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PRAVASI LEGAL CELL
Empowering People on Legal Front

Ref.N. REO/UI13/25.

New Delhi,

25/02/2025

To,

The Secretary,

Ministry of External Affairs,

Government of India,

74B, South Block, New Delhi

Subject:- Need for intervention in cancellation of the increased CPV (Consular, Passport, and Visa) charges that affect the Indian Migrant Workers drastically.

Sir,

Pravasi Legal Cell is a Non-Governmental Organization primarily working for the welfare of migrants, securing justice for the victims, and fighting for policy changes that affect migrants globally. This representation is made to address a serious issue of the urgent need to withdraw the decision of the Ministry of External Affairs to increase the CPV (Consular, Passport, and Visa) charges under the new outsourcing policy, which will put a severe financial burden on the Indian migrant workers. Such a rise in the CPV (Consular, Passport, and Visa) charges will further deteriorate the already limited financial conditions of Indian migrant workers and the same requires immediate attention from the Ministry of External Affairs in view of the following facts and circumstances mentioned hereunder:-



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1. Millions of Indian migrant workers are engaged in blue-collar work, especially in the Gulf Region, and all other parts of the world. These Indian workers are positioned to work tirelessly on a limited income and are put under further financial stress by way of the increase in the CPV charges.
2. That the Ministry of External Affairs introduced a revised Request for Proposal(RPF) for outsourcing Passport, Visa, and Consular (CPV) services across 23 Indian Missions/Post worldwide. The increased rate of charges will impose a significant burden on the Indian migrant workers who work tirelessly and contribute to the Indian economy through remittances.
3. That the rise in charges are substantial which would go on to mean that majority of the Indian workers will find it difficult to afford the rates. As per the new policy, the fee increased in some of the countries are as follows:
 - Saudi Arabia- *From SAR 50-75 to SAR 200-300*
 - United Arab Emirates- *From AED 50-100 to AED 200-300*
 - Oman- *From OMR 5-10 to OMR 25-35*
 - Bahrain-*From BHD 5-10 to BHD 20-30*

The excessive rise that is reflected above only questions the affordability and needs reconsideration from the Ministry therein.

4. That the revised outsourcing policy for the increase in CPV charges is only benefitting the private service providers including VFS, IVS, BLS DU, etc. The increase in the fee structure would make the cost for availing the services 2 to 5 times than the current charges, wherein to a community of workers who are struggling daily for their survival, this would add an exorbitant financial burden that would be hard to recover from.



5. That the revised policy also enforces a “Service Fee per Application” which mandates the applicants to pay for a package, including document digitization, fingerprint, and facial biometric capture, and additional services of photocopying, photography, form filling, and courier services. Such additional fees being mandatory, even if the applicant does not require all these services puts a great financial burden on the applicants therein.
6. That the rise in the CPV charges is bound to create a situation where Indian migrant workers may not be able to afford such fees, and the same will lead to the delayed renewal of passports and visas, which will potentially cause legal and employment issues.
7. That the blue-collar workers of India abroad are earning a minimal income, and the steep jump in the service fees, will mean that they have to cut down on their necessities. Such a financial hardship will create a question about their basic sustenance and well-being, hence consideration to cut down the charges are required.
8. That it is also pertinent to note that many of the migrant workers rely on loans to finance their employment abroad, and the added financial strain may potentially push the workers into debt, which may force their return back to India just because they couldn’t afford visa renewals and work permits.
9. That it is also submitted that such a sudden rise in the CPV charges will also go on to create a loss of trust in the government and the migrant workers may also feel abandoned by the Indian government.
10. That the Indian workers are the backbone of India’s remittance economy as India has received over \$100 Billion in remittances in 2023, much of it from blue-collar workers. The rising service costs may lead to the return of Indian migrants back to



India, which will affect the dependent families as well as the Indian economy at large.

11. In light of the above-mentioned, it is necessary to roll back the increased CPV charges to restore affordability for all Indian migrant workers and also it is requested to reconsider the Outsourcing Policy of such services. It is also submitted that such changes if made after consultation with the relevant stakeholders, including the worker's representatives and the Indian community workers will definitely aid in the decrease of such issues in the future therein.
12. Therefore, I humbly pray your good self to intervene in this matter and take the necessary steps to retract the revised Request for Proposal (RPF) for outsourcing Passport, Visa, and Consular (CPV) services that increase the charges beyond the affordability of Indian migrant workers, and revert the same back to the previous charges, so as to protect the rights and interests of Indian citizens abroad.

Thanking you,

Yours truly

Advocate Jose Abraham, President

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