



Jharkhand to Help Workers Stranded in Cameroon

Why in News?

After an intervention by Jharkhand Chief Minister, a **group of 47 migrant workers from Jharkhand** who are **trapped in Cameroon** have **received partial payment of their wages**.

Key Points

- **Pending Salaries and Legal Non-compliance:**
 - Workers employed by M/s Transrail Lighting Limited in Cameroon alleged non-payment of salaries for three months.
 - The **Chief Minister of Jharkhand directed the Labour Commissioner to register** an **First Information Report (FIR)** against the employers and middlemen.
 - The FIR noted violations of **the Interstate Migrant Workers Act, 1979**, including sending workers abroad without registration or requisite licenses.
 - FIRs were filed in the Hazaribagh, Bokaro, and Giridih districts of Jharkhand.
- **Salary Payment Update:**
 - Transrail Lighting stated the **workers were paid US Dollar 100 per month**, promising to transfer the balance to their Indian accounts.
 - The Labour Department has requested the company to **provide contracts, salary records, and other relevant documents**.
 - A letter has been sent to **the Protector of Emigrants (POE)** and other authorities for necessary action.
- **Diplomatic Efforts:**
 - The Indian High Commission and the **Union Ministry of External Affairs** are actively facilitating discussions between the company and the stranded workers.
 - Control room teams are maintaining contact with workers and officials to ensure their safety.
 - Officials warned that failure to pay full salaries could result in the **cancellation of agreements with contractors**.
- **Previous Cases of Intervention:**
 - In **July 2024**, the Chief Minister intervened to **bring back 27 stranded workers** from Cameroon.
 - Efforts are ongoing to **repatriate 50 workers stranded in Malaysia**, who have reached Visakhapatnam and are expected to return home soon.

Inter-State Migrant Workmen Act, 1979

- The Act seeks to regulate the employment of inter-State migrants and their conditions of service.
- It is applicable to every establishment that employs **five or more migrant workmen from other States**; or if it had **employed five or more such workmen** on any day in the **preceding 12 months**.
- It is also **applicable to contractors** who employed a similar number of inter-State workmen.
- It envisages a system of **registration of such establishments**. The principal employer is prohibited from employing inter-State workmen **without a certificate of registration** from the relevant authority.
- The law also lays down that **every contractor who recruits workmen** from one State for

deployment in another State **should obtain a licence to do so.**

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