

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2721
To be answered on 17th December, 2008

INDIANS STRANDED IN GULF COUNTRIES

2721. SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR:
SHRI PANNIAN RAVINDRAN:
SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE:
SHRI A.V. BELLARMIN:
SHRI PRATIK P. PATIL:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether a large number of Indians are stranded in Gulf countries for return to India;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the name of the countries alongwith the reasons therefor; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government for their early repatriation to India?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) to (c): The Indian Missions in Gulf countries have informed that there is no report of large number of Indians stranded for return to India. However, there are cases reported from time to time regarding stay of Indian nationals having become illegal for violation of local rules and regulations, non-possession of valid visas/resident permits etc.

Governments in Gulf countries have declared Amnesty Schemes from time to time to permit such foreign nationals to either regularize their stay or leave the country without penalty, during the operation of the scheme.

Indian Mission officials visit the deportation centers to ascertain and ensure welfare of the deportees. Assistance is also provided for regularization of the stay in deserving cases. The missions also issue emergency certificates or necessary travel documents to facilitate repatriation.

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, in coordination with the Ministry of External Affairs, Home Affairs, Civil Aviation and State Governments, closely monitors such deportation of the Indian workers.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2745
To be answered on 17th December, 2008

IMPACT OF RECESSION ON OVERSEAS INDIANS

2745. SHRIMATI KIRAN MAHESHWARI:
(OIH) SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether a large number of Indian I.T. experts working in overseas countries are being sent back to India as a result of recent global economic recession;
- (b) if so, the number of Indians sent back from the overseas countries after the onset of this recession; and
- (c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) to (c): The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2752
To be answered on 17th December, 2008

ATTACK ON INDIAN STUDENTS IN FOREIGN UNIVERSITIES

2752. ADV. (SHRIMATI) P. SATHEEDEVI:
SHRI CHANDRA BHUSHAN SINGH:
SHRI M. RAJA MOHAN REDDY:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether Indian students in foreign universities have been attacked recently;
- (b) if so, the details thereof: and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) to (c): Details are being collected from Indian Missions/Posts abroad and would be laid on the Table of the House.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2865
To be answered on 17th December, 2008

NON-PROFIT TRUST FUND FOR DIASPORA PHILANTHROPY

2865. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether the proposal to set up a Non-Profit Trust Fund to channelize diaspora philanthropy has been finalised;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the amount deposited so far; and
- (c) the efforts made by the Government to ensure transparent transactions in this fund?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) to (c): A not-for-profit Trust to channelize diaspora capital into India has been approved by the Government. This will serve as a credible institutional mechanism to assist the Overseas Indians to contribute to the social causes. The trust will have a Board chaired by Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs and twelve nominated Members (four each from amongst eminent overseas Indians, resident Indians, and from Government - all nominated by the Government of India). The day-to-day management of the trust will be vested in the Managing Committee, with Secretary MOIA as Chairman and a Chief Executive Officer of the Trust as Secretary. The Managing Committee will have seven members, both, Government officials as well as persons of eminence from outside the Government. The trust is expected to be fully operational with effect from the next financial year.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1571
To be answered on 10th November, 2008

EXPLOITATION OF INDIAN WORKERS IN MALAYSIA

1571. SHRI ANIRUDH PRASAD ALIAS SADHU YADAV:
SHRI EKNATH M. GAIKWAD:
SHRIMATI NIVEDITA MANE:
SHRI MADHU GOUD YASKHI:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether there are reports that Indian workers are under paid and assaulted by recruitment agents and their employers in Malaysia;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken or likely to be taken by the Government in this regard?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) & (b): Complaints are received from time to time from the Indian workers working abroad including in Malaysia about illegal recruitment for employment by recruiting agents which often results in their exploitation and harassment.

On complaints against illegal/ unregistered recruiting agents, penal action is taken against them for violation of provisions of the Emigration Act, 1983 by referring their cases to the Police authorities of the State Governments concerned. During 2006, 2007 and 2008 (upto 30.11.2008) respectively 78, 41 and 87 complaints were sent to the state police authorities and the Protectors of Emigrants for legal action against unregistered recruiting agents. 21, 07 & 34 prosecutions have been sanctioned in this regard during 2006, 2007 and 2008 respectively.

As and when a complaint is received against a registered Recruiting Agent, he is directed to redress the grievance in a time bound manner. If he fails to do so, action is taken to suspend/cancel his Registration Certificate. In cases where the conduct of registered recruiting agent is required to be specifically watched in view of the nature of complaint, they are placed on an Internal Watch List. During the years (upto 30.11.2008), 80, 12 and 24 registration certificates (RCs) respectively were suspended/ cancelled.

On recommendation of Indian missions abroad on complaints against Foreign Employers (FEs) referred to them, the FEs are placed on Prior Approval Category (PAC/ Black List). 345 such companies have been put under the PAC category till 30.11.2008.

(c): With a view to protect the interests of the Indian workers going abroad, the following steps have been taken: -

- Attestation of employment documents by the Indian missions concerned in respect of six countries viz. Yemen, Lebanon, Libya, Jordan, Sudan and Kuwait for all categories of workers (skilled & unskilled) has been made mandatory whereas for vulnerable categories, i.e. housemaids/ domestic servants and unskilled labour, attestation of employment documents by the Indian missions has been made mandatory for all ECR countries.
- All demands for 500 or more workers is verified for the genuineness of the demand as well as the Foreign Employer by the concerned Indian mission.
- All demands from Recruiting Agents in the Watch List of the Ministry are attested by the Indian mission concerned before grant of clearance.
- Protectors of Emigrants have been asked to conduct appropriate checks and exercise abundant caution while granting emigration clearance, while taking into account the extant instructions of the Ministry.
- This Ministry has signed bilateral MOUs with the UAE, Kuwait and Oman and additional protocol on the existing MoU with Qatar to ensure protection to emigrant workers. MOU with Malaysia and Bahrain have been finalized. Efforts are being made to sign MOUs with other labour receiving countries. These MOUs provide for a Joint Committee consisting of representatives of both countries to discuss and resolve grievances of workers.
- Special measures being taken for better protection and welfare of vulnerable sections of emigrants including women emigrants are:
 - Age restriction of 30 years for all women emigrating on ECR passports.
 - Opening of Overseas Indian Workers Resource Centre in host countries to serve as a one stop service outlet for addressing the information and assistance needs of emigrants.
 - A 24x7 helpline viz. Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) has been set up to enable emigrants/ prospective emigrants to seek information and file complaints against Recruiting Agents/ Foreign Employers.
- A comprehensive insurance scheme, viz. Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana, 2006, is in place, which makes it mandatory for every emigrant worker to be covered under the Scheme while seeking emigration clearance. The Scheme, inter-alia, provides workers with life insurance, medical expenses and legal expenses cover and also the deportation expenses wherever needed. With effect from 01.04.2008, the scheme has been upgraded by providing additional benefits at reduced premium rates. Workers now have life insurance coverage of Rs.10 lakhs (in place of Rs.5 lakhs), Medical Expenses coverage of Rs.75,000/- (in place of Rs.50,000/-), Family Hospitalization coverage of Rs.50,000/- (in place of Rs.25,000/-), Maternity Expenses coverage of Rs.25,000/- (in place of Rs.20,000/-), Legal Expenses coverage of Rs.30,000/- (in place of Rs.25,000/-) etc. The

insurance premium has been reduced to Rs.275 for 2 years policy period and Rs.375 for 3 years policy period.

A vigorous campaign in the print and electronic media to educate potential emigrants including labourers and other vulnerable sections like women emigrants has been launched to propagate the benefits and hazards of legal and illegal migration respectively.

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1616
To be answered on 10th November, 2008

SIGNING OF MOU WITH THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PHYSICIANS

1616. SHRI RAOSHEB DANVE PATIL:
(OIH)

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether any Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been signed with the American Association of Physicians of Indian origin in the health sector for treatment of various diseases;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to set up Welfare Centres in the country through the Non-Resident Indians;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the details of the problems being faced in setting up of the said centres?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) and (b): The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the American Association of Physicians of Indian Origin (AAPI) to strengthen the public-private partnership mode of social sector development and lead overseas Indian resources into social sectors in India to provide for better rural health-care.

The objective is to share the knowledge and expertise of Overseas Indians. Innovative health care delivery system are being introduced through two pilot projects in Andhra Pradesh and Bihar that can then constitute models for replication in other States. The Projects are under implementation in both the States.

(c) and (d) : No, Sir.

(e): Does not arise.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1629
To be answered on 10th November, 2008

INDIAN HOUSEHOLD SERVICE WORKERS ABROAD

1629. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) the estimated number of Indians working as Household Service Workers (HSW) in various countries abroad;
- (b) whether bilateral labour welfare pacts have been signed between India and various other countries in which Indian HSWs are employed;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the incidents of exploitation of Indian women working as HSW abroad have come to the notice of the Government;
- (e) if so, the details thereof; and
- (f) the steps taken by the Government to protect the exploitation of Indian workers abroad?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) As per information furnished by Indian Missions in Oman, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait, UAE, Lebanon and Jordan, the approximate total number of Indian women working as housemaids is about 1,70,000.

(b)&(c): This Ministry has signed bilateral MOUs with the UAE, Kuwait and Oman and additional protocol on the existing MoU with Qatar to ensure protection to emigrant workers. MOU with Malaysia and Bahrain have been finalized. Efforts are being made to sign MOUs with other labour receiving countries. These MOUs provide for a Joint Committee consisting of representatives of both countries to discuss and resolve grievances of workers. They also intend to strengthen cooperation in man-power development, facilitate mobilization and recruitment of man-power, exchange expertise and experience in all related areas, and lay down the terms and conditions as well as rights and duties of the employer and the employee.

(d) &(e): Instances of exploitation of Indian emigrant workers have come to the notice of the Government from time to time. The complaints received relate to various issues including instances of exploitation by recruitment agents. During the last two years, the number of complaints received are as under:

COMPLAINTS AGAINST UNREGISTERED RECRUITING AGENTS

Year	No. of complaints	Prosecution Sanctions issued	Cases referred to State Governments/ POEs for action
2006	78	21	57
2007	41	7	34
2008 (upto 30.11.08)	87	59	87

COMPLAINTS AGAINST REGISTERED RECRUITING AGENTS

Year	No. of complaints	Show Cause Notices issued	No. of Registration Certificates Suspended/cancelled	No. of Complaints Drop-ped/resolved	Cases pending and being followed up
2006	167	167	80	84	03
2007	98	94	12	66	20
2008 (30.11.08)	102	102	24	26	52

(f): With a view to protect the interests of the Indian workers abroad, the following steps have been taken: -

- Attestation of employment documents by the Indian missions concerned in respect of six countries viz. Yemen, Lebanon, Libya, Jordan, Sudan and Kuwait for all categories of workers (skilled & unskilled) has been made mandatory whereas for vulnerable categories, i.e. housemaids/ domestic servants and unskilled labour, attestation of employment documents by the Indian missions has been made mandatory for all ECR countries.
- All demands for 500 or more workers is verified for the genuineness of the demand as well as the Foreign Employer by the concerned Indian mission.
- All demands from Recruiting Agents in the Watch List of the Ministry are attested by the Indian mission concerned before grant of clearance.

contd. ...3/-

- Protectors of Emigrants have been asked to conduct appropriate checks and exercise abundant caution while granting emigration clearance, while taking into account the extant instructions of the Ministry.
- Special measures taken for better protection and welfare of vulnerable sections of emigrants including women emigrants are:
 1. Age restriction of 30 years for all women emigrating on ECR passports.
 2. Opening of Overseas Indian Workers Resource Centre in host countries to serve as a one stop service outlet for addressing the information and assistance needs of emigrants.
 3. A 24x7 helpline viz. Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) has been set up to enable emigrants/ prospective emigrants to seek information and file complaints against Recruiting Agents/ Foreign Employers.
- A comprehensive insurance scheme, viz. Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana, 2006, is in place, which makes it mandatory for every emigrant worker to be covered under the Scheme while seeking emigration clearance. The Scheme, inter-alia, provides workers with life insurance, medical expenses and legal expenses cover and also the deportation expenses wherever needed. With effect from 01.04.2008, the scheme has been upgraded by providing additional benefits at reduced premium rates. Workers now have life insurance coverage of Rs.10 lakhs (in place of Rs.5 lakhs), Medical Expenses coverage of Rs.75,000/- (in place of Rs.50,000/-), Family Hospitalization coverage of Rs.50,000/- (in place of Rs.25,000/-), Maternity Expenses coverage of Rs.25,000/- (in place of Rs.20,000/-), Legal Expenses coverage of Rs.30,000/- (in place of Rs.25,000/-) etc. The insurance premium has been reduced to Rs.275 for 2 years policy period and Rs.375 for 3 years policy period.

A vigorous campaign in the print and electronic media to educate potential emigrants including labourers and other vulnerable sections like women emigrants has been launched to propagate the benefits and hazards of legal and illegal migration respectively.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1662
To be answered on 10th November, 2008

INDO-FRANCE AGREEMENT ON SOCIAL SECURITY OF INDIAN WORKERS

1662. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether the Government has signed any agreement with France for the social security of the Indians working in that country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the benefits likely to accrue as a result thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) & (b): Yes, Sir. Social Security Agreement between India and France was signed on 30th September, 2008 at Paris.

(c): The following will be the benefits:

- (i) For short contract up to 5 years no social security contribution would need to be paid under the French law by the detached workers provided they continue to make social security payment in India.
- (ii) The above benefits shall be available even when the Indian company sends its employees to the French Republic from a third country.
- (iii) Indian workers shall be entitled to the export of the social security benefits if they relocate to India after the completion of their service in the French Republic.
- (iv) The self-employed Indians in the French Republic would also be entitled to export of social security benefit on their relocation to India.
- (v) The period of contribution in India or France as the case may be, will be added to the period of contribution in the other country for determining the eligibility for social security benefits.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1720
To be answered on 10th November, 2008

INDIAN WORKERS LIVING IN KUWAIT

1720. SHRI MAHAVIR BHAGORA:
(OIH)

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) the number of the Indian workers living in Kuwait presently;
- (b) whether Indian workers are deported from Kuwait every year;
- (c) if so, the details thereof for the last three years and the current year;
- (d) whether any agreement has been signed with the Government of Kuwait in this regard; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) As per information furnished by Indian Mission in Kuwait, the number of Indian nationals working in Kuwait was 5,09,277 as on 01.07.2008.

(b) & (c): Some Indian workers are deported from Kuwait from time to time. Main reasons of deportation, inter-alia, are: expiry of residence visa, filing of 'absconding' cases by sponsors, involvement in crime etc. In all such cases, the Indian nationals are detained by the local authorities and finally deported, after issuance of Emergency Certificates, as most of the deportees are not in possession of their passports. The number of Emergency Certificates issued during the last three years and the current year are given below:

Year	EC issued
2005	1029
2006	1354
2007	8234 (including 7411 issued under the Amnesty declared by the Government of Kuwait in 2007)
2008(till date)	4538 (including 3590 issued under the amnesty declared by the Government of Kuwait in 2008)

(d) & (e): A Memorandum of Understanding on Labour, Employment and Manpower Development has been signed between India and Kuwait in April 2007, with the intention of strengthening cooperation in man-power development, facilitating mobilization and recruitment of man-power, exchanging expertise and experience in all related areas, and laying down the terms and conditions as well as rights and duties of the employer and the employee. Under the MOU, a Joint Working Group (JWG) has been set up for discussion on various labour related issues between the representatives of the two Governments.

Government of India

Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1755
To be answered on 10th November, 2008

INVESTMENT BY OVERSEAS INDIANS

1755. SHRI BALASHOWRY VALLABHANENI:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas has created a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) that has facilitated investments of overseas Indians;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the strategy to be adopted during the coming years?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) to (c): At the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) held in January, 2007, the Prime Minister had announced the establishment of an 'Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC)' to serve as a single window for Overseas Indians investing in India. The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) has established the OIFC as a not-for-profit trust in a public/private partnership with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII).

The OIFC was registered as a trust on 28th May, 2007 and is fully operational. The strategy of OIFC will focus on investment promotion through :

- (i) Dissemination of information to Overseas Indian on investing in India;
- (ii) Providing hand-holding services for potential Overseas Indian investors.
- (iii) Promoting business-to-business partnerships between Indian businesses and Overseas Indian businesses;
- (iv) Assisting the State Governments in promoting Overseas Indian investments in the States.

The OIFC has conducted business-to-business meets for Overseas Indians at the market place organized during the 6th PBD in January, 2008 and the Mini PBD in Singapore in November, 2008. In addition, the OIFC has also organized the first investors meet at Muscat (Sultanate of Oman) on 12th November, 2008.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1756
To be answered on 10th November, 2008

INTER-MINISTERIAL SUB-COMMITTEE TO HELP NRI COUPLES

1756. SHRI ADHALRAO PATIL SHIVAJIRAO:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether the Government has set up any Inter-Ministerial Sub-Committee to extend help to the NRI couples as reported in *The Times of India* dated 14 July, 2008;
- (b) if so, the details of main recommendations made by the aforesaid Committee;
- (c) the action taken by the Government on these recommendations; and
- (d) the other steps taken by the Government to mitigate the suffering of women defrauded by their NRI husbands?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a): Yes, Sir. An Inter-Ministerial Sub-Committee was set up on 4th May 2007 to discuss ways and means to assist Indian women who are deserted by their overseas Indian spouses.

(b) to (d): The details are given in the Annexure.

Annexure to Lok Sabha Question No. 1756 for 10th December, 2008

The recommendations of the Inter-Ministerial Sub Committee are as under:-

1. All marriages solemnized in India should be compulsorily registered. Proforma for registration of marriages may be uniform in all states and it should include all relevant information e.g. spouse's profession, work-place address, passport number, income, actual marital status and social security number, if applicable.
2. Litigations related to NRI marriages should be taken up on fast track courts through Ministry of Law and Justice and, also, where necessary, by special public prosecutors. Since 'marriage' is a state subject, the proposal for appointment of special public prosecutor to handle such cases has to come from the State Governments in consultation with the High Court concerned. However, in cases of Central enactments, such proposals can be made by the Ministry/Department concerned in consultation with the jurisdictional High Court.
3. To incorporate suitable provisions on serving of notices, summons, enforcement of maintenance orders with regard to overseas Indian marriages in the mutual legal assistance treaties (MLAT) which are in the pipeline especially, with the countries like USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand where problem of desertion of Indian women by overseas Indians is acute.
4. Whenever there is an ongoing litigation in a foreign court, the Indian bride's case should not go unrepresented. The existing funding mechanism to such cases may be strengthened by organizing a network of NGOs and NRI legal professionals as volunteers.
5. A vigorous information campaign may be launched at all levels using the media and NGOs to educate prospective brides and their families to take possible precautions before entering into marriage alliance with overseas Indians.
6. Information brochure may be prepared by experts having knowledge of Private International Law, regarding the working of the relevant Hague Conventions and also procedures to be followed by the general public regarding serving of notices, summons etc. to parties staying abroad. Thereafter, a media campaign may be launched to make general public aware of the provisions pertaining to serving of summons, notices etc. to accused NRIs in foreign countries.
7. States/Union Territories should pass on information regarding court orders against accused NRIs to Emigration Authorities to prevent such people from leaving India against these orders.
8. Suitable instructions may be issued to the police authorities of all the States/Union Territories to register FIRs in such cases without any delay.

9. Bilateral agreements may be signed with foreign countries to protect the victims of NRI marriages. Besides other clauses, such agreements should include provisions e.g. (i) divorce order of foreign courts should be effective only when endorsed by a court in India, (ii) decrees granted by Indian courts should be enforceable in foreign countries, (iii) deserted Indian women should be allowed to be present in the foreign country where a divorce petition has been filed against her, and (iv) the concerned foreign government may grant temporary visa for this purpose to the Indian women and should issue instructions to their courts to decide such cases only after requisite visa has been provided to the Indian woman.

The action taken by the Government on these recommendations:

The above recommendations of the Inter-Ministerial Committee were considered in an Inter-Ministerial meeting held on 7th July 2008 under the chairmanship of the Minister for Overseas Indian Affairs. The following decisions were taken at this meeting:

- 1.) There was agreement over the sub-committee's recommendation that all marriages solemnised in India should be compulsorily registered and pro-forma for registration of marriages should be uniform in all states and should contain all relevant information that would help in identifying the persons.

It was further agreed that the pro-forma for registration of marriages should also have columns, in the case of overseas Indians, for the social security number, passport particulars, ID card / labour card etc. to build a proper identification and tracking system. Introduction of a uniform format would need interaction with the State Governments. Ministry of Law and Justice would prepare an appropriate pro-forma and take it up with the State/UT Governments (Action: Ministry of Law and Justice, State/UT Governments)

- 2.) There was agreement over the sub-committee's recommendation that:
 - (a) Litigations related to overseas Indian marriages should be taken up by fast track courts. It was felt that instead of building up a new system for these courts, this should be brought within the scope of the existing family courts. (Action: State /UT Governments, Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of Women and Child Development).
 - (b) Efforts may be made to let the family courts clear the pending cases early and a mechanism may be put in place for regular monitoring of such cases. (Action: State /UT Governments, Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of Women and Child Development).

- 3.) There was agreement over the sub-committee's recommendation that provisions on serving of notices, summons, enforcement of maintenance orders be made part of the mutual legal assistance treaties (MLAT) especially with USA, UK, Canada, Australia and New Zealand where problem of desertion of Indian women by overseas

Indians is acute. (Action: Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs).

- 4.) There was agreement over the sub-committee's recommendation that whenever there is an ongoing litigation in a foreign court, the Indian bride's case should not go unrepresented. MOIA's Scheme to assist Indian women in defending their cases abroad was appreciated. However, it was felt that the amount being sanctioned per case by MOIA i.e. US \$1,000/ was grossly inadequate and should be enhanced substantially. The possibility of creating a flexi-fund may also be explored by pooling of money by Indian Associations. A matching grant from the government could be considered. (Action: Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Ministry of External Affairs, Indian Missions/Posts abroad).
- 5.) It was agreed that a vigorous information campaign was necessary at all levels using the media and NGOs to educate prospective brides and their families to take possible precautions before entering into marriage alliance with overseas Indians. The information campaign launched by MOIA was appreciated and it was decided that the campaign needs to be continued. (Action: Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, Ministry of Women and Child Development, National Commission for Women, State/UT Governments).
- 6.) It was agreed that information brochure may be prepared by experts having knowledge of Private International Law on the working of the relevant Hague Conventions and procedures that is to be followed by the general public regarding serving of notices, summons etc. to parties staying abroad. Thereafter, a campaign may be launched to make the general public as also the concerned officers aware of these provisions. (Action: Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of Women and Child Development, National Commission for Women).
- 7.) There was agreement over the sub-committee's recommendation that states/Union Territories should pass on information regarding court orders against accused NRIs to Emigration Authorities to prevent such people from leaving India against court orders. (Action: Ministry of Home Affairs, State/UT Governments).
- 8.) It was agreed that appropriate instructions may be issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs to the States/Union Territories to ensure that FIRs in such marriage disputes/problems are registered without any delay. (Action: Ministry of Home Affairs, State/UT Governments).
- 9.) There was agreement over the sub-committee's recommendation that appropriate bilateral agreements may be considered with foreign countries with a view to protect the interests of Indian women victims of overseas Indian marriages.
- 10.) On the recommendation made by the Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women to evolve a well defined/coordinated mechanism among all the concerned agencies to deal with the issue of problematic NRI marriages and to enable the aggrieved women to get a respectable solution to the problems, it was decided that the National Commission for Women will, henceforth, be the coordinating

agency at the national level to receive and process all the complaints related to deserted Indian women by overseas Indians.

The final decisions taken by the Inter-Ministerial Committee have been circulated to concerned Ministries, State Governments and Government agencies for appropriate follow up action.

The other steps taken by the Government to mitigate the suffering of women defrauded by NRI husbands:

The Ministry has launched a scheme to provide legal and financial assistance through Indian Missions abroad to Indian women deserted or divorced by their overseas Indian spouses. Under the scheme, funds have been placed at the disposal of Indian Missions in USA, UK, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and countries in the Gulf which can be released to the Indian Women's Associations, NGOs etc. empanelled with the Missions for providing legal and counseling services to Indian women victims of NRI marriages.

The Ministry has brought out information pamphlets in English, Hindi, Punjabi, Malayalam and Telugu to make Indian women aware of their rights and responsibilities and precautions that could be exercised before entering into marital alliance with overseas Indians.

The Ministry has brought out a guidance booklet on "Marriages to Overseas Indians" in English, Telugu, Hindi, and Punjabi. This booklet contains information on safeguards available to women deserted by their NRI spouses, legal remedies available, authorities that can be approached for redressal of grievances, and NGOs which can provide assistance.

The Ministry has launched the publicity cum awareness campaign through audio visual advertisement on regional T.V network primarily to cover the States of Punjab, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *159
To be answered on 29th October, 2008

UNIVERSITY FOR NRIS

*159 SHRI HARIBHAU RATHOD:
SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) the current status of the proposal for establishing a University for Non-Resident Indians(NRIs) in the country alongwith the locations identified in this regard;
- (b) the details of the fund earmarked for this purpose; and
- (c) the time by which the proposed University is likely to be established?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a): The task of setting up the proposed NRI/PIO University at Bangalore as a "Deemed University" under Section 3 of the UGC Act, has been entrusted to the Manipal Academy of Higher Education Trust, Manipal. A detailed Project Report (DPR) has been received for the purpose from them. The DPR will be placed before an Advisory Board being constituted to examine if the DPR meets the academic and infrastructural requirements of UGC, MCI, AICTE, etc.

(b): Nil.

(c): The University is likely to start functioning from the academic year 2010-11.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1396
To be answered on 29th October, 2008

COUNCIL FOR PROMOTION OF OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT

1396 SHRI SARVEY SATHYANARAYANA:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (f) the current status of the proposal for setting up a Council for Promotion of Overseas Employment;
- (g) whether the Government proposes to register the Council as a not-for-profit society ;
- (h) if so, the details thereof; and
- (i) the time by which other procedural formalities are likely to be completed?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) to (d): The Government has already set up the Council for Promotion of Overseas Employment (CPOE) as a not-for-profit society. This was registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 on 30th July, 2008. Some of the main objects of CPOE are to serve as a 'Think Tank' to devise and execute medium to long term strategies for promoting overseas employment of Indian, regularly monitor, study and analyse the trends in international labour markets as well as strategies of various labour sending and labour receiving countries, to develop and sustain a national strategy to be globally competitive as a labour supplier. At present the Governing Council of CPOE comprises fourteen members with Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs as the Chairman.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. *69
To be answered on 22nd October, 2008

EXPLOITATION OF INDIAN WORKERS ABROAD

*69 PROF. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA:
(OIH) SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (j) whether Indian workers engaged in construction works abroad especially in the Gulf countries are being exploited and subjected to atrocities by the local companies/contractors there;
- (k) if so, the details thereof ;
- (l) the number of complaints received by the Government in this regard during the last two years; and
- (m) the effective measures taken by the Government to protect the interests of the Indian workers abroad?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) to (d): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.69* FOR ANSWER ON 22.10.2008 REGARDING EXPLOITATION OF INDIAN WORKERS ABROAD

(a) to (c): Instances of exploitation of Indian emigrant workers have come to the notice of the Government from time to time. Over 90% of such workers are employed in Gulf countries. The complaints received relate to various issues including instances of exploitation by recruitment agents. During the last two years, the number of complaints received are as under:

COMPLAINTS AGAINST UNREGISTERED RECRUITING AGENTS

Year	No. of complaints	Prosecution Sanctions issued	Cases referred to State Governments/ POEs for action
2006	78	21	57
2007	41	7	34
2008 (upto 09/2008)	71	37	34

COMPLAINTS AGAINST REGISTERED RECRUITING AGENTS

Year	No. of complaints	Show Cause Notices issued	No. of Registration Certificates suspended/ cancelled	No. of complaints dropped/ resolved	Cases pending and being followed up
2006	167	167	80	84	03
2007	98	94	12	51	35
2008 (30.09.2008)	89	89	17	30	42

Besides the above, 345 foreign employers have been placed under prior approval category based on such complaints.

(d) With a view to protect the interests of the Indian workers going abroad, the following steps have been taken: -

- Attestation of employment documents by the Indian missions concerned in respect of six countries viz. Yemen, Lebanon, Libya, Jordan, Sudan and Kuwait for all categories of workers (skilled & unskilled) has been made

contd...../

mandatory whereas for vulnerable categories, i.e. housemaids/ domestic servants and unskilled labour, attestation of employment documents by the Indian missions has been made mandatory for all ECR countries.

- All demands for 500 or more workers is verified for the genuineness of the demand as well as the Foreign Employer by the concerned Indian mission.
- All demands from Recruiting Agents in the Watch List of the Ministry are attested by the Indian mission concerned before grant of clearance.
- Protectors of Emigrants have been asked to conduct appropriate checks and exercise abundant caution while granting emigration clearance, while taking into account the extant instructions of the Ministry.
- This Ministry has entered into bilateral MOUs with the UAE and Kuwait and updated the existing agreement with Qatar to ensure protection to emigrant workers. MOU with Malaysia and Bahrain have been finalized. Negotiations are on with Oman. Efforts are being made to sign MOUs with other labour receiving countries. These MOUs provide for a Joint Committee consisting of representatives of both countries to discuss and resolve grievances of workers.
- Special measures being taken for better protection and welfare of vulnerable sections of emigrants including women emigrants are: -
 4. Age restriction of 30 years for all women emigrating on ECR passports.
 5. Opening of Overseas Indian Workers Resource Centre in host countries to serve as a one stop service outlet for addressing the information and assistance needs of emigrants.
 6. A 24x7 helpline viz. Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) has been set up to enable emigrants/ prospective emigrants to seek information and file complaints against Recruiting Agents/ Foreign Employers.
- A comprehensive insurance scheme, viz. Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana, 2006, is in place, which makes it mandatory for every emigrant worker to be covered under the Scheme while seeking emigration clearance. The Scheme, inter-alia, provides workers with life insurance, medical expenses and legal expenses cover and also the deportation expenses wherever needed. With effect from 01.04.2008, the scheme has been upgraded by providing additional benefits at reduced premium rates. Workers now have life insurance coverage of Rs.10 lakhs (in place of Rs.5 lakhs), Medical Expenses coverage of Rs.75,000/- (in place of Rs.50,000/-), Family Hospitalization coverage of Rs.50,000/- (in place of Rs.25,000/-), Maternity Expenses coverage of Rs.25,000/- (in place of Rs.20,000/-), Legal Expenses coverage of Rs.30,000/- (in place of Rs.25,000/-) etc. The insurance premium has been reduced to Rs.275 for 2 years policy period and Rs.375 for 3 years policy period.
- A vigorous campaign in the print and electronic media to educate potential emigrants including labourers and other vulnerable sections like women emigrants has been launched to propagate the benefits and hazards of legal and illegal migration respectively.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 625
To be answered on 22nd October, 2008

INDIANS LANGUISHING IN JAILS IN GULF COUNTRIES

625 SHRIMATI C.S.SUJATHA:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether a large number of Indian nationals are languishing in jails in Gulf countries, being victims of recruitment agencies in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof ; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government for the release of these people?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) to (c): As reported by the Indian Missions in the Gulf countries, cases of Indian nationals who are victims of Recruitment of Agencies being in jails have not come to their notice.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 632
To be answered on 22nd October, 2008

WELFARE FUND FOR EMIGRANTS

632. SHRI NAVEEN JINDAL:
SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether the Government has established a welfare fund for the benefit of emigrants;
- (b) if so, the details thereof ;
- (c) the funds released and utilised therefrom so far;
- (d) whether there is any scheme for upgrading the skills of emigrants to enhance their prospects; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) to (c) : A proposal to establish an 'Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF)' to provide funding support to the Indian Missions in the Emigration Clearance Required (ECR) Countries for the welfare of the workers who are in distress is under the consideration of the Government. The details of the Scheme are being finalized.

(d) & (e): The Ministry has undertaken a Scheme for Skill Up-gradation and Pre-departure Orientation of prospective emigrant workers. The objective of the Scheme is to upgrade the skills of the Indian workers and equip them with the basic knowledge about laws, language and culture of the destination Countries with a view to enhance their prospects in the overseas employment market and to enable them to move up in the wage chain. The Scheme is being implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSME), select State Governments, apex Industrial Associations and leading NGOs in the field. The Ministry is extending financial assistance @ Rs. 5000/- per trainee to these implementing Agencies.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 695
To be answered on 22nd October, 2008

DEATH OF INDIANS IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

695. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA:=
SHRI E. DAYAKAR RAO:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether the number of suicides/deaths among the expatriate Indians is on the rise;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the families of the deceased are facing lot of problems in getting the bodies back to India;
- (d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for not providing adequate attention to the families of victims who die outside India; and
- (e) the compensation paid to them during the last three years?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a) to (e): The requisite details are being collected from Indian Missions/Posts abroad and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 711
To be answered on 22nd October, 2008

OVERSEAS INDIAN FACILITATION CENTRE

711 SHRI M.P. VEERENDRAKUMAR:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether the Government has set up Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre with a view to extend counseling services to overseas Indian workers;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the number of overseas Indians who have availed of the assistance at these Centres?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

- (a) to (c): The Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC) established by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs serves as a 'one stop shop' to promote overseas Indian investment into India and facilitate business to business partnerships between Indian businesses and overseas Indian businesses.

To extend counseling services to overseas Indian workers, the Ministry has also set up an Overseas Workers' Resource Centre (OWRC) for rendering counseling assistance to overseas Indian workers and those who are desirous of going abroad for employment. The objectives of the Centre are:

- Information dissemination on matters relating to emigration
- Registering, responding to and monitoring complaints received from emigrant workers
- Grievance redressal and follow up with stakeholders

The OWRC functions with a toll free number **1800 11 3090** accessible from anywhere in India for rendering help to the emigrant workers. The Helpline is presently functioning in seven languages, viz. Hindi, English, Tamil, Malayalam, Punjabi, Kannada and Telugu from 10.00 am to 10.00 pm, seven days a week. The Helpline has received a total of 4616 including 43 calls from overseas Indians, till date.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 768
To be answered on 22nd October, 2008

ILLEGAL TRANS-SHIPMENT OF INDIAN WORKERS

768 SHRI KINJARAPU YERRANNAIDU:
SHRI K.S. RAO:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether some private companies/ recruitment agents are involved in the business of sending workers abroad illegally;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the number of complaints received by the Government during the last three years and the action taken by the Government thereon;
- (c) whether such workers are forced to live in unhygienic conditions and to face hardships;
- (d) if so, the action taken against the erring agents/private companies; and
- (e) the steps taken by the Government to provide legal and financial help to such workers?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

- (a) to (e): Complaints are received about illegal recruitment of Indian workers for employment abroad by unregistered recruiting agents which often results in their exploitation and harassment at the hands of law enforcing authorities and the employers. During the last three years complaints so filed and action taken

contd...2/-

against unregistered agents are as under:

COMPLAINTS AGAINST UNREGISTERED RECRUITING AGENTS

Year	No. of complaints	Prosecution Sanctions issued	Cases referred to State Government /POE for action
2005	53	8	45
2006	78	21	57
2007	41	7	34
2008 (30.9.2008)	71	37	34

On receipt of such complaints, the Protectors of Emigrants (POEs) are directed to file complaints/FIRs against such unregistered recruiting agents for violation of Section 10 of the Emigration Act 1983.

Further, whenever amnesty is declared, permitting illegal workers to return to India, by any foreign country, this Ministry co-ordinates with the Ministries of Home, External Affairs and Civil Aviation and the Indian missions abroad, to facilitate their return. Such repatriations on large scales have been facilitated from UAE, Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia etc.

This Ministry also co-ordinates with the Indian missions abroad in resolving the problems of such workers by taking up issues of concern to them with the Foreign Employers and local authorities and provides appropriate assistance and support for repatriation of illegal emigrants from time to time.

Government of India
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 797
To be answered on 22nd October, 2008

INDIAN STUDENTS STRANDED IN BEIJING

797. SHRI S.K. KHARVENTHAN:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:
प्रवासी भारतीय कार्य मंत्री

- (a) whether a large number of Indian students got stranded in Beijing recently due to sale of fake air tickets to them by bogus travel agents as reported in the "Times of India" dated 15th July, 2008;
- (b) if so, whether the Government has taken up the matter with the Chinese authorities to help the stranded students;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) the steps taken to prevent the recurrence of such incidents?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS
(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)

(a): As per available information 154 Indian medical students from Chongqing, Nanjing and Suzhou Medical Universities in China had purchased return fare e-tickets to facilitate their travel to India for the summer vacation from a Bangladeshi national Mohammed Jabbar Miah alias Farooq in July 2008. Some of these students were not issued boarding passes by Emirate Airways at Shanghai Airport on the grounds that the tickets had been bought through fake credit cards. Malaysian Airways also cancelled certain tickets purchased from them.

(b, c & d): The matter was reported by our Mission in China to the Exit-Entry Administration of the Beijing Municipal Public Security Bureau requesting their assistance in the matter. Details of Bangladeshi national along with his passport particulars were intimated to them. Air India office at Shanghai was also contacted to accommodate the stranded students by providing discounted fare and priority booking.

Following the incident, Universities in Eastern China Region have appointed nodal officers to liaise with counterpart representative of Air India and Jet Airways for the purchase of tickets. The Universities concerned and students have been advised to be careful while purchasing tickets and follow this mechanism in future thereby obviating the need for travel agents.
