

(c) and (d) In a letter addressed to the Prime Minister dated 4 January, 2018, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu highlighted the arrest of the 13 Indian fishermen by Sri Lankan authorities and urged the Government to take up the issue with the Government of Sri Lanka. As soon as information regarding apprehension of the 13 Indian fishermen was received, High Commission of India in Colombo and Consulate General of India in Jaffna secured consular access, met the apprehended fishermen and distributed clothes, essential toiletries, etc. The matter was also raised by the High Commission of India in Colombo with the Government of Sri Lanka which resulted in the release of the fishermen.

Advisory against fraud with Indians seeking job abroad

†4330. SHRI RAM NATH THAKUR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has prepared any advisory for the Indians going abroad for jobs to protect them from fraud/cheating;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Indians on a large scale are falling prey to frauds and are being ill-treated in foreign countries even after these type of efforts; and

(d) the manner in which Government has recently provided help to Indians stranded in various countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GEN. (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) and (b) The Government is taking steps to prevent overseas job-seekers from fraudulent and illegal recruitment agents. To this effect, a mass media campaign through Radio (AIR and FM channels) and Television (Doordarshan) has been launched.

Additionally, a series of meetings have been convened with the States Governments to focus on safe and legal migration practices, specially concerning 'Emigration Check Required' (ECR) category to the notified 18 ECR countries (Afghanistan, Bahrain, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, UAE and Yemen).

The States have been exhorted to educate their populace through a mass media campaign in vernacular to seek employment only through the laid down procedure as enunciated in the Ministry of External Affairs' scheme of 'Surakshit Jao, Prashikshit Jao' i.e. go for overseas employment only through registered Recruitment Agents (RAs) and after adequate skilling through the Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PKVY), which would prevent their exploitation.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) and (d) The Government has been receiving complaints/grievances from emigrants and their family members/relatives from time to time, of being cheated by illegal agents. Such complaints are forwarded to concerned State Governments and Police authorities urging them to apprehend illegal agents and prosecute them. Since illegal and fake agencies operate from the territories within the States, the State Governments have to promptly stop the illegal activities of such fake agencies and prosecute them, after investigations. The State-wise details of requests for taking action against illegal agencies in 2017 are given in the Statement (*See below*). On receipt of requests from State Governments, Prosecution Sanction is issued by MEA. Wherever required, such complaints are also referred to Missions/Posts abroad for providing immediate relief/rescue of emigrants in distress, who were recruited by such illegal agents.

Government has also issued a Standard Operating Procedure on 26th May, 2016, to be followed by State Governments, on receipt of such complaints. The State Governments have also been requested to launch periodic visual and print media awareness campaign(s) amongst the populace, to use the services of only Registered Recruiting Agencies, and not to go abroad through illegal/fake agencies. Two high level meetings have also been held by the Ministry of External Affairs with State Government NRI Departments of all the States to sensitize them on the need to take prompt action on complaints received against illegal recruiting agents.

Reports are received by Indian Missions/Posts in the Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries, about Indian workers, being denied appropriate living and working conditions and denial of legitimate labour rights and benefits as also long working hours, refusal to grant exit/re-entry permits for visit to India, refusal to allow the worker on final exit visa after completion of their contracts and non-provision of medical and insurance facilities, incidents of confinement etc. Immediately on receipt of such complaints, the Indian Missions take them up with the concerned local Government authorities for resolution. The Government has taken several steps to safeguard the interests of Indian emigrants to the Gulf countries, these are:—

- (i) The on-line MADAD portal enables the emigrant workers and their family members to register their consular grievances online and track their redressal.
- (ii) Grievances related to overseas employment in notified Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries including Gulf countries, can also be logged in directly by emigrants/relatives or through the Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) on eMigrate portal. These grievances are settled by respective jurisdictional Protectors of Emigrants (PoEs) as per laid down procedures.

- (iii) Missions especially in ECR countries also conduct Open Houses on a regular basis where workers can seek redressal of their grievances.
- (iv) A multi-lingual 24X7 helpline of Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) in New Delhi provides information, guidance and grievance redressal on all issues and problems pertaining to overseas employment of Indian nationals.
- (v) Missions in Gulf countries have also established 24x7 helplines and toll free helplines for the benefit of Indian workers to seek help.
- (vi) Indian Workers Resource Centres (IWRC) have been set up at Dubai and Sharjah (UAE), Riyadh and Jeddah (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) and Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia), to provide guidance and counselling on all matters pertaining to overseas Indian workers.
- (vii) Missions in Gulf provide free legal counseling, free interpretation service and assistance in death cases.
- (viii) Migrant Resource Centres are operational in Delhi, Kochi, Hyderabad, Chennai and Lucknow.
- (ix) Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) is in place to assist Indian nationals abroad in times of distress, on a means tested basis.
- (x) Suitable accommodation to distressed Indian nationals has been setup in Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, UAE and Malaysia to provide temporary accommodation.
- (xi) Labour and Manpower Cooperation MoUs/Agreements are already in place with the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries that provide the institutional framework to comprehensively discuss and review labour related issues.

Statement

*State-wise details of requests forwarded by Ministry of External Affairs
for taking action against illegal agencies in 2017*

Sl.No.	State/UT	Number of requests forwarded
1.	Andhra Pradesh	13
2.	Bihar	04
3.	Chandigarh	16
4.	Chhattisgarh	02
4.	Delhi	94
5.	Gujarat	08

Sl.No.	State/UT	Number of requests forwarded
6.	Haryana	14
7.	Himachal Pradesh	05
8.	Jammu and Kashmir	03
9.	Karnataka	11
10.	Kerala	15
11.	Madhya Pradesh	3
12.	Maharashtra	54
13.	Odisha	01
14.	Punjab	51
15.	Pudducherry	01
16.	Rajasthan	11
17.	Tamil Nadu	28
18.	Telengana	17
19.	Uttar Pradesh	79
20.	Uttarakhand	06
21.	West Bengal	10
TOTAL		446

Infrastructure development by China along borders

4331. SHRI PARTAP SINGH BAJWA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the activities of Chinese authorities have stalled several developmental works going on in the border areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last three years, State-wise and the action taken to resume the work;

(c) whether Government is aware of massive infrastructure built up including road/rail links by China, right upto the international border and also in Pakistan occupied Kashmir (PoK); and

(d) if so, the details thereof including the threat posed to the security of the country, as a result thereof?