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Russian Labor Ministry Denies Plans to Recruit 1M Indian Workers in 2025

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New Delhi, India. **Maxim Shemetov / TASS**

Russia's Labor Ministry has denied claims that it plans to recruit as many as 1 million workers from India by the end of the year.

Andrei Besedin, head of the Ural Chamber of Commerce and Industry, had made that assertion on Wednesday, saying the arrival of Indian workers would assuage the country's deepening labor shortage, particularly in the Sverdlovsk region.

But the Labor Ministry later told the RBC news website that the recruitment of workers from India is regulated by quotas that are set a year in advance based on regions and employers' needs.

"Each specialist from visa countries invited within the quota obtains a work visa and work permit. And the company, before employing a visa worker, obtains permission from the Interior Ministry to hire such employees," the Labor Ministry told RBC.

Russia's total quota for foreign workers in 2025 is 234,900, with 71,817 spots for Indian citizens.

In the Sverdlovsk region, the quota for all foreign workers is 4,343 people.

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Russian businesses have already begun experimenting with Indian labor.

In March, Moscow-based developer Samolyot Group launched a pilot program to hire Indian construction workers. While executives cited advantages, including lower wage expectations and limited job mobility compared to Central Asian laborers, they also encountered early setbacks.

"The results haven't been particularly successful," said Alexei Akindinov, the company's operations director, blaming the language barrier and cultural differences.

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Retail giant X5 Group, which owns Pyaterochka and Perekrestok supermarkets, has also started hiring Indian workers for logistics and distribution roles.

"There are many nuances," said company president Yekaterina Lobacheva, pointing to "basic linguistic and cultural differences."

Last year, over 4,000 Indian migrants applied for jobs in St. Petersburg alone, and Indian workers have been spotted in the Kaliningrad and Moscow regions.

Online marketplace Ozon has hired Indian citizens for both warehouse positions and technical roles.

Meanwhile, Russia's influential Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs has floated the idea of building vocational training schools in India to prepare laborers specifically for the Russian job market — an initiative supported by Education Minister Sergei Kravtsov, who has pledged to coordinate with the Foreign Ministry.

This article has been updated to include the Labor Ministry's statement.

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