

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION No- 2325
ANSWERED ON- 20/03/2025

ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION RACKETS IN PUNJAB

2325. MS. SWATI MALIWAL

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government is aware of illegal immigration centres in Punjab that fraudulently send children and youth abroad under false job promises, leading to exploitation;
- (b) the number of cases registered against such agents in the last five years by Government with specific reference to Punjab;
- (c) whether the Centre has directed Punjab to strengthen oversight of immigration consultancies and the State's response; and
- (d) whether Government plans better Centre-State co-ordination to curb illegal immigration?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

- (a) Ministry is aware of fraudulent activities by some illegal/unscrupulous recruitment agents/agencies in the country, including that in Punjab, who are not authorised to engage in recruitment for overseas employment as per the provisions of The Emigration Act 1983, but carry out this work illegally. Complaints have also been filed by aggrieved emigrants or their relatives/friends who have been cheated/exploited by their employers.
- (b) As and when complaints of illegal migration/human trafficking are received, such matters are referred to the State police for investigation and prosecution under the relevant legal provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and other legislation in place including that enacted by the State Government of Punjab like Punjab Prevention of Human Smuggling Act, 2012. In the cyber domain, action is also taken against illegal recruiting agents in association with MHA and State Police authorities. Requests to take down social media posts of illegal recruiting agencies from all over India including Punjab have been regularly shared with MHA. In a recent joint operation of Ministry with Punjab Police, a total of 38 FIRs has been registered against illegal/unregistered recruiting agencies based in Punjab. In addition, 11 FIRs have also been filed by Punjab Police separately.
- (c) & (d) Ministry issues advisories through eMigrate portal, social media handles, and other modes of publicity about the perils of fake job rackets and ways to prevent the same. Till February 2025, a total of 3,281 illegal agents in country including in the State of Punjab, have been notified on the

eMigrate portal. The awareness campaign on safe and legal migration through eMigrate portal has been carried out by the Ministry across the country including in Punjab by conducting workshops, trainings, information sessions, digital campaigns for media groups, police officials and law enforcement agencies, local administration, aspiring recruiting agents, entrepreneurs and general public. During these sessions awareness on emigration regulations, schemes beneficial for emigrants like Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY), Pre-Departure Orientation Training (PDOT), eMigrate portal and various advisories issued by Indian Embassies are brought to the notice of all stakeholders.

Ministry regularly coordinates with the State Governments including Punjab regarding issues of illegal agencies in the field of overseas employment and the ways to address challenges related to enforcement of Emigration Regulations. Videsh Sampark Programme is organized in collaboration with State Governments from time to time. The Ministry regularly organises outreach programs to sensitise various stakeholders about the benefits of safe and legal migration and suggests ways to prevent illegal migration through fake/unregistered recruitment agencies. In addition to the regular information sharing on unregistered recruiting agencies, regular meetings with the State level Nodal Officer are held. Regular workshops & training sessions are held by the Ministry for law enforcement agencies of the State Governments in which information on the Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) of the Ministry, detection of unlawful content on social media, and case studies of Cyber Scamming is shared with the participants.
