



Ministry of External Affairs
Government of India

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QUESTION NO.2428 AGREEMENT FOR PROTECTION OF INDIAN WORKERS IN SAUDI ARABIA

March 23, 2017

RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2428
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.03.2017

AGREEMENT FOR PROTECTION OF INDIAN WORKERS IN SAUDI ARABIA

2428. SHRI PALVAI GOVARDHAN REDDY:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that an agreement is signed between India and Saudi Arabia for protection of general category of workers from India;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and to what extent this helps in protecting Indian workers;
- (c) whether the above agreement facilitates in expediting the cases filed against our workers working in Saudi Arabia;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) how many workers from India are working in Saudi Arabia, State-wise, particularly from Telangana?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
[GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD)]

(a) & (b) Yes. Ministry of External Affairs has signed an agreement with Ministry of Labour of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on 3rd April, 2016 with a validity of 5 years for recruitment of General Category Workers from India. The agreement, inter-alia, envisages:

(i) Adopting a standard employment contract for General Category Workers with detailed terms and conditions of the employment, including the rights and obligations of the employer and workers;
(ii) That the welfare and rights of General Category Workers employed in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are promoted and protected in accordance with the applicable laws, rules and regulations;

(iii) That the term 'General Category Workers' shall refer to all Indian nationals employed in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia through employment contracts except domestic workers;

(iv) Recruitment of general category workers directly or through recruitment agencies, offices or companies that are licensed/registered by their respective governments;

(v) That recruitment agencies, offices or companies of both countries shall not charge or deduct from the salary of the General Category Worker any cost attendant to his/her recruitment and deployment or impose any kind of unauthorized salary deductions;

(vi) That recruitment, hiring and placement takes place in accordance with laws, rules and regulation applicable in India. (vii) Authenticity of the Employment Contract by way of attestation of contracts by Mission.

(viii) The right of recourses to competent authorities within a fixed time-frame in accordance with applicable laws in case of contractual dispute between both parties; etc.

(c) & (d) Yes. Recently, there were reports of Indian workers being affected in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia by the ongoing economic downturn due to fall in crude oil prices. There were some layoffs due to closures or downsizing by the companies to adjust to the current situation. Instances of unpaid salaries for a few months were reported by a section of Indian workers employed in two major companies Saudi Oger and Saad Group. Government of Saudi Arabia extended assistance to the affected workers of these two companies including waiver of fines on Iqama (resident permit) related violations, providing exit visas and one way return ticket to India. Saudi authorities also facilitated transfer of sponsorship, wherever possible, for the affected workers from their present company to other companies on gratis basis. A significant number of affected workers also availed of transfer of sponsorship to other companies. Embassy has already handed over the claim forms of the Indian workers to the Law Firm appointed by the Saudi Labour Ministry, which in turn is fighting the case of all the aggrieved workers of the Saudi Oger Company. All these procedures/formalities were completed by the Embassy before repatriation of the workers. In Dammam also, the issue of legal dues of the SAAD Group workers and Saudi Oger Workers have been referred to the Saudi Government appointed law firm/lawyer.

(e) This Ministry maintains data relating to Emigration Check Required (ECR) category passport holders proceeding for overseas employment to the 18 notified ECR countries. The State-wise number of ECR category Indian workers, who have been granted emigration clearance during the last three years, for employment to Saudi Arabia, are at Annexure.



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