

## Survey of non-resident Keralites on in Kerala

A survey covering 50 households each from 200 select villages is being conducted in Kerala to find out the number of the non-resident Keralites (NRKs).

The Migration Research Unit funded by the overseas Indian affairs ministry and attached to the Centre for Development Studies (CDS) is conducting the survey.

S. Irudayarajan, head of the Research Unit, told IANS the survey had reached the halfway mark. The study is being carried out for the Kerala government and funded by the non-resident Keralites Affairs Department that has allocated an initial funding of Rs.5 million.

'The field survey is being done by the Kerala Statistical Institute and would cover 50 households each from 200 select village councils in the state,' said Irudayarajan.

This is the third survey being undertaken by Irudayarajan and noted demographer K.C.Zachariah who conducted the first in 1998 and the second in 2003.

In the last survey, it was found out that Kerala's total number of emigrants increased from 1.36 million in 1998 to 1.83 million in 2003 and, among them, close to 90 percent were in the Middle East.

'We are also looking into the details of remittances, apart from other socio-economic factors, and hope to come out with the preliminary findings on World Population Day July 11,' said Irudayarajan

According to their earlier studies, remittances from non-resident Keralites were found to have shot up from Rs.136.52 billion (1998) to Rs.184.65 billion (2003).

The first study found that the maximum number of migrants were in Saudi Arabia and in the subsequent one said they were in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

The study will be helpful to the state government to devise new polices for the welfare of NRKs.

( © IANS / India eNews)