

Govt vows to protect domestic workers in Gulf

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Madurai: The Central government on Tuesday told the Madurai bench of the Madras high court that it was taking steps to rescue women who have been under illegal detention in the hands of employers in Oman. Moreover, the state government assured the court that its police would look into the matter seriously by registering cases against recruiting agents who illegally send women to Oman.

The development pertains to the court directive to central and state governments to produce Mekala, daughter of K Kalavathi (48) of Jaihindpuram in Madurai before the court after the mother filed a habeas corpus petition (HCP) alleging that 14 Tamil Nadu women including her

daughter were under illegal detention in Oman.

On Tuesday, when the police produced Mekala, the petitioner filed an additional affidavit before the court narrating how her daughter underwent harassments from the recruiting agents and her employer in Oman. In the affidavit, it was stated that many women who went to Oman to work as domestic helps were subjected to sexual harassment. A girl from Thailand was raped in front of other women, the affidavit said.

The petitioner thanked the high court for the directions issued, which reunited her with her daughter. "Due to the court directions, my daughter was sent from Muscat to Mumbai by her employer, from where she reached Madurai on June 30. As she had suffered injuries, she was admitted at the Government Rajaji Hospital in Madurai, where she was given treatment for

three days. Now, she is getting treatment as an outpatient," the petitioner said. She wanted action against the agents who illegally sent women to foreign countries.

Kalavathi further pleaded that many women share the plight of her daughter. If the court ordered the central and state governments to verify the list of women workers sent by agents and check their present status, the truth would come out, she said.

Subsequently, the bench asked the government sides of the central and state governments, which assured action.