

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-558
ANSWERED ON- 07/12/2023

INDIANS LANGUISHING IN JAILS OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES

558. SHRI MALLIKARJUN KHARGE

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) the total number of Indian nationals languishing in jails of foreign countries as on date, time period-wise and country-wise;
- (b) the steps taken/being taken by Government for the release of Indian prisoners languishing in jails abroad and the outcome thereof, country-wise; and
- (c) the details of the expected time by which such process shall be completed, country-wise?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a) As per the information available with the Ministry, the number of Indian prisoners, including undertrials, in foreign prisons at present is 9521. Country-wise list is placed at Annexure. However, due to strong privacy laws prevailing in many countries, the local authorities do not share information on prisoners unless the person concerned consents to the disclosure of such information. Even countries which share information do not generally provide detailed information about the foreign nationals imprisoned.

(b) The Government attaches the highest priority to the safety, security and well-being of Indians in foreign countries, including those in the foreign jails. Indian Missions/Posts abroad remain vigilant and closely monitor the incidents of Indian nationals being put in jail in foreign countries for violation/ alleged violation of local laws.

As soon as the information about the detention/arrest of an Indian national is received by an Indian Mission/Post, it immediately gets in touch with the local Foreign Office and other concerned local authorities to get consular access to the detained/arrested Indian national to ascertain the facts of the case, confirm his or her Indian nationality and ensure his or her welfare. Missions/Posts remain vigilant to ensure that rights of the Indian prisoners in foreign jails are protected.

Apart from extending all possible consular assistance to Indians imprisoned abroad, Indian Missions and Posts also assist in providing legal aid wherever needed. Missions and Posts also maintain a local panel of lawyers where Indian community is in sizeable numbers. No fee is charged from any Indian prisoner for extending facilities by the Indian Embassy concerned. The Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) is set up in Indian Missions & Posts abroad for assisting overseas Indian nationals in distress situations on a means tested basis in deserving cases. The support extended under ICWF includes financial assistance to Indian prisoners for legal aid as well as travel documents / air tickets during repatriation.

The issue of release and repatriation of Indian nationals in foreign prisons is regularly pursued by Indian Missions and Posts abroad with the local authorities concerned. Missions/Posts abroad also approach the law enforcement agencies to complete the investigation and judicial proceedings at the earliest possible. The Government also follows up this issue during consular and other consultations with other countries. In addition, the Government, through its Missions/Posts abroad and during high level visits, also takes up and pursues grant of amnesty/commutation of sentences of Indian prisoners in foreign countries. India has also entered into prisoner transfer treaties with many nations that allow a person convicted of a crime to be transferred to his or her home country to serve the prison sentence.

(c) The number of Indians in foreign jails is a dynamic figure as there are a number of arrests and releases every week. However, all of the arrested Indians are released after serving their sentences. When these imprisoned Indians get released, they are facilitated in getting travel documents for early repatriation.

ANNEXURE

Sl. No.	Country	Number of Indian prisoners, including undertrials, in foreign prisons
1	Algeria	1
2	Angola	1
3	Argentina	1
4	Armenia	11
5	Australia	65
6	Austria	8
7	Azerbaijan	5
8	Bahrain	310
9	Bangladesh	47
10	Belarus	1
11	Belgium	10
12	Bhutan	59
13	Brunei Darussalam	1
14	Bulgaria	3
15	Cambodia	1
16	Canada	23
17	Chile	1
18	China	180
19	Congo (Kinshasa)	1
20	Côte d'Ivoire	7
21	Cuba	1
22	Cyprus	51
23	Czech Republic	1
24	Denmark	5
25	Egypt	1
26	Ethiopia	1
27	France	40
28	Georgia	15
29	Germany	77
30	Greece	23
31	Guatemala	1

32	Hungary	2
33	Indonesia	22
34	Iran	3
35	Israel	5
36	Italy	165
37	Jamaica	1
38	Japan	4
39	Jordan	35
40	Kenya	2
41	Kuwait	410
42	Kyrgyzstan	2
43	Laos	3
44	Lebanon	6
45	Madagascar	2
46	Malawi	1
47	Malaysia	309
48	Maldives	12
49	Malta	2
50	Mauritius	9
51	Mexico	1
52	Mozambique	6
53	Myanmar	24
54	Namibia	1
55	Nepal	1227
56	New Zealand	11
57	Nigeria	2
58	Oman	135
59	Pakistan	308
60	Philippines	34
61	Poland	7
62	Portugal	10
63	Qatar	752
64	Republic of Ireland	5
65	Republic of Korea	3

66	Romania	2
67	Russia	37
68	Rwanda	2
69	Saudi Arabia	2200
70	Senegal	4
71	Serbia	2
72	Singapore	86
73	South Africa	1
74	Spain	30
75	Sri Lanka	23
76	Switzerland	2
77	Tajikistan	1
78	Tanzania	3
79	Thailand	40
80	Togo	2
81	Trinidad and Tobago	2
82	United Arab Emirates	2143
83	United Kingdom	278
84	USA	170
85	Uzbekistan	2
86	Venezuela	12
87	Vietnam	3
88	Yemen	1
89	Zimbabwe	2
	Total	9521
