

Press Release

Non Resident Tamils' Welfare Department

Tamils are increasingly migrating to foreign countries for various employment opportunities. It has been reported that they have been taken to Cambodia, Thailand, and Myanmar on tourist visas under the pretence of IT jobs and are pressured to engage in illegal online activities. Those who refuse are subjected to electric shocks and physical abuse. So far, this Department has rescued 83 Tamils from these countries.

It is recently reported that Indian nationals are being lured for employment through Thailand in Lao People's Democratic Republic (PDR) – also known as Laos. These fake jobs are for posts such as of Digital Sales and Marketing Executives or Customer Support Service by dubious companies involved in call centre scams and crypto currency fraud in Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone in Laos. Agents in places such as Dubai, Bangkok, Singapore and India associated with these firms are recruiting Indian Nationals by taking simple interviews and the typing test and are offering high salaries, hotel bookings along with return air tickets and visa facilitation.

Victims are illegally taken across the border into Laos from Thailand and held captive to work in Golden Triangle Special Economic Zone in Laos under harsh and restrictive conditions. At times, they are taken hostages by criminal syndicates indulging in illegal activities and forced to work in strenuous conditions under constant physical and mental torture.

Visa on Arrival in Thailand or Laos does not permit employment and the Lao authorities do not issue work permits to Indian nationals coming to Laos on such visas. It may be noted that tourist visa is to be used only for the purpose of tourism. Please note that those convicted of human trafficking crimes have been sentenced up to 18 years in prison in Laos. Therefore, Indian nationals are advised not to get enticed and entrapped in such fraudulent or exploitative job offers and are requested to exercise extreme caution and verify the antecedents of recruiting agents as well as any company before taking up any job offer in Laos.

For any help or clarification on job offers in Laos and Cambodia, please contact Indian Mission at Laos: Contact Number.+856-2055536568 or email: cons.vientianne@mea.gov.in and Indian Mission at Cambodia: cons.phnompehh@mea.gov.in and visa.phnompehh@mea.gov.in

To prevent Indians from falling into these traps and to stay alert against employment scams, it is advised to thoroughly investigate recruitment agents and the companies they will be working for before going abroad. Indian should only travel with an employment visa and a proper job contract and before travelling verify the authenticity of the visa through the Indian Embassy in the respective countries and the embassies of those countries in India.

For information on overseas employment and resolving issues faced by Tamils abroad, contact the toll-free numbers of the Tamil Nadu Government's Commissionerate of Welfare of Non-Resident Tamils:

- a) 18003093793 (within India)
- b) 8069009901 (for calls from abroad)
- c) 8069009900 (Missed Call No.)

Additionally, one can contact the Protector of Emigrants, Chennai, for assistance at 9042149222. The Government warns that strict legal action will be taken through police against agents/agencies in Tamil Nadu sending people abroad for work without being registered with the Union Government.

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Issued By: DIPR, Secretariat, Chennai – 9

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