



(Reg. No. 0409/2011)

PRAVASI LEGAL CELL
Empowering People on Legal Front

ACTIVITY REPORT 2024-25





Pravasi Legal Cell is a Non-governmental Organization working with the objective of empowering people with the power of law. PLC is a group of retired Judges, Lawyers, Social Activists, Journalists and inspired citizens of India, constituted to provide possible legal help to the poor and the needy, who cannot afford to voice their concerns otherwise, and to empower them on the legal front. PLC was inaugurated on February 01, 2009 and in the last ten years of its existence has positively intervened to secure justice for many. PLC aims at protecting the vitality and dignity of human life irrespective of caste, creed, colour, religion, language, gender, place etc. and to safeguard the constitutional and legal rights of the common man.

Along with turning the actual wheels of justice, PLC is also committed to spreading legal awareness among the public through various modes. Seminars, Workshops, Discussions and Niyamavedis are regularly conducted in association with various governmental and non-governmental organizations. The purpose of these initiatives is to make people recognize their rights in different walks of life and educate them about various ways of approaching the justice distribution system. At PLC, we believe empowerment comes through awareness and knowledge about one's rights and the laws protecting them.

The year 2024–2025 has been another milestone in the journey of Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC). For over fifteen years, PLC has stood as a strong voice for Indian nationals living abroad, working tirelessly to safeguard their rights, address their grievances, and ensure that justice is accessible to every member of the diaspora.

This year, PLC actively intervened in critical issues affecting Indians overseas, including fraudulent recruitment scams, challenges faced by students pursuing education abroad, the taxation of expatriates, difficulties in the repatriation of mortal remains, and passenger rights in civil aviation. Through petitions before the Hon'ble Courts and representations to the Union Government, we have consistently sought systemic reforms and immediate relief for our people.

We also continued to strengthen our global and national presence. With international coordinators, country heads, regional chapters, and state units working together, PLC has become more organized and better equipped to respond to the concerns of Indians across the world.

As President, I wish to place on record my deepest gratitude to all our members, coordinators, volunteers, and well-wishers. Your tireless commitment and unwavering support make our work possible and ensure that PLC remains a credible and trusted platform for the Indian community abroad.

Looking ahead, PLC will continue to expand its reach and deepen its interventions, staying true to our mission of protecting the dignity, rights, and welfare of Indians overseas. Together, we will continue to serve those who look to us for hope, support, and justice.

Appreciating and looking forward to have your continued goodwill and support!

Advocate Jose Abraham

Global President, Pravasi Legal Cell

PRAVASI LEGAL CELL BAHRAIN CHAPTER LAUNCHES “EXPAT LENS”



April 2nd, 2024: The PLC Bahrain Chapter has launched Expat Lens, a short film contest designed to showcase the diverse narratives and journeys of belonging experienced by expatriates. Centred on the theme “Journeys of Belonging,” the contest invites filmmakers to creatively explore the experiences, challenges, and triumphs of individuals building a life away from their homeland.

Open to both aspiring and established filmmakers in Bahrain, Expat Lens called for submissions in a 5-minute video format highlighting the intricacies of belonging, identity, and cultural adaptation. To encourage participation and celebrate outstanding storytelling,

cash awards of \$1,000, \$500, and \$250 for the top three winners were announced by Bahrain Chapter President and Global PLC Spokesperson, Mr Sudheer Thirunilath.



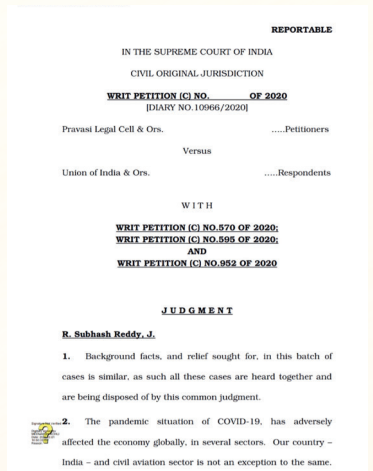
PLC URGED THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION TO ADDRESS AND PROVIDE ASSISTANCE FOR PASSENGERS AFFECTED BY AIR INDIA FLIGHT CANCELLATIONS

May 10th, 2024: PLC urged the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) to address and provide assistance for passengers affected by Air India flight cancellations, which have caused severe job losses and financial hardships for expatriates. PLC has also decided to conduct webinars and awareness sessions to disseminate information about the online grievance portal of AIRSEWA established by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (www.airsewa.gov.in) to claim refunds and compensation without having to spend any money by the victims who are affected by the recent cancellations. The organisation will support travellers in pursuing compensation and legal remedies, ensuring their rights are safeguarded. Global President Adv. Jose Abraham, together with chapter presidents from Bahrain, Qatar, and the UAE, has urged both the Government of India and the airline authorities to take urgent corrective measures to prevent further disruptions. Pravasi Legal Cell had taken up the issue earlier, also before various forums, to control and regulate airfare and also with regard to the smooth repatriation of mortal remains from abroad. In continuation of the earlier interventions, PLC took a decision to approach the Hon'ble Delhi High Court to strengthen the airline grievance portal, ie. AIRSEWA if the issues are not resolved.

It is pertinent to note that the PLC had earlier obtained a landmark judgment with regard to the refund of airline tickets cancelled during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thousands of victims got a refund due to this intervention of PLC, which otherwise may not have been received. PLC was widely appreciated by various stakeholders for this noble cause.

PLC BAHRAIN CHAPTER ANNOUNCES BIRTH REGISTRATION CAMPAIGN

May 18th, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) Bahrain Chapter has announced a Birth Registration Campaign to ensure that Indian expatriates in the Kingdom of Bahrain comply with local legal requirements. Under Bahraini law, every new birth must be reported within 15 days in order to obtain a birth certificate—a vital document for securing valid residency and other essential services for the child. Noting that many



Indian expatriates remain unaware of this legal mandate and in some cases have failed to report births on time, PLC Bahrain has launched this campaign to provide awareness, guidance, and assistance to the community. PLC Bahrain has also created a video and published it in various languages, including Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Bengali, Odia, etc. The initiative underscores PLC's commitment to protecting the rights of expatriates and ensuring that every Pravasi family in Bahrain has the support needed to meet legal obligations- announced Bahrain Chapter President and Global PLC Spokesperson, Mr Sudheer Thirunilath.

SUCCESSFUL REPATRIATION OF MR. DEBASHIS MONDOL

June 6th, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) Bahrain Chapter successfully facilitated the return of Mr. Debashis Mondol, a Kolkata resident, who had been stranded in Bahrain under dire circumstances.

Mr. Mondol arrived in Bahrain on a visit visa after paying an agent one lakh rupees for a promised work visa, which never materialized. Since November 2023, he had been left without employment, shelter, or resources, facing extreme hardship. The case was brought forward by Mr. Mohammed Salim, PLC Council Member, leading to immediate intervention. PLC worked closely with the Indian Embassy in Bahrain and the Bahrain Immigration Department to resolve his overstaying issues. With the support of compassionate community members, his travel arrangements were secured.



On June 4, 2024, Mr. Mondol safely returned to Mumbai, bringing an end to his distressing ordeal. This case highlights PLC's ongoing commitment to safeguarding the rights and dignity of expatriates, ensuring that vulnerable individuals receive timely legal aid and humanitarian support.

PLC INITIATES GRIEVANCE CELL AGAINST THE HOLDING OF ORIGINAL CERTIFICATES

June 8th, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has launched a Grievance Cell to collect information on instances where institutions are illegally retaining the original certificates of students or employees—a practice commonly known as the Bond System. Despite clear legal directions, this issue remains prevalent in several parts of the country, with school managements and employers continuing to hold certificates unlawfully. Earlier, PLC approached the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India through a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), which resulted in a favorable order. Following this, the concerned authorities issued circulars banning the practice.


However, reports indicate that such practices still persist across various institutions. In response, PLC has launched this Grievance Cell to ensure strict enforcement of the law and to protect the rights of students and employees.

PLC SUBMITS REPRESENTATION SEEKING REDRESSAL OF UNCONTROLLED FLIGHT FARES OF EXPATRIATES

June 16th, 2024: Pravasi Legal Cell submitted a representation to Union Aviation Minister, Shri. Kinjarapu Rammohan Naidu seeking redressal of uncontrolled flight fares of expatriates. The representation warranted a change to be made in the past position of the government that market forces will determine the air fares, and that the government has no control over the same. The representation also made specific averments for the strengthening of the Airseva portal. It was pointed out in the petition that the Airseva portal, which was started with the aim of solving problems related to air travel, was ineffective and many people who complained through the Airseva portal for refunds when flights were cancelled on

a large scale recently did not get refunds. It was also pointed out in the petition that the Airseva portal, which was created to solve the problem free of charge, was inefficient and, therefore, passengers are left with no other option than to approach the court for refunds.

PLC MOVES KERALA HIGH COURT AGAINST FAKE RECRUITMENT AGENCIES.


GOVERNMENT OF KERALA

Abstract

NORKA Department - Judgment dated 20.06.2024 of Hon'ble High Court of Kerala in WP (C) No. 22105/2024 filed by President, Pravasi Legal Cell- Complied with - Orders issued.

Non Resident Keralites' Affairs (B) Department

G.O.(Rt)No.850/2024/NORKA Dated,Thiruvananthapuram, 28-09-2024

Read:- Judgment dated 20.06.2024 in WP (C) 22105/2024 of Hon'ble High Court of Kerala.

ORDER

The President, Pravasi Legal Cell, a registered Non-Governmental Organization, has filed WP (C) No. 22105/2024 before the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala, with prayer to direct the respondents to conduct proper enquiry on complaints related to recruitment scams with regard to foreign jobs and to take immediate steps to consider and pass appropriate orders on Exhibit P3 representation within a reasonable period.

2) The Hon'ble HC as per judgment read above, has ordered as follows:

" In view of the limited prayer made, this writ petition is disposed of directing the 2nd respondent to consider and pass appropriate orders on Exhibit P3 representation, after hearing the petitioner, at the earliest, at any rate, within two months from the date of receipt of a copy of this judgment".

3) The Secretary to Government, NORKA Department is the second respondent in the WP (C). In compliance of the directions contained in the judgment, the petitioner was personally heard by the Additional

June 20th, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC), an international organization dedicated to the protection of Indian migrants, filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) before the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala vide WP(C) No. 22105/2024, seeking urgent and strict action against fake agencies engaged in large-scale recruitment scams.

The petition highlighted the alarming rise in fraudulent recruitment practices, particularly in the post-COVID-19 period, when widespread unemployment made thousands of young people in Kerala vulnerable to exploitation. Unscrupulous agencies have been luring individuals with false promises of overseas employment, collecting exorbitant fees, and often abandoning them without jobs or sending them abroad on improper visas. Such malpractices not only devastate the lives of aspiring migrants but also undermine trust in legitimate recruitment channels.

PLC further drew the Court's attention to a glaring loophole in the legal framework: agencies sending students abroad are not covered under the Emigration Act, 1983. Many of these agencies, operating outside regulatory oversight, have effectively turned into unlicensed recruitment operators, leaving students and their families at the mercy of fraudulent schemes.

In addition to strict enforcement, PLC urged the authorities to prioritise preventive measures through widespread awareness campaigns by NORKA (Non-Resident Keralites Affairs Department), so that aspiring migrants and students can make informed decisions and avoid falling prey to fraudulent operators.

The task force includes the Chief Executive Officer of NORKA Roots, officers from the Protector of Emigrants in Thiruvananthapuram and Ernakulam, and the Superintendent of Police from the NRI Cell, the release said.

NORKA Roots, is a public sector undertaking under the Department of Non-Resident Keralite's Affairs.

Also Read: [Kerala releases books for parents to address their children's educational needs](#)

Numerous complaints have been received regarding both authorised and unauthorised recruiters who collect money under the pretext of offering jobs abroad.

The task force will review the progress of investigations into such complaints in monthly meetings, the release said.

Additionally, based on recommendations submitted by the NGO Pravasi Legal Cell, a request will be made to the Ministry of External Affairs to take immediate and strict measures to prevent recruitment fraud effectively, it said.

Instructions have also been issued to the State

DH India | Karnataka | Opinion | World | Business | Sports | Video | Entertainment | Life

Kerala government forms task force to combat illegal recruitment and visa fraud

Numerous complaints have been received regarding both authorised and unauthorised recruiters who collect money under the pretext of offering jobs abroad.

PTI
Last Updated: 18 October 2024, 17:06 IST

Follow Us: 



CM Pinarayi Vijayan Credit: PTI File Photo

Thiruvananthapuram: The Kerala government, taking strong measures to prevent illegal recruitment and visa fraud in foreign travel, constituted a task force on Friday to address complaints related to such activities.

After hearing the matter, the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala disposed of the petition, directing the State Government to consider PLC's detailed representation dated 11.07.2024 within two months. The Court's direction ensured that the concerns raised by PLC received formal consideration at the highest administrative level.

Acting upon the Court's directive, the Government of Kerala issued Government Order GO(Rt) No. 850/2024/NORKA dated 28.09.2024. Importantly, this Government Order specifically referenced both the PIL filed by PLC and its representation, acknowledging the critical role of civil society intervention. The Government Order laid out a comprehensive set of measures to combat fraudulent overseas recruitment practices in Kerala, including intervention of Kerala Police, strengthening the NRI Cell of Kerala Police, creation of a Special Task Force, Raising of Public Awareness, etc.

PLC BAHRAIN CELEBRATES SECOND ANNIVERSARY



June 22nd, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) Bahrain Chapter celebrated its second anniversary in a grand manner at the KIMS Auditorium in Umm al Hasam on July 22, 2024. The event saw distinguished guests, including the Indian Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain, Mr. Vinod Jacob, who graced the occasion as the Chief Guest.

In his address, Ambassador Jacob applauded the remarkable activities of the PLC both in Bahrain and globally. He emphasized the critical role of organizations like the PLC in supporting the expatriate community in Bahrain and expressed his hope for continued assistance from such groups. The Ambassador also took the opportunity to launch the latest newsletter of the PLC, *The Bridge*.



Other esteemed dignitaries present included Member of Parliament His Excellency Dr. Hassan Eid Bokhammas, Chairman of the Committee of Foreign Affairs, Defence, and National Security; His Excellency Mr. Tirtharaj Wagle, the Ambassador of Nepal to the Kingdom of Bahrain; Mr. Khayees, Acting Ambassador and Chargé d'Affaires of the Bangladesh Embassy; Mr. Fahad Albinali, Director of Outreach and Community Partnership at LMRA; Mr. Hussain Al Hussaini from the Ministry of Labour; veteran journalist Mr. Soman Baby; Dr. Cherian; PLC Global President Mr. Jose Abraham; Bahrain Chapter President and Global PLC Spokesperson, Mr. Sudheer Thirunilath, among other community heads.

SUCCESSFUL REPATRIATION OF MR. SUDERSANA RAO

June 25th, 2024: In a commendable collaborative effort involving various ministries and the Embassy of India in Bahrain, Mr. Sudersana Rao Pllumuri, aged 51, from Kakinada, East Godavari – Andhra Pradesh, was successfully repatriated to India for advanced medical treatment. Mr. Rao, who was admitted to Jidhafis Hospital on 19.06.2018, where he remained for six years due to complications arising from hypertension and diabetes mellitus, underwent a critical tracheostomy procedure during his stay.



Because of his health condition and a travel ban imposed by a bank in Bahrain over unresolved loan issues, Mr. Rao's return to India faced significant hurdles. However, through persistent efforts and continuous advocacy by his family, the travel ban was lifted, paving the way for his safe transportation.

This successful repatriation stands as a testament to the effective collaboration of governmental authorities and diplomatic channels, ensuring that citizens facing medical emergencies abroad receive timely and essential care back home.

PLC ANNOUNCES THE COVER LAUNCH OF THE BOOK "CHRONICLES OF JUSTICE & BEYOND"

July 01st, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) Bahrain Chapter has announced the cover launch of its compelling new book titled *Chronicles of Justice & Beyond*. This publication is a profound compilation of

ten select cases that PLC Bahrain has meticulously handled since its inception. More than legal narratives, these cases are human stories—tales of triumph and tribulation that shed light on the complex challenges faced by expatriates in Bahrain. Each account stands as a testament to resilience and fortitude, capturing how individuals navigated legal complexities in a foreign land, with PLC's steadfast support.

PLC BAHRAIN CHAPTER CONDUCTS IN-HOUSE TRAINING PROGRAM

July 11th, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) Bahrain Chapter successfully conducted an in-house training program for its Governing Council members. The session was led by Shri. Sudheer Thirunilath, Global PRO and President of PLC Bahrain, and focused on providing deeper insights into the functioning, structure, and vision of the organization. The training was further enriched by the presence of Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President of PLC, and Mr. William Gois from the Migrant Federation in Asia, whose participation added valuable perspectives to the program.

PLC SUBMITS REPRESENTATION BEFORE THE MINISTER OF PORTS, SHIPPING, AND WATERWAYS

July 19th, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has submitted a detailed representation to Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, Hon'ble Union Minister of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways, highlighting the persistent delays in the handling of cargo belonging to Indian migrants at the Port of Kochi.

The representation notes that such delays have been consistently occurring since February 2024, with Cochin Port Authorities citing procedural and technical grounds to justify the situation. However, these explanations fail to address the severe hardships faced by the expatriate community, which relies heavily on timely cargo movement to support their families in India.

PLC pointed out that the delays at Cochin Port have directly led to an increase in parcel delivery charges, disproportionately affecting Indian migrants and their dependents. For many families, remittances and cargo consignments constitute a crucial lifeline, and delays not only disrupt the flow of essential goods but also impose an undue financial burden.

The representation also draws attention to the fact that such issues appear to be specific to Cochin Port. Similar grievances have not been reported from other major ports such as Chennai or Mumbai, where cargo movement remains comparatively smooth and efficient. This disparity raises concerns about administrative inefficiencies and the lack of accountability at Cochin Port.

PLC has strongly urged the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways to intervene and direct the concerned authorities to take immediate corrective measures. It emphasized the need for a robust mechanism to ensure prompt clearance and delivery of cargo, transparent communication with stakeholders, and measures to prevent arbitrary hikes in delivery charges.

The representation concludes by reiterating that Indian migrants, who contribute immensely to Kerala's economy and to India's foreign exchange reserves through remittances, deserve fair and efficient treatment in matters relating to cargo handling. PLC called upon the Ministry to prioritize the grievances of expatriates and ensure that Cochin Port functions with the same efficiency and accountability as other major ports in the country.

PLC SUBMITS REPRESENTATION BEFORE THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, SEEKING UNIFICATION OF LAWS GOVERNING THE TRANSPORTATION OF MORTAL REMAINS

August 24th, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has submitted a representation before the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), urging the unification of laws and procedures governing the transportation of mortal remains of Indian citizens and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) from abroad.

The representation was made in the context of the Delhi High Court's judgment in W.P.(C) No. 11192/2024, which arose after the Indian Mission in the UK denied the repatriation of the mortal remains of a PIO from Hyderabad, citing that only Indian citizens were eligible. In contrast, the Delhi High Court noted that Indian Missions in the USA and Singapore had permitted such repatriations, and held the UK Mission's denial to be illegal and discriminatory.

In light of this, PLC has called for the formulation of uniform guidelines to ensure that all Indian Missions abroad follow a consistent and compassionate policy on the repatriation of mortal remains. The representation emphasized that a common legal framework would prevent such disparities, ensuring dignity, fairness, and timely relief for grieving families.

PLC SUBMITS REPRESENTATION BEFORE THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AGAINST THE REDUCTION OF FREE BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE

September 7th, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has submitted a representation to Shri K. Rammohan Naidu, Hon'ble Union Minister for Civil Aviation, expressing deep concern over the recent reduction in the Free Baggage Allowance (FBA) on Air India Express flights.

In its representation, PLC highlighted that Air India Express serves as the primary carrier for thousands of Indian migrant workers, especially those employed in Gulf and Southeast Asian countries. These passengers, most of whom belong to economically weaker sections, rely on the airline not only for affordable travel but also for transporting essential goods, personal belongings, and household items needed for their stay abroad.

The decision to reduce the Free Baggage Allowance has imposed significant financial strain on these passengers, many of whom already struggle with limited incomes. The introduction of higher charges for excess baggage only compounds their hardship, forcing them to bear additional expenses that are disproportionate to their earnings. For low-income migrant workers, who frequently travel with basic necessities and gifts for their families, such policies make overseas travel increasingly unaffordable.

PLC further stressed that Indian expatriates make a substantial contribution to India's economy through remittances, which form a crucial part of foreign exchange reserves and directly support millions of households back home. At a time when migrant workers are already facing rising living costs abroad, placing additional burdens through restrictive airline policies undermines their welfare and disregards their vital role in sustaining the nation's economy.

The representation calls upon the Ministry of Civil Aviation to urgently intervene and restore the earlier Free Baggage Allowance policy for Air India Express passengers. PLC emphasized that any changes in airline policy must take into account the unique needs of migrant workers, who constitute a majority of the airline's customer base. By restoring the Free Baggage Allowance, the government would not only provide immediate relief to vulnerable expatriates but also reaffirm its commitment to protecting the interests of the Indian diaspora, whose contributions continue to strengthen the nation.

ADV. SONIYA SUNNY PRESENTED WITH BEST PLC ACTIVIST AWARD, 2023

September 14th, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has recognized Adv. Soniya Sunny, President of the PLC UK Chapter, as the Best PLC Activist for the year 2023. The award was presented by Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President of PLC, in the presence of Judge (Rtd.) P. Mohandas, Former Chairperson of the Kerala State Human Rights Commission, and Shri D. B. Binu, President of the District Consumer Redressal Commission, Ernakulam, in recognition of her



exceptional dedication and leadership.

“The unwavering leadership and efforts towards the PLC UK Chapter have set a shining example for all members of the organization. May her contributions inspire PLC to reach even greater heights,” said Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President, PLC, while presenting the award.

PLC BAHRAIN SUCCESSFULLY AIDED IN THE REPATRIATION OF KOLLAPPILIL RAGHAVAN SANTHOS

September 19th, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) Bahrain Chapter has successfully facilitated the repatriation of Mr. Kollappilil Raghavan Santhos, an Indian national who had been stranded in Bahrain for over six months due to health complications and legal hurdles.

Mr. Santhos had faced multiple travel-related cases, which initially resulted in a three-year jail sentence. Acting swiftly, PLC Bahrain engaged a legal advocate who filed an urgent appeal. The presiding judge, upon review, cancelled the jail sentence and instead issued an order of deportation, enabling Mr. Santhos to return home.

This intervention underscores PLC Bahrain's steadfast commitment to safeguarding the rights and dignity of expatriates facing legal and humanitarian challenges.

MS. SUJA SUKESHAN APPOINTED AS PLC STUDENTS WING GLOBAL COORDINATOR

September 21st, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has appointed Ms. Suja Sukeshan as the Global Coordinator of the PLC Students Wing. The Students Wing is envisioned to play a vital role in identifying and addressing the challenges faced by Indian students abroad. By fostering collaboration and participation among students across various nations, the wing aims to create a dynamic platform for cooperation, problem-solving, and support.

This initiative reflects PLC's commitment to empowering the student community and ensuring that their concerns are effectively heard and addressed.



Suja Sukeshan is an accomplished social science post graduate with a distinguished background in addressing social inequalities and development issues. She earned her MSc in Inequalities and Social Science from the University of Leeds, UK, an MA in Development Studies from Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Mumbai, and a Bachelor of Social Work from Rajagiri College of Social Sciences in Kochi. Suja has served as the Student Welfare and Finance officer for one of the UK's largest further education institutions, Luminate education group- Leeds City College. Before this, she worked as a Resident Assistant with Unipol Student Homes at University of Leeds, UK. Suja has conducted impactful research across various domains. Her notable studies include an investigation into food insecurity among asylum seekers in the UK, an analysis of international migration and remittance economies in Kerala, and an examination of the challenges faced by social entrepreneurs in South India. Additionally, she explored the motivational factors behind entrepreneurship and youth engagement in South Korea during her studies at Youngsan University, Busan, South Korea.

We congratulate and wish her all the best for her endeavours with Pravasi Legal Cell.

D-144-A, Ashram, New Delhi, 110014

01135608590 ; +91 9654907269

pravasilegalcell@gmail.com | www.pravasilegalcell.org

KERALA GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTS MEASURES TO CURB RECRUITMENT SCAMS

September 24th, 2024: The Government of Kerala, in pursuance of the judgment of the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala dated 20.06.2024 in Writ Petition (C) No. 22105/2024 filed by Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC), has issued Government Order No. B3/213/2024-NORKA introducing strict measures to curb the menace of illegal recruitment scams. The PLC had earlier submitted a detailed representation dated 05.02.2024 before the State Government seeking the adoption of effective safeguards to protect citizens from the rising job scams. As the representation evoked no response, the matter was brought before the High


GOVERNMENT OF KERALA
Non Resident Keralites' Affairs (B) Department
24-09-2024, Thiruvananthapuram
No. B3/213/2024-NORKA 0471-2518129
addsec.norka@kerala.gov.in

From
Secretary to Government

To
Adv. R. Muraleedharan,
General Secretary,
Pravasi Legal Cell,
plckeralatvm@gmail.com

Sir,

Sub: NORKA Department - Judgment dated 20.06.2024 in WP (C) No. 22105/2024 - to take effective and strict measures to curb the menace of innumerable number of recruitment scams related to foreign jobs throughout Kerala - compliance of - reg.
Ref: 1. Representation dated 05.02.2024 submitted by Pravasi Legal Cell.
2. Judgment dated 20.06.2024 in WP (C) 22105/2024 of Hon'ble HC.
3. Suggestions made by Pravasi Legal Cell in writing during the hearing.

In inviting your attention to the reference cited, I am to inform you that in compliance of the directions contained in the judgment, following steps have been taken at Government level;

1. Ministry of External Affairs has been requested to take urgent necessary action on the basis of the suggestions made by Pravasi Legal Cell, for effective and strict measures to curb the menace of innumerable number of recruitment scams related to foreign jobs throughout Kerala.
2. The State Police Chief, Kerala and Superintendent of Police have been directed to initiate urgent necessary action to strengthen NRI Cell and to open a cyber cell exclusively for NRI CELL.

3. CEOs, Norka-Roots / KNRKWB to consider the suggestions made by PLC and to explore the scope of including them as far as possible, in the next year's Annual Plan, and to furnish a compliance report to Government.
4. Law Department has been requested to examine the scope of making legislation / legal frame work to regulate the recruitment agencies and agencies involved in migration of students.
5. Planning & Economic Affairs Department has been requested to examine the scope of ensuring support from banks on item no. 12 of the suggestions made by PLC through SLBC.

Yours Faithfully,
SINDHU S
ADDITIONAL SECRETARY
For Secretary to Government.

Approved for Issue,

Signed by
Githi. S. V
Serial 1845208-984807



Court through the aforesaid Writ Petition. Acting upon the Court's directions, the Government Order now mandates several preventive and regulatory steps, including the strengthening of the NRI Cell under the Kerala Police, and recommending the formulation of legislation to regulate recruitment agencies, the NORKA Department have been directed to consider the suggestions made by PLC and explore the possibility of including them in the Annual Plan, opening of a cyber cell exclusively for NRI's etc. These measures mark a significant step toward protecting job seekers from fraudulent recruitment practices and ensuring greater accountability in overseas employment processes.

DELHI HIGH COURT DIRECTS GOVERNMENT TO RESOLVE ISSUES FACED IN AIRSEWA PORTAL

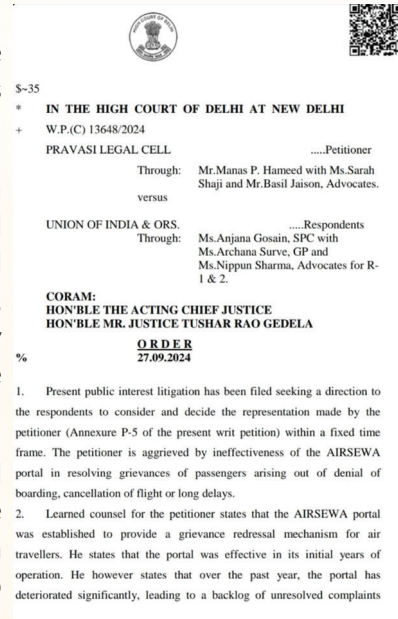
September 27th 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) moved the Hon'ble Delhi High Court vide WP(C) No. 13648/2024, raising serious concerns regarding the ineffectiveness of the Airsewa Portal.

The petition noted that while the Airsewa Portal was launched as a vital grievance redressal mechanism for air passengers and functioned effectively in its initial years, its performance has significantly deteriorated over the past year. Thousands of complaints relating to flight delays, cancellations, baggage issues, and service deficiencies have reportedly remained unresolved, leading to a massive backlog and causing immense hardship to travellers who rely on the platform for timely redressal.

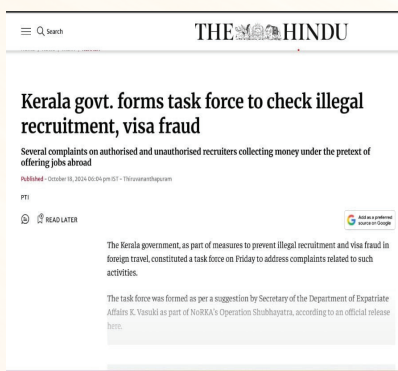
PLC informed the Court that before resorting to judicial intervention, it had submitted a representation to the Ministry of Civil Aviation, outlining the shortcomings of the portal and requesting corrective action. However, in the absence of any response from the authorities, PLC was constrained to seek the Court's intervention in order to protect the rights of passengers and ensure accountability.

The matter was heard by a Division Bench comprising the Hon'ble Chief Justice of the Delhi High Court and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Tushar Rao Gadela. While disposing of the writ petition, the Bench directed the Union Government to consider and take necessary action on PLC's representation dated 10.05.2024 as expeditiously as possible.

This judicial direction marks an important step in compelling the authorities to address the grievances of air travellers and to strengthen the functioning of the Airsewa Portal, which was envisaged as a transparent, efficient, and accessible platform for resolving aviation-related complaints.



KERALA GOVERNMENT CREATES TASK FORCE FOR PREVENTING FOREIGN RECRUITMENT SCAMS



October 19th 2024: The Kerala Government, acting upon the Representation submitted by Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) on 05.02.2024 and in compliance with the judgment of the Hon'ble High Court of Kerala dated 20.06.2024 in Writ Petition (C) No. 22105/2024 filed by PLC, has constituted a Task Force to combat foreign recruitment scams and visa frauds. The Task Force comprises the Chief Executive Officer of NORKA Roots, the Protectors of Emigrants of Trivandrum and Ernakulam, and the Superintendent of the NRI Cell. It has been mandated to convene on a monthly basis to review developments, monitor investigations, and address complaints relating to unlicensed recruitment agencies, fraudulent recruitment practices, and visa frauds.

PLC FACILITATES THE REPATRIATION OF MR. SUNILKUMAR RAJAN

October 25th, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) Bahrain Chapter, with the support of the Embassy of India and the Government of Bahrain, has successfully facilitated the repatriation of Mr. Sunilkumar Rajan, who had been stranded in Bahrain for over five years due to travel bans and visa-related issues.

This humanitarian effort was further strengthened by the support of HOPE Bahrain, which generously provided a travel kit to Mr. Sunilkumar, ensuring his safe and dignified journey home. This initiative once again underscores PLC Bahrain's commitment to assisting expatriates in distress and working hand-in-hand with authorities and community organizations for meaningful impact.

KERALA HIGH COURT ISSUES DIRECTIONS TO ENHANCE THE RTI PORTAL FOR BETTER ACCESSIBILITY

October 25th, 2024: The Hon'ble High Court of Kerala, in Writ Petition (C) No. 36106/2024 filed by Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC), has directed the State of Kerala to implement measures for enhancing the Online RTI Portal so as to make it more accessible to the public.

The Court has specifically called for the integration of Regional, District, and Village Offices within the ambit of the Online RTI Portal, ensuring that citizens across all levels of administration can effectively exercise their right to information. One of the landmark judgments obtained by Pravasi Legal Cell from the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India is with regard to the establishment

of online RTI portals in all state governments and all the High Courts. As per the order dated 20th March 2023, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has directed all the state governments and all the high Courts to establish an online RTI Portal within 3 months. This intervention of PLC is considered one of the landmark interventions to ensure transparency.

PLC took up the cause of online RTI portals due to the reason that an Indian National who resides in a foreign country is required to undergo complex procedures and formalities to obtain RTI information from a Panchayat Level or any government office in India. An applicant is required to send an application in physical format, spending a lot of money on postal charges for submitting an

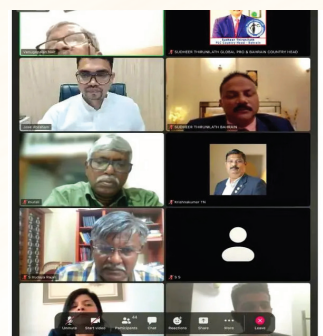
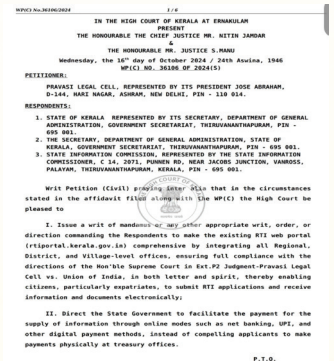
RTI application. In the era of digital age, the physical form of the RTI application is a huge limitation for the Pravasi community. In this background, PLC filed this PIL and obtained this landmark achievement. The judgment further mandates compliance with the directions of the Hon'ble Supreme Court in its order dated 20.03.2023 in W.P (C) No. 1040/2019 and W.P (C) No. 1325/2020, both initiated by the PLC.

This landmark ruling is expected to significantly enhance the reach and efficiency of the Online RTI Portal, strengthening transparency and accountability in the functioning of public offices across the State.

MR. AJITH KOLASSERY (CEO, NORKA ROOTS) INAUGURATES PLC STUDENTS WING

October 26th, 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has officially inaugurated its Students Wing, an initiative aimed at uniting migrant students and providing them with cooperation, legal aid, and social support in times of need. The inauguration was carried out by Mr. Ajith Kolassery, CEO of NORKA Roots, while the keynote address was delivered by Prof. S. Irudayarajan, a renowned academician and author of several works on migration studies.

The event was graced by the presence of Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President





of PLC; Ms. Suja Sukeshan, Global Coordinator of the PLC Students Wing; Mr. Sudheer Thirunilath, Global PRO & President of PLC Bahrain Chapter; Adv. Soniya Sunny, President of PLC UK Chapter; and Adv. R. Muraleedharan, General Secretary of PLC Kerala Chapter.

The establishment of the Students Wing comes in response to the growing challenges and exploitation faced by migrant students. It seeks not only to extend timely support to those in distress but also to raise awareness among aspiring students about the realities of studying abroad.

PLC BAHRAIN CHAPTER CONDUCTS 6TH EDITION OF “CONNECTING PEOPLE”



November 02nd 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) Bahrain Chapter successfully conducted the 6th edition of its flagship program, Expatriate Legal Cell – “Connecting People”, at the Kim’s Health Hospital Auditorium, Umm Al Hassam. The event was organized in collaboration with the Labour Market Regulatory Authority (LMRA) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

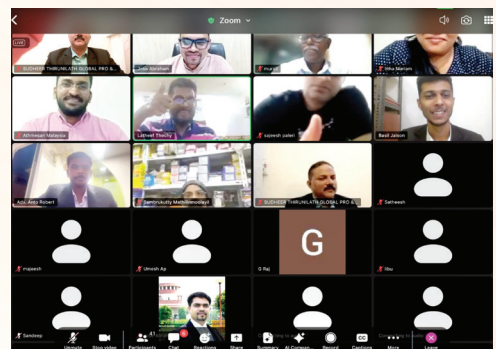


Key sessions during the program focused on Human Trafficking Awareness, the Rights and Responsibilities of Workers and Employers, and health-related concerns of expatriates. The deliberations were further enriched by the participation of senior officials from LMRA and IOM, whose valuable insights contributed to making the program impactful and meaningful.

PLC CONDUCTS WEBINAR ON SAFE EMIGRATION

November 23rd 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) organized a webinar on Safe Emigration, addressing the alarming rise in migration-related scams and highlighting redressal mechanisms to protect Pravasis from exploitation. The session was inspired by the book “Boarding Pass”, authored by Mr. Athmeshan Pachat.

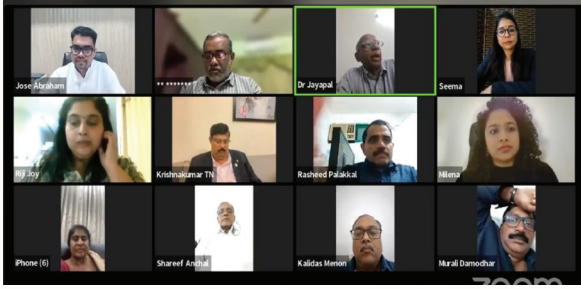
The program was presided over by Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President of PLC, and inaugurated by Judge (Rtd.) P. Mohandas, Former Chairperson of the Kerala State Human Rights Commission. Shri D. B. Binu, President of the District Consumer Redressal Commission, Ernakulam, graced the occasion as Guest of Honour.



The keynote address was delivered by Mr. Athmeshan Pachat, whose book “Boarding Pass” narrates the real-life struggles of individuals who suffered exploitation in Malaysia. His insights underscored the urgent need for stronger safeguards and support systems for migrant workers.

PLC ABU DHABI CHAPTER INAUGURATED BY HON'BLE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE OF KERALA, SHRI. P. PRASAD.

November 28th 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) Abu Dhabi Chapter was formally inaugurated by Shri. P. Prasad, Hon’ble Minister of Agriculture, Government of Kerala. While inaugurating, the Minister



emphasized that empowering the Pravasis is the need of the hour and commended the relentless commitment of PLC in assisting and supporting Indian expatriates across various nations.

The ceremony was graced by the esteemed presence of Shri. S. H. Panchapakshan, Former District Judge and Disability Commissioner, and Judge (Retd.) P. Mohandas, Former Chairman of the Human Rights Commission. The

inaugural address was delivered by Dr. Jayapal Chandrasenan, President of the PLC Abu Dhabi Chapter, followed by remarks from Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President, PLC. The event also witnessed participation from key PLC leaders, including T. N. Krishnakumar, President, PLC Dubai; Riji Joy, Global Secretary, PLC; Ms. Seema Krishnan, Secretary, PLC Abu Dhabi; and Ms. Milena Mathews, Media Coordinator, PLC. The inauguration marks a significant milestone in PLC's continued mission to safeguard the rights and interests of Indian expatriates worldwide.

DR. RITHIN RAJ APPOINTED AS GENERAL SECRETARY OF PLC BAHRAIN

December 02nd 2024: Mr. Rithin Raj has been appointed as the General Secretary of PLC Bahrain. Originally hailing from Kannur, Kerala, he has been a resident of Bahrain for the past 17 years. He is also an active member of several social and cultural organizations in the region, contributing significantly to community engagements.

ADV. BASIL JAISON APPOINTED AS NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR PLC

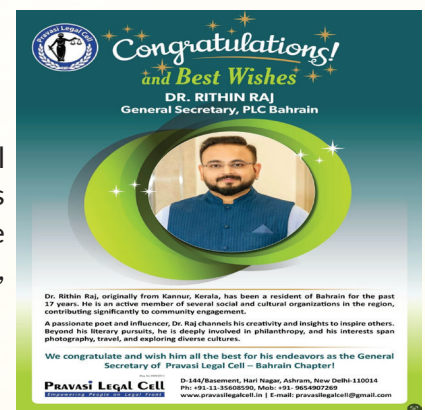
December 03rd 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has appointed Adv. Basil Jaison as its new National Coordinator. Adv. Basil is a litigator practising before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India, the Delhi High Court, and various tribunals in Delhi. He has also been associated with the Human Rights Law Defenders (HRLD), an NGO dedicated to the protection of human rights.

In his professional journey, Adv. Basil has worked with eminent legal luminaries, including Hon'ble Justice Abhay S. Oka of the Supreme Court of India, as well as distinguished senior advocates such as Sr. Adv. Geeta Luthra. His appointment as National Coordinator underscores PLC's commitment to strengthening its legal advocacy and advancing its mission to safeguard the rights and dignity of expatriates.

HIGH COURT OF DELHI DIRECTS GOVERNMENT TO DECIDE ON REPRESENTATION SEEKING GUIDELINES FOR PROTECTING INDIAN STUDENTS ABROAD

December 06th 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) approached the Hon'ble Delhi High Court by filing a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), WP(C) No. 16886/2024, seeking urgent measures to safeguard the rights and interests of Indian students studying abroad. In its petition, PLC highlighted the absence of a comprehensive legal framework to address the challenges faced by Indian students overseas.

The PIL pointed out that while the Emigration Act, 1983 regulates the emigration of Indian workers, it does not extend protection to students migrating abroad for education. This legislative gap has left





Delhi HC directs centre to decide on representation for guidelines protecting Indian students abroad

ANI | Updated: Dec 06, 2024 12:33 IST

thousands of students vulnerable to exploitation by unregulated education agents, fraudulent admissions, financial scams, and lack of access to legal remedies in times of distress.

PLC emphasized that the number of Indian students going abroad has risen significantly in recent years, making them one of the largest migrant groups from India. Despite their growing numbers and economic contribution—both in terms of remittances and global visibility for Indian talent—students remain outside the protective cover of Indian emigration

law. The petition, therefore, called upon the Union of India to take immediate steps to frame policies, guidelines, or legislative amendments to ensure that students are not left unprotected.

Prior to filing the petition, PLC had submitted a detailed representation to the Ministry of External Affairs, urging the Government to recognize the urgent need for legal safeguards and regulatory oversight in this sector. However, due to the lack of response, PLC was compelled to approach the Hon'ble Delhi High Court for judicial intervention.

The matter was heard by a Division Bench comprising Hon'ble the Acting Chief Justice Mr. Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Hon'ble Mr. Justice Tushar Rao Gadela. While disposing of the PIL, the Court directed the Union of India to consider PLC's representation "in the manner it deserves," thereby ensuring that the concerns of Indian students abroad receive due attention from the Government.

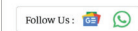
Delhi HC directs Centre to decide on guidelines to safeguard Indian students abroad

According to plea, these students lack adequate legal protection leaving them vulnerable to fraud and various malpractices perpetuated by unregulated foreign institutions.

ANI 06 December, 2024 02:15 pm IST



File photo of Delhi High Court | Commons



Text Size: A- A+

New Delhi: The **Delhi High Court** has directed the Central Government to decide on a representation urging the Ministry of External

DR. A. ABDUL HAKKIM PRESENTED WITH THE PLC RTI AWARD 2024

December 12th 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has conferred the K. Padmanabhan Memorial RTI Award 2024 upon Dr. A. Abdul Hakkim, Information Commissioner, Kerala, in recognition of his outstanding contributions to transparency and accountability in governance.



The award was presented by the Hon'ble Chief Information Commissioner of India, Shri Heeralal Samariya, at a ceremony held at the Central Information Commission Bhawan, New Delhi.



The occasion was further graced by the presence of Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President of PLC, and Shri D. B. Binu, President of the District Consumer Redressal Commission, Ernakulam.

MS. SHYNY FRANK APPOINTED AS INTERNATIONAL COORDINATOR OF PLC LADIES WING

December 14th 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has appointed Ms. Shyny Frank as the International Coordinator of the PLC Ladies Wing. Ms. Shyny is a pioneering social worker with over 30 years of dedicated service in addressing humanitarian issues. She currently serves as the Administrative Supervisor of the Special Needs Department at Al Resala Bilingual School, Kuwait.

Throughout her journey, she has been a strong advocate for stranded individuals, patients, widows with children, and domestic labourers, offering unwavering support to those in need. Her leadership and service have earned her multiple distinctions, including recognition as an official female community volunteer authorized by the Embassy of India in Kuwait, and as the President of the Differently Abled Welfare Association in Kerala.

In 2024, she was also honoured with the Garshom Pravasi Vanitha Award, instituted by the Garshom Foundation, Bangalore, further affirming her commitment to the welfare of expatriates and marginalized communities.

PROF. JOSE V PHILIP APPOINTED AS PLC COORDINATOR, ITALY

December 23rd 2024: Prof. Jose Vattakottayil Philip has been appointed as the Coordinator of PLC, Italy. Prof. Jose is a distinguished academician who is currently serving as Professor at University of Sapienza, Rome. He holds various meritorious positions, including the CEO of IndiaXclusive media, accredited correspondent for Vatican News and has also been elected twice as a member of Lok Kerala Sabha. He has a diverse range of specializations with expertise extending to research coordination and is an acknowledged authority on Italian Immigration. Hailing from Payyannur, a remote village in Kerala, and having spent a long 36 years in Italy, he truly has earned a recognition of being a bridge between the two nations with an intrinsic understanding of both Indian and Italian cultural dynamics. He has also been appointed by the Italian government to mediate the resolution of a high-profile case involving two Italian Marines detained in Kerala. His expertise, diverse knowledge, and involvement in social issues will surely strengthen and guide us in the journey ahead.

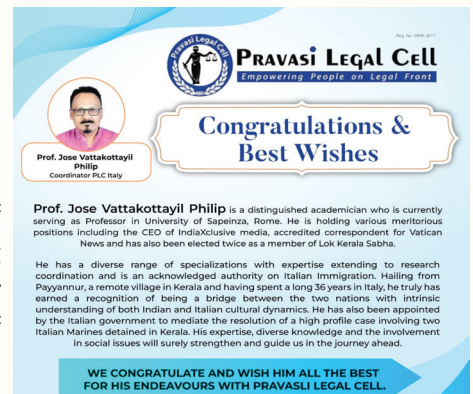
PLC KERALA CHAPTER ENTERS INTO MOU WITH THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT

December 24th 2024: The Pravasi Legal Cell Kerala Chapter, has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD) to establish a "Pravasi Help Desk." The MOU was signed by Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President of PLC, and Prof. S. Irudayarajan, Chairman of IIMAD.

The Pravasi Help Desk, based in Thiruvananthapuram, will function as a dedicated support system to provide legal guidance and assistance to Pravasis, ensuring timely help and resolution of issues faced by expatriates- announced by Adv. R. Muraleedharan, General Secretary of PLC, Kerala Chapter.

MR. BIJU PHILIP APPOINTED AS COORDINATOR OF PLC CANADA

January 18th 2025: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has appointed Mr. Biju Philip as the Coordinator of PLC Canada. Mr. Biju is a seasoned professional in the electrical power industry with over 24 years of experience, having worked with reputed companies such as Emerson Electric and General Electric. An alumnus of the Moscow Power Engineering Technical University, Russia, he also holds an MBA from XLRI, India.



Beyond his professional achievements, Mr. Biju has been actively engaged in several non-profit organizations, including the Canadian Cochin Club and MEGA. Hailing from Ernakulam, Kerala, he has consistently championed social causes such as food programs for the needy, environmental conservation, and medical aid for the underprivileged. Notably, during the Covid-19 crisis, he coordinated the repatriation of 188 labourers to India and facilitated the supply of oxygen concentrators to government hospitals through NORKA Roots during the pandemic's second wave.

With his blend of professional expertise and humanitarian spirit, Mr. Biju Philip is poised to strengthen the activities of PLC Canada and expand its outreach among the Pravasi community.

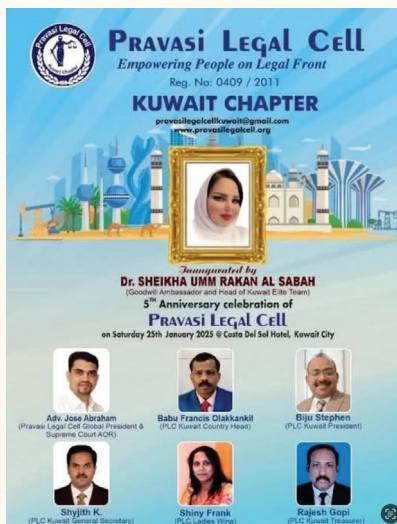


PLC KUWAIT CHAPTER CELEBRATES ITS FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

January 25th 2025: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) Kuwait Chapter grandly celebrated its fifth anniversary at the Costa Del Sol Hotel. The program was officially inaugurated by Dr. Shaikha Um Rakan Al Sabah, Head of the Kuwait Elite Team and Goodwill Ambassador.



Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President of Pravasi Legal Cell and Advocate-on-Record at the Supreme Court of India, was the chief guest of the ceremony. The meeting was presided over by Biju Stephen, President of the PLC Kuwait Chapter. The keynote address was delivered by Babu Francis, World Kerala Assembly Member and Country Head of the PLC Kuwait Chapter. General Secretary Shaijith K. delivered the welcome speech.



Prominent dignitaries, including Lawyer Jabir Al-Failakawi, Lawyer Talal Thaqi, Sunil Parakkappadath, Chairman of Royal Seagull Group, Azeem Syed Sulaiman, Head of Business Development of Shifa Al Jazeera Medical Group, Lama Ibrahim, Marketing Manager of Medex Medical Group, Dr. Susovna Sujith Nair, Vice President of Indian Doctors Forum, Lawyer Haifa Al-Huwaidi, Board Member of Kuwait Human Rights Society, and renowned playback singer Sindhu Devi Ramesh, conveyed their felicitations.

During the function, the recipients of the Gershom Pravasi Women's Award, including Shiny Frank, as well as sponsors and other eminent personalities from various fields, were honored with mementos. Treasurer Rajesh Gopi delivered the vote of thanks. The program was coordinated by Shiny Frank, International Coordinator of the PLC Women's Wing and the event's convener.

The event witnessed wide participation from the Indian expatriate community, including social and cultural activists, media professionals, representatives from the Kuwait Society for Human Rights, Legal Director Centre, and over fifty Kuwaiti nationals who expressed willingness to collaborate with the PLC Kuwait Chapter. PLC Kuwait Chapter Patron Jayakumar, Advisory Board Member Dr. Sabu P. S., Coordinator Anilkumar, Vice President Charles P. George, and Joint Secretary Sreekumar led the proceedings.

PLC SUBMITS REPRESENTATION SEEKING INTERVENTION IN TAX DISCRIMINATION AGAINST EXPATRIATES

January 29th 2025: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has submitted a representation to Union Finance Minister Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman, seeking urgent intervention against the discriminatory provisions introduced under the Finance Act, 2024, which adversely affect Indian citizens residing abroad.

The representation highlights that the Finance Act, 2024 creates an unjustified distinction between resident Indians and expatriates with regard to taxation on property transactions. Specifically, Indian expatriates are compelled to pay a significantly higher rate of income tax on gains arising from the transfer of property in India, while resident Indians are subject to comparatively lower rates. PLC has strongly argued that this differential treatment, based solely on the residence status of Indian citizens, is arbitrary and violative of Article 14 of the Constitution of India, which guarantees equality before law and equal protection of laws.

By treating expatriates differently, the Act imposes an unfair financial burden on millions of Indians living abroad, many of whom have invested their hard-earned savings into property in India. The representation further stresses that expatriates continue to contribute substantially to the Indian economy through remittances, investments, and philanthropic initiatives. Instead of acknowledging their role as vital stakeholders in the nation's growth, such provisions penalize them with additional tax liabilities.

PLC has urged the Union Government to immediately reconsider and withdraw this provision of the Finance Act, 2024. It has called upon the Ministry of Finance to ensure that expatriates are not unfairly burdened or subjected to unequal treatment in matters of taxation merely because of their residential status.

The representation cautions that retaining such provisions would discourage investment in India by the expatriate community and could also face legal challenge as unconstitutional. PLC has therefore appealed to the Government to adopt a more inclusive approach, ensuring that expatriates enjoy the same rights and protections as their fellow citizens residing in India.

PLC KERALA CHAPTER SUBMITS REPRESENTATION SEEKING RESERVATION FOR PRAVASIS IN NORKA ROOTS

February 04th 2025: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) Kerala Chapter has submitted a representation before Dr. K. Vasuki, IAS, Principal Secretary of NORKA ROOTS, seeking measures to strengthen welfare and employment opportunities for the expatriate community.

The representation emphasized the need for reservations in contractual jobs at NORKA ROOTS, ensuring that deserving Pravasis are given fair employment opportunities. It also called for the creation of a dedicated redressal cell, the construction of care homes, and the establishment of specialty hospitals exclusively catering to the needs of Pravasis.

Dr. Vasuki assured the delegation that the matter would be taken up with the concerned authorities and that necessary steps would be initiated. The representation was submitted by Adv. R. Muraleedharan, Ms. Sheeba Ramachandran, Mr. Benny Perilakathu, along with other representatives of PLC.



PLC SEEKS INTERVENTION IN FINANCIAL EXPLOITATION OF CUSTOMERS IN VFS OFFICES IN KERALA

February 06th 2025: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has submitted a representation to the CEO of VFS Global, seeking urgent intervention to curb the alleged financial exploitation of customers across VFS offices in Kerala.

The representation was prompted by multiple complaints from prospective emigrants, who reported being compelled to avail premium lounge services despite having pre-booked appointments and carrying all the required documents. Applicants alleged that their applications were often rejected on trivial or unreasonable grounds, leaving them with no option but to opt for premium services at an additional cost.

Following the submission, Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President of PLC, was contacted by concerned officials of VFS Global, who assured that the issue would be examined and necessary corrective steps would be taken.

ADV. HARSHIL MAHESHWARI APPOINTED AS THE COORDINATOR OF PLC DELHI

February 14th 2025:The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has appointed Adv. Harshil Maheshwari as the Coordinator of its Delhi Chapter. A seasoned advocate and policy strategist with over 12 years of experience in legal advocacy, policy reforms, and regulatory affairs, Adv. Harshil has worked extensively with government agencies and law enforcement bodies to drive impactful change. Over the course of her career, she has successfully led policy campaigns and played a pivotal role in strengthening animal rights law in India.



PLC SHARJAH-AJMAN CHAPTER CONDUCTS BLOOD DONATION CAMP



February 18th 2025:On the occasion of the 16th Foundation Day of the Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC), a blood donation camp was organised by PLC Sharjah-Ajman Chapter at Karama. The event was inaugurated with the unveiling of the official poster by Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President of PLC.

The function was graced by the presence of Mr. Hashim Perumbavoor, International Coordinator, PLC, Mr. AI Nishad

Shahul, General Secretary, PLC Sharjah-Ajman Chapter, and Mr. Shajahan Valiyakathu, Vice President, PLC Sharjah-Ajman Chapter.

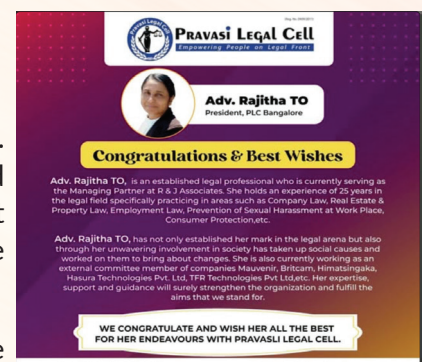
The camp witnessed an overwhelming response, with a large number of people joining under the banner of PLC Sharjah-Ajman Chapter to support this noble cause.

ADV. RAJITHA T.O. APPOINTED PRESIDENT OF PLC, BANGALORE CHAPTER

February 22nd 2025:The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has appointed Adv. Rajitha T.O. as the President of its Bangalore Chapter. A distinguished legal professional, she is currently serving as the Managing Partner at R & J Associates and brings with her over 25 years of experience in the legal field.

Her practice spans diverse areas, including Company Law, Real Estate & Property Law, Employment Law, Prevention of Sexual Harassment at the Workplace, and Consumer Protection. Alongside her legal practice, Adv. Rajitha has been actively engaged in social causes, working tirelessly to bring about meaningful change in society.

She also serves as an external committee member for several companies such as CloudSEK, Hasura Technologies Pvt. Ltd., and TFR Technologies Pvt. Ltd., further strengthening her contributions to corporate governance and workplace justice.



PLC SUBMITS REPRESENTATION AGAINST THE FORCED SALE OF PASSPORT COVERS

February 23rd, 2025: PLC submitted a representation before the Ministry of External Affairs seeking intervention in the forced sale of passport protective covers at Passport Seva Kendras across India. At present, there are 93 Passport Seva Kendras and 424 Post Office Passport Seva Kendras functioning under 37 Regional Passport Offices in India. Since 2008, the responsibility of handling passport application services at PSKs has been entrusted to the private company Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). From the time TCS took over, protective passport covers manufactured by its subsidiary, Tata International Limited, have been sold through PSKs.

Although the “passport protective cover” is supposed to be an optional service, reports have emerged that in several PSKs, including those in Kerala, applicants are being compelled to purchase them. Following these complaints, PLC has urged action against such unauthorized practices.

The issue came to light when it was found that at certain PSKs under the Kozhikode Regional Passport Office, applicants were sold these covers without being informed that it was an optional service. In response to a Right to Information (RTI) application filed by migration activist and Malaysia-based social worker Athmeshan Pachatt, it was revealed that the MEA has never granted approval for the sale of passport covers through PSKs. This disclosure directly contradicts the information on the official website of the Passport Authority, which misleadingly lists passport covers along with other fee categories as if they had official sanction.

Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President of Pravasi Legal Cell and Advocate-on-Record at the Supreme Court of India, pointed out that misleading information on the Passport Authority’s web portal and the unauthorised sale of passport covers through government service centres amounted to serious malpractice. He emphasized that government institutions meant to provide essential services to the public should not become avenues for corporate profit-making, calling such financial transactions a violation of human rights.

ADV. ARPIT LALL APPOINTED PRESIDENT OF PLC, CHHATTISGARH CHAPTER



March 08th 2025: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has appointed Adv. Arpit Lall as the President of its Chhattisgarh Chapter. A distinguished advocate, he practices before the Supreme Court of India and the High Court of Chhattisgarh, with 11 reported judgments to his credit.

Beyond his legal career, Adv. Arpit has an inspiring journey marked by extraordinary accomplishments. He was conferred the Doctor of Divinity (First Class), becoming the youngest recipient of this honour in Theology, awarded by the Hon’ble Governor of Chhattisgarh. His achievements further include holding six Guinness World Records across diverse fields and successfully clearing the

Kerala Judicial Service Examination in his very first attempt.

With his blend of legal expertise and remarkable contributions, Adv. Arpit Lall brings both vision and dedication to his new role at PLC.

PLC REPRESENTATIVES FROM KERALA CHAPTER MEET LEADER OF OPPOSITION, SHRI. V.D. SATHEESHAN

March 09th 2025: Representatives from the Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC), Kerala Chapter, met with the Leader of the Opposition, Shri. V.D. Satheeshan, to highlight key issues faced by the Pravasi community.

During the discussions, the delegation raised pressing concerns such as the need for reservations in contractual jobs at NORKA ROOTS, establishment of a dedicated redressal cell, and the construction of care homes and specialty hospitals for Pravasis.

A detailed representation was also submitted, seeking:

- Increase of Pravasi Pension from ₹3,500 to ₹5,000
- Introduction of a Pravasi Insurance Scheme
- Enhancement of the NORKA Loan limit from ₹20 lakhs to ₹50 lakhs

The representation was submitted by Adv. R. Muraleedharan, General Secretary, PLC Kerala, Ms. Sheeba Ramachandran, Mr. Benny Perilakathu, along with other PLC representatives.



PLC SEEKS INTERVENTION FOR FORMULATION OF A MECHANISM TO GUARANTEE COMPETENT LEGAL AID

March 10th 2025: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has submitted a representation before the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), urging the formulation of a clear mechanism or guidelines to ensure that competent legal aid is extended to Indian citizens living abroad.

The representation highlights that Article 39-A of the Constitution obligates the State to ensure justice on the basis of equal opportunity. To give effect to this mandate, the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987 was enacted to provide free and competent legal services to the underprivileged. The Act makes no distinction between Indians residing in the country and those living abroad, thereby casting a duty on the Government of India to extend legal aid to all citizens. Further, the Hon'ble Supreme Court has consistently recognised free legal aid as part of the fundamental right to life under Article 21. It is therefore incumbent on the Government to safeguard this right by ensuring the availability of free and competent legal aid to Indians both within and outside the country.

The representation comes in the backdrop of the recent execution of three Indian nationals in the UAE. In one such case, the father of an executed Indian national had filed a writ petition before the Hon'ble Delhi High Court, where the Government of India informed on 03.03.2025 that the execution had already taken place on 15.02.2025.

PLC highlighted that such instances raise serious concerns about the existing framework for safeguarding the rights of Indians abroad. The representation strongly calls for an effective, transparent, and time-bound mechanism to ensure access to competent legal aid for Indian citizens facing trial or capital punishment in foreign jurisdictions.

ASGAR A APPOINTED AS THE COORDINATOR FOR PLC DISABILITY RIGHTS WING

March 13th 2025: Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has appointed Mr. Asgar A as the Coordinator of its Disability Rights Wing. A committed community worker, Mr. Asgar has been at the forefront of advocating for the rights and welfare of Persons with Disabilities (PwD).

His contributions span legal education, rehabilitation support for individuals suffering from work-related injuries, and spreading awareness about insurance laws and regulations. Through his tireless efforts, he has empowered countless individuals to navigate legal and social challenges, making a lasting impact on their lives.

With extensive experience as a Work Injury and Social Rights Volunteer in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Mr. Asgar has guided many migrant workers facing workplace injuries, ensuring they receive rightful support from social insurance organizations and legal authorities.

Pravasi Legal Cell
Empowering People on Legal Front

Congratulations!
and Best Wishes

ASGAR A
Co-ordinator
PLC Disability Rights Wing

Asgar A is a dedicated community worker who is focused on aiding the needs of the Persons with Disability community. He is involved in promoting the rights of community members with legal education, rehabilitation for people who suffer work injuries, and empowering individuals with an understanding of insurance laws and regulations. His ardent community service has helped various individuals navigate through legal and social impediments and his selfless acts for the disabled are truly commendable.

Mr. Asgar has worked as a Work Injury and Social Rights Volunteer in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, for a long time period, wherein he has guided pravisis who met with work injuries to deal with social insurance organizations and legal proceedings. His passion for securing the rights of other people who are socially and legally suffering can be made a true example of service in its true meaning. His expertise and experience will surely guide this organization and will help secure the rights of many more people in the future.

We congratulate and wish him all the best for his endeavours as the Co-ordinator of Pravasi Legal Cell Disability Wing

Pravasi Legal Cell
D-144/Basement, Hari Nagar, Ashram, New Delhi-110014
Ph: +91-11-35608590, Mob: +91-9654907269
www.pravasilegalcell.in | E-mail: pravasilegalcell@gmail.com

His appointment to lead the Disability Rights Wing reflects PLC's strong commitment to addressing the unique challenges faced by persons with disabilities, particularly within the migrant community.

PLC INAUGURATES ITS NEWEST WING: THE PLC DISABILITY RIGHTS WING

March 19th 2025: The Disability Rights Wing of Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) was formally inaugurated by Justice (Retd.) P. Mohandas, Former Chairperson of the Kerala State Human Rights Commission. Established as a dedicated redressal mechanism, the new wing aims to provide timely legal assistance to differently-abled pravasis in the countries where they reside, while also serving as a platform to address the unique challenges they face.

Delivering the keynote address, Justice S.H. Panchapakesan, Former Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, Government of Kerala, emphasized the need for structured support systems to safeguard the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities.

The inauguration was presided over by Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President of PLC. Mr. Asgar A, recently appointed as the Coordinator of the Disability Rights Wing, delivered the felicitation.

The launch of this wing underscores PLC's continued commitment to empowering differently-abled members of the migrant community and ensuring their voices are heard.

PLC SEEKS SUPPORT FROM SHRI G.M. HARISH, MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, FOR THE PROTECTION OF INDIAN STUDENTS ABROAD

March 30th 2025: The Pravasi Legal Cell (PLC) has submitted a representation to Shri G.M. Harish, Member of Parliament, seeking his support in safeguarding Indian students migrating for education and in strengthening legal aid mechanisms for Indians abroad.

The representation emphasized the urgent need to:

- Advocate for amendments to the Emigration Act, 1984
- Regulate education agents to prevent fraudulent practices affecting students
- Strengthen legal aid frameworks to ensure competent representation for Indians facing distress overseas

The representation was formally submitted by Adv. Jose Abraham, Global President of PLC, along with Adv. Harshil Maheshwari, Coordinator, PLC Delhi Chapter.



CONCLUSION

The year 2024-25 was another eventful year for Pravasi Legal Cell. PLC was able to intervene in different matters and make positive changes in the lives of ordinary Indian citizens within and outside the country. Justifying its name, Pravasi Legal Cell, could intervene positively in many matters that directly affects the Pravasi Indian population. PLC remains committed to its objectives and ever more motivated by the results for its various activities and the unconditional support shown by individuals and organizations across the world.



D-144/Basement, Hari Nagar, Ashram,
New Delhi-110014

Ph: +91-11 -35608590
Mob: +91- 9654907269
E-mail: pravasilegalcell@gmail.com

www.pravasilegalcell.in