

# **INDIA SPEAKS**

(Monthly Digest of Official Indian Statements on Middle East)

No. 92

March 2017

## **BILATERAL ISSUES**

### **a. IRAN**

#### **1. Visit of Trade Delegation to Iran, New Delhi, 3 February 2017**

20 member trade delegation led by Chairman, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) visited Iran from 28-30 January 2017. The main purpose of the visit related to promotion of export of rice since Iran is one of the largest importers of Basmati rice from India.

About 250 people participated in the sales promotion event held at Hotel Espinas Palace, Tehran. On the spot preparation of Iranian dishes prepared by Iranian Chefs with use of Indian rice was demonstrated and served as part of the lunch. Participants included about 30 media personnel, importers, inspection agencies and government officials from Food and Drug Organization (FDO) etc. Film of about 3.5 minutes duration was screened depicting different aspects of Basmati cultivation, processing, issue of health certificate and assurance of Indian rice being GMO free.

The delegation met various departments in the government of Iran including Food and Drug Organization, Governmental Trading Corporation and Trade Promotion Organization. Meetings were also held with Iran Chamber of Commerce and Rice Importers Association. The deliberations helped to dispel the negative publicity which appeared in some part of Iran media causing doubts about the health and safety of rice from India. Government of Iran may soon issue the notification about resumption of issuance of permits for import of rice. To supplement domestic production of about 2 million MT, Iran imports about 1 million MT of rice every year out of which about 7 lakh MT is exported from India.

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>*

#### **2. President of India's message on the eve of the 38th Anniversary of the Islamic revolution of Iran, New Delhi, 10 February 2017**

The President of India, Pranab Mukherjee has extended his greetings and felicitations to the Government and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the eve of the 38th Anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of Iran (11 February 2017).

In a message to His Excellency Grand Sayyid Ali Hosseini Khamenei, The Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the President has said, “On behalf of the Government and the people of India, I extend warm greetings and best wishes to Your Excellency and to the friendly people of Iran on the occasion of Thirty Eighth Anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of Iran. The Islamic Revolution stands testimony to the great valour and sacrifices of the people of Iran.

India-Iran relations are rooted in history and are based on our close cultural and civilizational linkages that span millennia. We consider Iran as an important partner and look forward to strengthening our bilateral cooperation across diverse areas on the basis of our shared interests. I am confident that such engagement will bring stability and prosperity to the entire region. Excellency, please accept my sincere wishes for your good health and well-being as well as for the progress and prosperity of the friendly people of Iran”.

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>*

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## **b. ISRAEL**

### **3. Cooperation with Israel in Farm Sector, New Delhi, 7 February 2017**

Will the Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether the Government has recently discussed with Israeli delegation for the bilateral cooperation in farm sector and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) Whether Israel has expressed their commitment to strengthen bilateral relations in the field of agriculture and cooperation in allied sectors and if so, the details thereof;
- (c) The level of satisfaction over the progress made in cooperation in the agriculture and allied sectors between the two countries; and
- (d) The steps taken by the Government to further strengthen bilateral relations in this regard?

#### **Answer**

Minister of State in the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare S.S. Ahluwalia

(a) to (d): Yes, Madam. Since the signing of an Agreement for cooperation in the field of Agriculture on 24 December 1993, the two sides met frequently and held several discussions. As a result, Phase-I (2010-2012) and Phase-II (2012-2015) of Indo-Israel Action Plan under the Agreement have been successfully completed. The two countries have since extended the Action Plan to Phase – III for the period 2015-2018. Under the Action Plan, 21 participating States are covered for cooperation in the field of energy efficient green houses, recycling of waste water for irrigation, Post Harvest Management for horticulture crops, training and visiting facilities in respective countries and private sector collaboration.

*Source: Lok Sabha (Council of People), Unstarred Question No.865, asked by Pritam Gopi Nath Munde, Vinayak Bhaurao Raut and Dharmendra Yadav, <http://164.100.47.194/Loksabha/Questions/QResult15.aspx?qref=46858&lsno=16>*

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### **c. KUWAIT**

#### **4. President of India's Message on the Eve of National Day of Kuwait, New Delhi, 25 February 2017**

The President of India, Pranab Mukherjee has extended his greetings and felicitations to the Amir and people of the State of Kuwait on the eve of their National Day (25 February 2017).

In a message to His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the State of Kuwait, the President has said, "On behalf of the Government and the people of India, it gives me immense pleasure to extend warm greetings and heartiest felicitations to Your Highness and to the friendly people of the State of Kuwait on the occasion of your National Day.

Our two countries have historically enjoyed close and friendly relations based on millennia-old cultural and economic exchanges, marked by extensive people-to-people contacts. I am confident that our mutually beneficial comprehensive partnership encompassing various spheres of engagement will continue to further diversify and strengthen in the years to come.

I take this opportunity to convey to Your Highness my best wishes for your personal good health and well-being, as also for the continued progress and prosperity of the friendly people of the State of Kuwait".

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>*

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#### **5. Indian Embassy to conduct condolence meeting on the demise of E Ahmad, Kuwait, 02 February 2017**

Following sad demise of E. Ahamed, MP, the Embassy is organizing a condolence meeting on Sunday, 5 February 2017 at 1730 hrs at its auditorium.

2. E. Ahamed had served as the Minister of State for External Affairs and was a Lok Sabha member from Malappuram in Kerala since 1991.

3. All members of Indian community are requested to join in the condolence meeting to pay our respects and tributes to the departed soul.

*Source: Embassy of India, Kuwait, <http://www.indembkwt.org/DispNews.aspx?ID=1047>*

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#### **6. Indian Embassy organizing "Made in India Exhibition", Kuwait, 8 February 2017**

Indian Embassy is organizing a "Made in India Exhibition" on Saturday, 18 February 2017 from 10:30 am to 8:00 pm at Al Dana Ball Room, Hotel Holiday Inn, Salmiya. The Exhibition will showcase several products manufactured in India.

2. During this Exhibition, a wide variety of Indian products ranging from tyres, motorbikes, trucks, buses, security solutions, batteries, fans, induction cooker, grills, rice cookers, mixies,

television, air compressors, etc., will be on display. Companies dealing in 30 Indian reputed brands are participating in the Exhibition. Display of Indian automobiles and home appliances will be a special attraction at the Exhibition.

3. The Exhibition is open to all. The Embassy takes this opportunity to invite Corporate and individuals to visit the same. Both Kuwaitis and foreign nationals will get to see the display of a wide variety of automobiles and home appliances manufactured in India during the Exhibition.

4. For more information about the “Made in India Exhibition”, kindly contact the Commercial Wing of the Embassy (Tel: 22530600 / 612 / 613 / 614 Ext: 211/ 226, Tel: 22571193 (Dir), Fax 22525811; Email: commercial@indembkwt.org / ssc@indembkwt.org).

*Source: Embassy of India, Kuwait, <http://www.indembkwt.org/DispNews.aspx?ID=1048>*

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### **7. Embassy warns about unscrupulous agents duping members of Indian community, Kuwait, 18 February 2017**

Some unscrupulous agents are duping members of Indian community in Kuwait by extorting money from Indian nationals/students/professionals who have submitted their educational/professional certificates/degrees for attestation/verification through local authorities/Embassy of Kuwait in New Delhi.

2. Further, these agents faking as representatives of Embassy of Kuwait, New Delhi are asking those who contact them to deposit big amount of Indian Rupees to the under-mentioned bank account towards mandatory attestation fee charged by concerned Indian universities and Foreigners Regional Registration Office (FRRO) for verification by using a fake email ID: kuwaitembassy\_in@hotmail.com. The details of the fraudulent bank account are as below:

Account No : 7860201005987

Account Name : Laltanpuia

Name of the Bank : Syndicate Bank

IFSC Code : SYNB0007960

2. The Embassy of Kuwait, New Delhi has confirmed that they have not asked anyone to deposit money in any bank account for the above purpose and that the email ID kuwaitembassy\_in@hotmail.com does not belong to them.

4. In view of above, the Embassy advises Indian community members not to fall prey to the perpetrators of such frauds mentioned to above.

5. It is important to note that process of verification of educational/professional certificates does take time due to procedure/due diligence involved including response from the concerned educational institutions situated in various parts of India.

*Source: Embassy of India, Kuwait, <http://www.indembkwt.org/DispNews.aspx?ID=1045>*

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### **d. OMAN**

### **8. ITEC Day Celebrated, Muscat, 27 February 2017**

Embassy of India, Muscat, celebrated 'Indian Technical & Economic Cooperation Programme (ITEC) Day' 2017 on Monday, 27 February, with participation of ITEC alumni from Oman. Over 200 Omani Officials and professionals, who participated in various training courses in India under ITEC Programme during previous years, attended the programme. The event was graced by the presence of H.E. Sheikh Khalid bin Omar Al Marhoon, Minister of Civil Service of Sultanate of Oman as Chief Guest and other Omani dignitaries including H.E. Ambassador Sheikh Hilal Marhoon Salem Al Ma'amari, Chief of West Asia Department; H.E. Mohsin Khamis Al Balushi, Advisor, Ministry of Commerce & Industry; H.E. Redha Al Saleh, Vice Chairman of Oman Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

H.E. Indra Mani Pandey, Ambassador of India to the Sultanate of Oman, in his welcome address, thanked the International Cooperation Department of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Oman for its support in implementation of the ITEC Programme in Oman. He underlined that ITEC Programme of India provides a perfect opportunity to Oman for development of its human resources and skills. Training and skill development under India's ITEC Programme contributes directly and significantly to Oman's goals to develop its human resources and its priority for diversification of its economy through small & medium enterprises (SMEs). A wide variety of training courses are offered under the ITEC Programme, which are open to both Governmental Officials and non-Governmental nominees, chosen by the Government of Oman. The skills which are being provided under ITEC Programme facilitate human resource development, capacity building, skills up gradation and empowerment.

In view of India's exceptionally close relations with Oman and Oman's interests, Government of India offers 150 scholarships annually under the ITEC programme to Officials and other nominees of Government of Oman to undertake short-duration training programmes in a number of fields in reputed Indian institutes. Over the years, ITEC Programme has received a good response in the Sultanate and hundreds of Omani Government officials have taken part in ITEC courses.

Today, there is a visible and growing awareness in the world about the capabilities of India to provide technical know-how and expertise as well as training, consultancy services, etc. ITEC Programme, which was launched in September 1964 as a bilateral programme of assistance of the Government of India for capacity building of friendly developing countries, has emerged as a key vehicle for India's contribution to the Human Resource Development of partner countries. Under ITEC Programme, Officials from 161 countries from Asia, Africa, East Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean as well as Pacific and Small Island countries are invited to benefit from India's developmental experience.

Under the ITEC Programme, every year India provides over 8000 scholarships to be utilized for participation in around 300 short, medium and long-term courses in 47 institutions which are state-of-art centres of learning & excellence. The ITEC Programme covers a very diverse range

of subjects from traditional areas like agriculture, SMEs, management, English language to IT, Science & Technology, biotechnology, etc. Over the years, the ITEC Programme has emerged as a key pillar of India's cooperation with the developing countries.

'ITEC Day' celebration is India's annual endeavour to bring all ITEC alumni together so that they can share their experiences and views on India with one another. The ITEC Day provided an opportunity to the ITEC Alumni, who have been trained in India under this Programme, to get-together at the Embassy to interact among themselves and learn from their experiences. ITEC Alumni were invited to speak to share their experience of training under the ITEC Programme in India. They spoke about the benefits of ITEC courses not only in providing knowledge and expertise but in giving an opportunity to interact with trainees from other countries and learn more about India and its culture and traditions. The guests were presented a flavour of Indian culture in the form of kathak and semi-classical dance performances depicting richness and diversity of Indian culture.

*Source: Embassy of India, Muscat,*

<http://www.indemb-oman.org/inner.aspx?type=AllPressRelease&id=0#collapseOne13>

### **9. An Evening with Indian Folk music and Dance from Jammu & Kashmir, Muscat, 13 February 2017**

A folk dance and music Troupe from State of Jammu and Kashmir of India gave a scintillating performance on Sunday, 12 February 2017, at Al-Bustan Palace, Muscat. The Troupe has also performed in Sohar and Sur and will perform in Salalah on February 14th February 2017. The Troupe presented a rich bouquet of folk dance and Music from different regions of Jammu & Kashmir, including Sufiana music, Rouff Dance, Hafiznagma dance, Bachha nagma Dance, Dogri dance, Bhoomra Dance etc. The performance was attended by over 600 persons, including diplomats and prominent Omanis and Indians. It was graced by the presence of H.E. Mohammed Yousuf Al Zarafi, Undersecretary for Administration and Finance Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and H.E. Ambassador Sheikh Hilal Marhoon Salem Al Ma'amari, Chief of West Asia Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sultanate of Oman.

The above performance was organized as a part of the first ever 'Festival of India in Oman' which is being organized by the Embassy of India in Muscat in cooperation with Ministry of Culture of India, from November 2016 to March 2017 in Muscat, Sohar, Sur and Salalah. As part of Festival of India, a number of cultural events have been organized, not only in Muscat but also in other cities of Oman like Salalah, Sohar and Sur. Since people of Oman are familiar with many facets of Indian culture, it has been the Embassy's endeavour to present some lesser known facets of Indian culture with a view to highlight the diversity of Indian culture as manifested in its numerous art, music, dance, culinary and costume traditions.

Festival of India was inaugurated by Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs, HE Yusuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah on 15th November 2016, with performance by an Indian ballet dance, presented by Hritaal Dance Troupe. That Troupe had also performed in Salalah, Sur and Suhar.

The Embassy had then organized, a part of this Festival, an Indian calligraphy exhibition in Muscat which was inaugurated on 21st November 2016 in Oman Avenues Mall. It showcased India's rich Islamic calligraphy traditions and its contribution to development of composite and diverse culture of India. Further, last month a classical music group, led by Dr. Soma Ghosh, presented a bouquet of classical, semi-classical, Sufi, folk and Bollywood songs, based on musical traditions of Benares Gharana, reflecting the historical durbar concerts, which used to be held in courts of Emperors, Sultans and Nawabs during the medieval period in India, They also performed in Salalah, Sur and Sohar and at the Republic Day Reception at the Embassy.

Jammu & Kashmir State of India is endowed with immense natural and scenic beauty, full of snow-capped mountains, waterfalls, lakes, rivers and valleys of flowers. In 17th century, Mughal Emperor Jahangir described Kashmir as the paradise on earth. Jammu and Kashmir is also a well-known tourist destination in India. It has a very rich and diverse cultural heritage. The three regions of the State – Jammu, Ladakh and Kashmir – have their own distinct, diverse and rich cultural traditions. The State also has a seven hundred years old, popular and respected Sufi tradition, which has left a deep imprint on music and dance traditions of the State.

As the last event of the festival of India, the Embassy has planned to hold an Indian Food Festival in March 2017, which will begin on 15 March 2017 and conclude on 19 March. It will delight people of Muscat with some lesser-known culinary traditions of India. It is hoped that the Festival of India in Oman will become an important milestone in development of friendly relations between the two countries and will strengthen the bonds of friendship between the people of India and Oman. It will also create awareness about the diverse and unique culture of India.

*Source: Embassy of India, Muscat,*

<http://www.indemb-oman.org/inner.aspx?type=AllPressRelease&id=0#collapseOne13>

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#### **10. Indian Coast Guard Ship Samudra Pavak Visits Oman, Muscat, 6 February 2017**

Indian Coast Guard Ship, Samudra Pavak, is scheduled to visit Oman from 10 to 14 February 2017. ICGS Samudra Pavak will be on a goodwill visit to Muscat to further reinforce the existing cooperation in defence and security between India and Oman. The visit also aims at improving cooperation with Royal Oman Coast Guard. The Ship is on a four nation overseas deployment in the Gulf region.

ICGS Samudra Pavak is the third of the Pollution Control Vessel (PCV) series of the Indian Coast Guard Ships built by M/s ABG Ship Yard Pvt. Ltd. Samudra Pavak in Hindi means "Purifier of the Seas", it was commissioned on 14 Jan 16 by the Defence Secretary of India. The visit of ICGS Samudra Pavak to Oman is the fourth visit by an Indian Coast Guard Ship to Oman in last four years.

ICGS Samudra Pavak, as a Specialized Marine Pollution Control vessel, is equipped with pollution response and control equipment which includes "Containment Equipment" like High

Sprint Booms and River Booms, “Recovery Equipment” like skimmers and Side Sweeping Arms, “Storage Devices” like ORO tanks (Capacity 500 KL) and Inflatable Barges (Capacity 150 KL) and the “Spraying Equipment” like Retractable Spill Spray System and Aerial Spray System. The Ship is capable of carrying and operating helicopter from her deck. It is also equipped with 02 Pollution control boats. The coast of Gujarat witness more than 70 percent of country’s oil transshipment. Considering the Samudra Pavak’s capability, She has been based at Porbandar, Gujarat, to respond to pollution control situation off the coast.

The Ship ICGS Samudra Pavak, on joining Coast Guard Fleet has been deployed extensively along the northwest maritime frontier to safeguard the maritime interests of India. It has participated in a tri-lateral DOSTI-XIII exercise with Sri Lankan Coast Guard and Maldives National Defence Forces at Male, Maldives in October 2016 wherein the ship showcased its Pollution Response, Anti-piracy and SAR capabilities. It was also the frontline ship during National Level Pollution Response Exercise conducted at Mundra, Gujarat in December 2016. ICGS Samudra Pavak is manned by 15 Officers and 99 men under the command of Deputy Inspector General Satish Kumar, TM.

Relations between ROPCG and Indian Coast Guard have been growing from strength to strength. Last year both Coast Guards signed a MoU on crime prevention and cooperation. Commander ROPCG is presently on an official visit to India on invitation of Director General Indian Coast Guard to discuss all facets of bilateral cooperation and attend a seminar on ‘Regional Cooperation for Safe and Secure Seas’ to mark the 40th anniversary of Indian Coast Guard.

*Source: Embassy of India, Muscat,*

<http://www.indemb-oman.org/inner.aspx?type=AllPressRelease&id=0#collapseOne13>

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## **e. TUNISIA**

### **11. Visit of Minister of State for External Affairs, M J Akbar to the Republic of Tunisia (26-28 February 2017) , New Delhi, 23 February 2017**

Minister of State for External Affairs of India, M. J. Akbar is paying an official bilateral visit to the Republic of Tunisia from 26-28 February 2017. During his visit, the Hon’ble Minister will be meeting with H.E. President of the Republic Beji Caid Essebsi, H.E. Foreign Minister Khemaies Jhinaoui, H.E. Minister of Energy, Mining and Renewable Energy, Hela Cheikhrouhou and H.E. Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Sabri Bachtobji.

He will also interact with the business community to be organized by the apex chamber of commerce and industry, UTICA to identify potential areas of trade and investment. He will also deliver a keynote address on India’s foreign policy to be organized by the Tunisian Institute of Strategic Studies.

During the visit, the MOS shall discuss a wide range of bilateral, regional and international issues of shared common interest including the strengthening cooperate in the fertilizer sector; India has very cordial bilateral relations with Tunisia. The economic cooperation between the



two countries is deepening with Indian investments in the fertilizer sector. The visit takes place in the context of further strengthening the bilateral relationship between India and Tunisia.

*Source: Ministry of External Affairs, New Delhi,*

[http://www.mea.gov.in/press-](http://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/28091/Visit_of_Minister_of_State_for_External_Affairs_M_J_Akbar_to_the_Republic_of_Tunisia_2628_February_2017)

[releases.htm?dtl/28091/Visit\\_of\\_Minister\\_of\\_State\\_for\\_External\\_Affairs\\_M\\_J\\_Akbar\\_to\\_the\\_Republic\\_of\\_Tunisia\\_2628\\_February\\_2017](http://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/28091/Visit_of_Minister_of_State_for_External_Affairs_M_J_Akbar_to_the_Republic_of_Tunisia_2628_February_2017)

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## **f. UAE**

### **12. APEDA -GULFOOD 2017, Dubai, 25 Feb 2017**

Sixty four (64) exporters dealing into range of Agriculture and Processed Food products are participating under the banner of APEDA.(The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) an apex organization under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry in the Gulf Food 2017 in Dubai.(26TH FEBRUARY- 2ND MARCH 2017) .APEDA pavilion would be inaugurated on 26th February, 2017 by Ms. Rita Teatota, Commerce Secretary. APEDA is mandated with the responsibility for Promotion and Development of the export of various agro products.

India is one of the largest producers of food in the world. APEDA's export basket includes fresh and processed fruits and vegetables, alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages, pickles, chutneys, guar gum, poultry, meat and dairy products, confectionery, cut flowers, food grains, aromatic plants, Basmati Rice and Indian Long Grain Rice and other Indian delicacies. India exports agricultural products to more than 80 countries world over. The export of Agro products for the year 2015-16 was to the tune of US\$ Million 16195.61.

UAE market is a potential market for Indian food products i.e. Basmati Rice, Fresh Fruits & Vegetables, Non Basmati Rice, Buffalo Meat, alcoholic Beverages, Sheep & Goat Meat, Processed Fruits and Juices, Cereal Preparation, Misc Processed items, Dairy Products, Milled Products, Wheat, Cocoa Products, Pulses, Other Cereals, Groundnut, Processed Vegetables, Floriculture, Guar gum, etc. The export of APEDA scheduled products to UAE market for the year 2015-16 was US \$ Million 1371.

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>*

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## **g. MULTILETERAL**

### **13. Indians working as labourer in foreign countries, New Delhi, 2 February 2017**

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to State:

- (a) The countries where Indian citizens are working only as labourers and number of such persons, country-wise;
- (b) Whether all such labourers are working as per Government rules or they are also made to work illegally; and
- (c) Whether Government proposes to establish any labour cell under the Ministry?

**Answer**

The Minister of State in the Ministry of External Affairs M. J. Akbar

- (a) This Ministry maintains data relating to emigration of workers, i.e. Emigration Check Required (ECR) category passport holders proceeding for overseas employment to the 18 notified ECR countries; namely Afghanistan, Bahrain, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Malaysia, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, Thailand, UAE and Yemen. Most of the Missions in these countries have reported that in addition to large number of Indian workers employed as skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers engaged in industrial, construction, sanitation, domestic and agricultural sectors, there are also Indians working as professionals, viz. bankers, doctors, engineers, Chartered Accountants, lawyers etc. and businessmen also in these countries. The number of ECR passport holding Indian workers, who proceeded after obtaining Emigration Clearance (EC) for overseas employment in ECR countries, during the last three years is annexed.
- (b) & (c) Indian workers with ECR passport who emigrate after obtaining Emigration Clearances (EC) from any of the ten Protector of Emigrants (PoE) offices in the country through the online emigration clearance system (e-migrate portal) of the Ministry of External Affairs, can work legally in the destination country and are covered under their labour laws and provided protection by the Protector General of Emigrants of the Ministry of External Affairs. However, action is taken by the Governments at destination countries also, against those who do not emigrate as per the Government rules and seek employment in violation of the local laws/rules. There is no proposal of establishing any labour cell in the Ministry, as the ten Protector of Emigrants (PoE) offices in India, under the supervision of Protector General of India, are already mandated to ensure protection and welfare of overseas Indian workers.

*Source: Rajya Sabha (Council of States), Unstarred Question No. 33, asked by Sanjay Seth, <http://164.100.47.5/qsearch/QResult.aspx>*

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#### **14. Admiral Sunil Lanba, Chief of Naval Staff on Official Visit to United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman, New Delhi, 25 February 2017**

Admiral Sunil Lanba, Chief of the Naval Staff, Indian Navy is visiting United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Oman on a bilateral visit from 26 February to 02 March 2017. The visit aims to consolidate bilateral naval relations with UAE and Oman, as also to explore new avenues for naval cooperation.

The CNS will be commencing his bilateral visit from UAE on 26 February 2017, where he will hold bilateral discussions with the His Excellency Mohammed bin Ahmad Al Bowardi, Hon'ble Minister of State for Defence of UAE, Lieutenant General Hamad Mohammed Thani Al Rumaithi, Chief of Staff, UAE Armed Forces and Rear Admiral Ibrahim Salim Mohammed Al Musharrakh, Commander of UAE Naval Forces. The Admiral will be visiting the Ghantoot Naval Base, where he will be briefed on the latest Baynunah Class Corvette. He will also visit the National Defence College of UAE, where he will interact with the Student Officers, and also tour

the training facilities at the Rashid Bin Saeed Al Maktoum Naval College of UAE. The Admiral will also lay a wreath at the Wahat Al Karama Memorial.

On completion of his visit to UAE, the CNS will be visiting Oman from 01 March 2017, where he will hold bilateral discussions with His Excellency Bader Bin Saud Bin Harib Al Busaidi, Hon'ble Minister Responsible for Defence Affairs of Oman, as also the three Service Chiefs. The Admiral will visit the Sultan Qaboos Naval Academy, the Said Bin Naval Base, where he will also visit the Fleet Maintenance Facility and the latest Khareef Class corvette, RNOV Al Shamikh.

The Indian Navy cooperates with both the navies of UAE and Oman on many fronts, which include Training, Operational interactions and exchange of 'White Shipping Information', through the medium of Navy-to-Navy Staff Talks with both countries, as also through Joint Defence Cooperation Committee (JDCC) with UAE and Joint Military Cooperation Committee (JMCC) with Oman. In addition, the Indian Navy and the Royal Navy of Oman have been conducting the bilateral Maritime Exercise 'Naseem Al Bahr' since 1993. Ten editions have been held so far, the last being held off Goa in January 16.

*Source: Press Information Bureau, New Delhi, <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx>*

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**Note:**

**1 Crore = 10 million. Lakh = 100,000**

**For Lok Sabha and Press Information Bureau the items can be searched by Date and Ministries concerned.**

## **Compiled by Jatin Kumar**

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