

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO.186
ANSWERED ON 08.08.2024

ASSISTANCE TO VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

*186. SMT. SAGARIKA GHOSE:

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

- (a) whether cases of human trafficking of Indians like – alleged trafficking from Andhra Pradesh and Telangana recently, young software engineers taken to Princeton, USA to work as forced labour in software companies, about 150 citizens from Visakhapatnam trafficked to Cambodia and forced to carry out cybercrimes – are being followed up and victims being provided assistance by Embassies abroad; and
- (b) if so, the legal assistance and welfare measures being provided by Indian embassies currently to help these tech-educated young Indian victims of trafficking?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR)

(a & b): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) & (b) in respect of Rajya Sabha Starred Question no. 186 for reply on 08.08.2024 regarding “Assistance to Victims of Human Trafficking” asked by Smt. Sagarika Ghose.

(a): The Government is aware of the arrests of four (04) Indian nationals in Princeton, Texas, USA, who are all charged with trafficking of persons. Full details are yet to emerge as the matter is under investigation. While not privy to all the details of investigation, Government remains engaged with the US side on this case. Government is also seized of cases where some Indian nationals are being lured by fake job offers to South-East Asian countries including Cambodia, and made to carry out cyber crime and other illegal activities. Some of these Indian nationals/their family members have approached the Government seeking help for repatriation to India. Our Missions in Cambodia, Myanmar and Laos have facilitated the rescue and repatriation of Indian nationals. Till 25 July 2024, 650 Indian nationals have been repatriated from Cambodia, 415 from Myanmar and 548 from Laos. The Missions continue to work closely with the local authorities in this regard. The matter has also been raised at high levels with all the concerned Governments.

(b): The Government accords utmost priority to the safety, security and well-being of Indian nationals abroad and has robust mechanism to monitor their grievances. Our Missions/Posts abroad remain vigilant and actively monitor, in case any Indian national in any foreign country is in distress or have any grievance. On receipt of such complaints, our Missions/Posts abroad take prompt action and appropriate measures to assist and provide relief to the aggrieved Indian national(s). Missions/Posts also take up these issues suitably with the local Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other concerned Government agencies of the host countries like Immigration, Labour Department, Home Affairs, Defence and Border Affairs and law enforcement agencies. Government of India also takes up such issues at political level with the host Government from time to time.

The Government has established various channels to enable Indian nationals abroad to reach out to the Mission/Post in case they need any assistance. They can contact the Missions/Posts through walk-in interview, email, multilingual 24x7 emergency numbers, grievance redressal portal like MADAD, CPGAMS, and eMigrate, and social media etc. Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendras (PBSK) have been set up in New Delhi and at Dubai (UAE), Riyadh & Jeddah (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) and Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia).

Ministry issues advisories including on social media platforms and media briefings about fake job rackets from time to time. Such communications are also issued by concerned Indian Missions/Posts abroad through their websites, social media handles and through the print media. The Ministry through Indian Missions/Posts abroad, takes pro-active measures to rescue Indian nationals including IT professionals trapped in foreign countries.

As and when complaints of illegal migration/human trafficking are received, such matters are referred to the State police for investigation and prosecution. The status of follow up action in this regard for the last two years is at Annexure-A. Information about illegal agents is also uploaded and updated on the e-Migrate Portal on regular basis. The e-Migrate portal publishes the list of legal and illegal recruitment agencies and, a total of 3,042 illegal agents have been notified on the portal till June 2024.

Our Missions/Posts abroad also utilize the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) to provide necessary assistance, including legal, on means tested basis to Indian citizens abroad and their dependents in times of distress. Since 2014, around Rs.656/- crores has been utilized by Indian Missions/Posts abroad under the Fund and around 3,50,194 Indians were extended assistance till March 2024.

Annexure-A

Sl No.	State/UT	Number		ATR Submitted by State Police		Number of Cases in which request for issue of prosecution sanction after investigation		Number of Prosecution Sanction issued	
		2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023
1.	Andhra Pradesh	688	445	0	5*		1		1
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	0	0	0	0				
3.	Assam	2	2	1	0				
4.	Bihar	2	6	0	1(FIR registered)				
5.	Chandigarh	0	3	0	0				
6.	Chhattisgarh	0	0	0	0				
7.	Delhi	1	4	0	0				
8.	Goa	14	5	5	0				
9.	Gujarat	2	2	0	1				
10.	Haryana	1	4	0	0				
11.	Himachal Pradesh	3	4	0	1				
12.	Jammu & Kashmir	1	1	0	0		1		1
13.	Jharkhand	0	0	0	0				
14.	Karnataka	21	32	4	6	1	3	1	3
15.	Kerala	69	110	47 (FIRs Registered)	87 (FIRs Registered)	7	7	7	7
16.	Madhya Pradesh	0	0	0	0				
17.	Maharashtra	8	6	2	1				
18.	Manipur	0	0	0	0				
19.	Meghalaya	0	0	0	0				
20.	Mizoram	0	2	0	1				
21.	Nagaland	0	0	0	0				
22.	Odisha	0	0	0	0				
23.	Punjab	23	56	0	0				

24.	Rajasthan	64	35	2	0		2		2
25.	Sikkim	0	0	0	0				
26.	Tamil Nadu	254	152	6	7		1		1
27.	Telangana	63	132	19	35				
28.	Tripura	0	0	0	0				
29.	Uttarakhand	0	0	0	0				
30.	Uttar Pradesh	1	0	0	0	2		2	
31.	West Bengal	10	5	1	2	1		1	
	Total	1227	1006	87	147	11	15	11	15

* One letter received from Andhra Pradesh Police informing that five emigrants have refused to file complaint against the agent.
