

The percentage of SC households in 2001 without any assets as per Census 2001 conducted by RGI was 42.60% of the total SC households numbering 152 lakhs. The percentage of SC households in 2011 without any assets as per Census 2011 had reduced to 22.60% numbering 99.95 lakh households.

(d) The Statement 21 of the Expenditure Budget Vol-I reflects the budgetary allocation for the welfare of SCs and utilization of the funds. The budgetary allocation made for the welfare of Scheduled Caste persons at the Central level during 2014-15 and 2015-16 was ₹ 50548.16 crores and ₹ 30850.88 crores respectively. Out of this, actual expenditure during 2014-15 was ₹ 30035.07 crores.

Problems faced by Indians in Gulf countries

†*284. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indians living and working in Gulf countries have been facing several new problems for the last two years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to resolve these problems;

(c) whether there has been a considerable rise in the number of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) coming back from Saudi Arab in the last one year; and

(d) if so, the number of Indians coming back to India and the reasons therefor and the steps being taken by Government to help the Non-Resident Indians coming back to India?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ):
(a) to (d) There is around 8 million strong resident Indian community in the Gulf countries. An estimated 70% of them are blue collar workers. Indian Missions in Gulf countries receive various types of complaints from Indian workers including non-payment/delayed payment of wages, sudden closure of companies, ill treatment, excessive working hours, filing false charges with police authorities, withholding of passports, dishonouring terms of the contract, exit visa, etc.

The economies of Gulf countries are facing an economic downturn due to fall in crude oil prices. In particular, those employed in oil and gas and construction sectors are among the most vulnerable where downsizing and lay-offs have been reported. There are some reports of Indian workers being asked to leave before completion

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

of their existing contracts. Instances of unpaid salaries for last few months and non-availability of food in some labour camps of two big companies in Saudi Arabia have also been reported by Indian workers.

The Government is closely monitoring the situation and is taking all possible steps to ensure the welfare and protection of the Indian community. In this context, Gen. (Dr.) V. K. Singh (Retd.), Hon'ble Minister of State for External Affairs visited Saudi Arabia from August 3-5, 2016 and had a very fruitful meeting with Saudi Minister of Labour and Social Development, Mufrej Al Haqqabani, on August 3 in Riyadh to address problems being faced by a section of Indian workers. He also visited labour camps to know firsthand the concerns of Indian workers. The Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz has personally intervened and has given instructions for resolution of problems at the earliest. The Government of Saudi Arabia has assured all possible assistance for the Indian workers.

Our Missions and Posts have been pro-active in liaising with the host countries in resolving difficulties faced by Indian workers. In addition, the institutional framework for supporting the welfare of Indian community abroad has been considerably strengthened during the last few years. The Indian Community Welfare Fund has been extended to all our Missions and Posts abroad to meet contingency expenditure for welfare activities for overseas Indian citizens who are in distress on a means tested basis. Multilingual helplines have been set up in India and in Gulf countries. Indian Worker Resource Centre (IWRC) has also been set up in Dubai, UAE that provides toll-free helpline and walk-in counselling facilities. Four more IWRCs have been approved in Sharjah, UAE, Riyadh and Jeddah in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia.

The strength of Indian community in Saudi Arabia is relatively stable. As per statistics available with our Mission, the size of the Indian community, which was 2.75 million in December, 2014 increased to 2.96 million in November, 2015 and further to 3.05 million in February, 2016. The Government maintains a database of ECR category workers going to ECR countries. As per available data of ECR category workers, the number of returnees from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (including those visiting home and for other purposes) during the last one year is given in the Statement (*See below*).

The responsibility of resettlement of the returnees primarily rests with the State Governments. The Government stands ready to extend necessary cooperation to States in this regard.

Statement*The number of returnees from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*

Month	Year	Returnees from Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (including those visiting on home visits and for other purposes)
August	2015	2640
September	2015	2260
October	2015	2629
November	2015	2942
December	2015	3040
January	2016	3651
February	2016	4649
March	2016	5416
April	2016	5736
May	2016	7752
June	2016	8578
July	2016	6437

Criteria for advertisements to media house

*285. SHRI M. P. VEERENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria adopted by Government in giving and rejecting Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) advertisements to media;

(b) whether Government has refused advertisement to any media houses in the country in the recent past, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government has received any complaints or representation regarding the matter from the State of Rajasthan?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) As per the policy guidelines, Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity (DAVP) issues advertisements to the Newspapers/Journals/Private Cable and Satellite (C&S) TV Channels/Private FM Radio Stations/Community Radio Stations/Digital Cinema/Internet Websites/Bulk SMS and Outdoor Publicity, keeping in view the objectives of the client Ministries/Departments, the contents, target audience for the advertisement and availability of funds in consultation with the