a worker has to be treated. Like I said earlier, our problem is when people go from here on a tourist visa and, through a tout, get it converted into a worker's visa and land up in some company, which is where the problem starts. Our aim has always been to educate people to adopt the legal methodology of going abroad. I would also like to apprise the hon. Member that Kuwait, on which the question has been asked, is also the hub of domestic sector workers. Most of them are going from Andhra and Telangana on tourist visas. They land up there, change their visas into a worker's visa through dubious means and they subsequently land up in problem. We are trying to ensure that this issue is solved and we are in constant touch with our Missions. The moment we come to know, we take action to extricate the particular worker or Indian who is in distress.

श्री परवेज हाशमी: सभापति जी, मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूँ कि कुवैत ने जो 1,700 वर्कर्स deport किए हैं, क्या वे सभी टूरिस्ट वीजा पर थे या कंपनीज की कम्प्लेंट पर deport किए गए थे? कुवैत में एक साल के अन्दर वर्कर्स की कितनी कम्प्लेंट्स मिलीं और वर्कर्स ने Embassy को कितनी कम्प्लेंट्स की? उन कम्प्लेंट्स पर गवर्नमेंट ने क्या एक्शन लिया और उन्हें क्या relief दिया?

जनरल (सेवानिवृत्त) वी. के. सिंह: सभापति महोदय, सबसे पहले तो जिन 1,700 भारतीयों को deportation के लिए identify किया गया, वे भारतीय थे, जो किसी तरीके से, चाहे उनके वीजा के अंदर गड़बड़ हो, चाहे उनके वर्क परमिट में गड़बड़ हो, उनको illegal पाया गया। इनमें से अभी वहां पर सिर्फ 34 भारतीय deportation के लिए हैं, बाकी सबको deport कर दिया गया है। कुवैत की लॉ के हिसाब से ये वे लोग हैं, जिनके उनकी कंपनियों के साथ या sponsors के साथ गलत दस्तावेज पाए गए। सबसे पहले तो हम identify करते हैं कि कौन लोग सही तरीके से गए हैं। जो ECR stamp लगवाकर जाते हैं, वे सही माने जाते हैं, लेकिन काफी लोग ऐसे हैं, जो टूरिस्ट वीजा पर जाते हैं, जिसका कोई लेखा-जोखा नहीं है। इनके बारे में पता नहीं चल पाता कि कौन जा रहा है, क्योंकि वह गया तो टूरिस्ट वीजा पर था, लेकिन वहां जाकर उसने अपना वीजा बदलवा लिया। जब उस पर मुसीबत आती है, तब हमें उसके बारे में पता चलता

है। इनकी statistics रखना बहुत मुश्किल है, क्योंकि ऐसे कितने लोग जाते हैं, इसका किसी को पता नहीं चलता।

श्री परवेज हाशमी: सभापति जी, मैं यह पूछ रहा था कि जो वर्क वीजा पर जाते हैं, उनको प्रॉब्लम होती है। आपके पास ऐसी कितनी कम्प्लेन्ट्स आई हैं और कितनी सॉल्व हो गई हैं?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is about work visas.

श्री परवेज हाशमी: मैं टूरिस्ट वीजा की बात नहीं पूछ रहा हूँ। ... (व्यवधान) ...

श्री सभापति: ठीक है, बैठिए।

जनरल (सेवानिवृत्त) वी. के. सिंह: सभापति जी, जो वर्क वीजा पर जा रहे हैं, उनकी कोई प्रॉब्लम नहीं है। अगर उनको कोई प्रॉब्लम आती है, तो उसको एमओयू के तहत सॉल्व करा दिया जाता है।

श्री परवेज हाशमी: सभापति जी, इनको जवाब ही नहीं देना आता, तो हम क्या करें?

श्री हुसैन दलवाई: सभापति जी ... (व्यवधान) ...

श्री सभापति: दलवाई साहब, आप बैठ जाइए।

SHRI ANANDA BHASKAR RAPOLU: Respected Chairman, I wish for the speedy recovery of senior Minister Shrimati Sushma Swaraj, in charge of Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs. Sir, in the Gulf nations where our labour force, particularly, from Telangana and other States live – they are from districts like Nizamabad, Karimnagar and Medak – our Embassies need to have the extension of the overseas Indian welfare concentration or cooperation centres. Will the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and External Affairs like to coordinate to have such centres so that the Indian residents or passport holders could have the health and other support measures from your official authorities?

GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH: Sir, the hon. Member is aware that the erstwhile Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has been merged with the Ministry of External Affairs. So, today the action is much more coordinated through the Ministry of External Affairs. We place required welfare officers in the Missions, especially, in the Gulf countries, who can take care of the welfare issues that come up from time to time. I can assure the hon. Member that we both, the senior Minister and me, are very sensitive to this. We sit on our twitters to monitor the complaints that some of the people send on twitter and actions are being taken in the fastest possible manner.

SHRI RANGANSAYEE RAMAKRISHNA: Sir, after the breakdown of the Doha Round of talks, the International Conventions on the Movement of Natural Persons has, completely, taken a backseat, and today, there is no umbrella International Convention

[Shri Rangansayee Ramakrishna]

to govern it. Then, we would also have bilateral treaties and bilateral agreements. The Minister was mentioning even about Saudi Arabia. But the Arabian Government does not even take note of our complaints. It leaves it to the contractors. So, I think, there is a dire need for an international convention, umbrella convention, under which we should have bilateral agreements. What is the Minister's reaction to this?

GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH: Sir, we have bilateral agreements as they are the ones which are the most effective between the two countries, and so far, we have found them to be quite effective in ensuring the safety and security of our workers. I would also, in the same breath, like to mention that we have the Indian Workers' Resource Centre in Dubai and we are starting two more, one in Saudi Arabia and one in Malaysia, to take care of our workers. And as regards the suggestion given by the hon. Member, we will see as to what can be done about it.

National policy on slums in cities

*124. SHRI AAYANUR MANJUNATHA: Will the Minister of HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the slum population is on the rise over the years;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether Government proposes to formulate a National Policy to deal with the increasing number of slums in the urban areas;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor; and
- (e) the action plan envisaged to provide basic and essential facilities in the slums?

THE MINISTER OF HOUSING AND URBAN POVERTY ALLEVIATION (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) As per Census figures, the slum population in the country has increased from 5.23 crore in 2001 to 6.55 crore in 2011. State-wise details of slum population in Census 2001 and Census 2011 is given in the Statement (*See below*).

There are various reasons for creation of slums of which the most important are as follows: