

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO- 75
FOR ANSWER ON- 05.02.2026

INDIAN MIGRATED ABROAD FOR STUDY AND EMPLOYMENT

*75 SHRI ABDUL WAHAB

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of Indian citizens who have migrated abroad for employment and for higher education separately during the last three years, year-wise and country-wise;
- (b) the major destination countries and sectors of employment and fields of study involved;
- (c) the steps taken to regulate recruitment practices and prevent exploitation of Indian workers overseas;
- (d) the measures to safeguard the interests and welfare of Indian students abroad; and
- (e) whether any bilateral agreements or arrangements exist with host countries in this regard?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) to (E) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 75 FOR REPLY ON 05.02.2026 REGARDING INDIAN MIGRATED ABROAD FOR STUDY AND EMPLOYMENT ASKED BY SHRI ABDUL WAHAB.

(a & b) The Ministry of External Affairs does not maintain comprehensive data of Indian citizens migrating abroad for employment. However, this Ministry maintains data on those Indian emigrant workers who hold Emigration Check Required (ECR) passports and emigrate to the notified ECR countries, for employment purposes only, after obtaining necessary Emigration Clearance from the Protector of Emigrants (POE) through the eMigrate Portal maintained by this Ministry. Country-wise data of Emigration Clearances issued to Indian workers during past three years is given at **Annexure-A**. Similarly, the MEA does not have comprehensive database of Indian students studying abroad. Data estimate based on voluntary registration of Indian students at Missions/Posts abroad is at **Annexure-B**.

(c) As per Section 10 of the Emigration Act, 1983, no person/agency can function as Recruiting Agent (RA) without a valid Registration Certificate (RC) issued by the Registering Authority i.e. Protector General of Emigrants (PGE). The process of registration of RA is done through eMigrate portal, which brings all the stakeholders, including the RAs, Foreign Employers (FEs) and the prospective emigrants on a common platform. Whenever any complaint against a registered RA is received, a Show Cause Notice (SCN) is issued to the concerned RA, under Section 14 of the Emigration Act, 1983, directing them to resolve the complaint. In case, the RA fails to respond to the SCN or reply is not found to be satisfactory, their RC can be cancelled or suspended for 30 days as per Section 14(2) of the Emigration Act, 1983. The order of suspension can be revoked by the Competent Authority only after consultation with all the stakeholders and after ensuring that the complaint has been fully resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant. Ministry has also published a list of 3505 unregistered RAs on the eMigrate portal till December 2025 to caution the prospective emigrants. Advisories/alerts on fraudulent/illegal recruiting agencies are also hosted on this portal.

(d) The Government of India accords highest priority to the safety, protection and wellbeing of Indians living abroad including workers and students. There are established channels to enable them to reach out to the Embassy/Consulate whenever they need assistance. The Embassy/Consulate can be contacted through walk-in, email, multilingual 24x7 emergency numbers, WhatsApp number, grievance redressal portal like MADAD/CPGRAMS/eMigrate, and social media channels.

There are also dedicated Labour Wings for handling such matters, where there is a sizeable number of Indian migrant workers. Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendras have been set up in key locations such as New Delhi, Dubai, Riyadh and Jeddah to provide guidance and counseling to the Indian workers. On receipt of any complaint or grievance from Indian workers, the Embassy/Consulate pro-actively takes it up with the concerned Foreign Employer (FE) and, if needed, the work place of the aggrieved worker is also visited. The issues are also taken up with the local Labour Department and other concerned authority of the host country for redressal. Open Houses and Consular Camps are also organized in remote areas to get feedback from Indian workers residing in such areas and to address their grievances, if any. On receipt of complaint from or on behalf of the emigrant worker, the same is taken up pro-actively with concerned Foreign Employer (FE) and, if required, the

work place of the aggrieved worker is also visited. The complaints pertaining to employment issues are also taken up with the local labour department and other relevant authorities of the host country for prompt redressal.

Further, as additional safeguard for protection and safety of the female workers, including domestic sector workers, Government has authorized only State run Recruiting Agencies (RAs) to recruit Indian female workers holding ECR category passports for overseas employment in Gulf and other notified ECR Countries through the e-Migrate Portal. Moreover, there is a minimum age criteria of 30 years for female workers holding ECR category passport for overseas employment to protect them against exploitation.

Indian Missions/Posts also make efforts to maintain regular contact with Indian students enrolled in foreign universities in their jurisdictions, brief them on potential challenges, risks, and precautions to be taken while studying overseas, including issue of advisories from time to time. Any complaint related to misleading academic programmes or adverse experiences by the students are promptly taken up with the concerned educational institutions and, if required, with authorities of the host country for necessary action. The Missions/Posts are especially vigilant in countries affected by political instability, economic crises, and where the risks of students being misled or exploited may be higher.

Government of India has undertaken large-scale evacuation operations to protect and bring home Indian nationals, including students during times of emergency. Notable evacuation operations include Operation Devi Shakti (Afghanistan), Operation Ganga (Ukraine), Operation Kaveri (Sudan), Operation Ajay (Israel) and Operation Sindhu (Israel and Iran). These efforts demonstrate Government of India's unwavering commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of Indian nationals towards protecting them from miscreants and unsafe security situations.

The Missions/Posts utilize the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) from time to time to provide financial and legal assistance to Indian nationals in distress abroad on a means-tested basis. Under ICWF, the major assistance/facilitation like Boarding & Lodging, Air Passage to India, Legal Assistance, Emergency Medical Care, Transportation of Mortal Remains to India, etc., are rendered on priority basis.

(e) The Government of India has established several bilateral mechanisms and agreements with key destination countries, including those in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), to safeguard Indian workers and ensure timely grievance redressal. These include Labour and Manpower Cooperation Agreements/MoUs, Agreements/Protocol on Domestic Workers, and Joint Working Groups/Joint Committee Meetings that oversee implementation of worker-protection provisions, streamline recruitment processes, facilitate resolution of complaints, and strengthen legal assistance frameworks. Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreements signed with countries also contain provisions for holding regular Joint Working Group meetings under which such issues pertaining to students, professionals, and researchers are also highlighted. These arrangements along with dedicated mechanisms in the Indian Missions abroad such as helpdesks, shelter facilities, online grievance portals, and coordinated interventions with local authorities ensure support for Indian workers facing exploitation or contract violations.

Annexure-A**Year-wise and country-wise number of Emigration Clearances granted to Indian emigrant workers during 2023-2025:**

Country	2023	2024	2025
AFGHANISTAN	-	-	-
BAHRAIN	7376	8607	6827
INDONESIA	-	3	9
IRAQ	1599	2761	1264
JORDAN	1187	3137	2192
KUWAIT	48212	39862	47087
LEBANON	200	130	36
MALAYSIA	15319	5606	3059
OMAN	21336	24258	29158
QATAR	30683	23785	21907
SAUDI ARABIA	200713	167598	136812
SOUTH SUDAN	-	-	73
SUDAN	-	2	-
SYRIA	-	-	-
THAILAND	4	10	-
UNITED ARAB EMIRATES	71687	111308	200686
YEMEN	-	-	-
LIBYA	-	-	-
Grand Total	398316	387067	449110

Annexure - B**Data on Indian Students Abroad**
(as on January 2025)

S. No	Country	Number of students studying in schools	Number of students studying in Universities/ Tertiary Institutions	Total number of Indian students
1	Afghanistan	0	0	0
2	Algeria	14	0	14
3	Albania	0	132	132
4	Angola	5	0	5
5	Argentina	4	0	4
6	Armenia	27	3450	3477
7	Australia	57529	138579	196108
8	Austria	0	520	520
9	Azerbaijan	Data not available	366	366
10	Bahrain	28215	405	28620
11	Bangladesh	0	9862	9862
12	Belarus	0	891	891
13	Belgium	Data not available	1178	1178
14	Belize	Data not available	98	98
15	Benin	157	0	157
16	Bhutan	Data not available	01	1
17	Bolivia	01	Data not available	1

18	Bosnia and Herzegovina	0	200	200
19	Botswana	39	9	48
20	Brazil	14	7	21
21	Brunei Darussalam	550	8	558
22	Bulgaria	Data Not available	508	508
23	Burkina Faso	0	0	0
24	Cambodia	0	Data not available	0
25	Cameroon	0	0	0
26	Canada	Data not available	427085	427085
27	Cape Verde	4	0	4
28	Chad	0	0	0
29	Chile	0	10	10
30	China	9	5330	5339
31	Colombia	0	0	0
32	Congo (Democratic Republic)	200	0	200
33	Republic of Congo	0	0	0
34	Cote D Ivory	157	0	157
35	Croatia	Data not available	25	25
36	Cuba	0	0	0

37	Cyprus	Data not Available	2778	2778
38	Czech Republic	291	1863	2154
39	Denmark	Data not available	509	509
40	Djibouti	35	0	35
41	Dominica Republic	0	0	0
42	Egypt	517	1500	2017
43	Equatorial Guinea	5	0	5
44	Eritrea	14	0	14
45	Estonia	Data not available	167	167
46	Eswatini	0	0	0
47	Ethiopia	40	0	40
48	Fiji	75	10	85
49	Finland	1600	1968	3568
50	France	145	10,000	10145
51	Gabon	Data not available	0	0
52	Germany	2714	49483	52197
53	Georgia	20	16000	16020
54	Ghana	1000	0	1000
55	Greece	Data not available	20	20
56	Guatemala	0	0	0
57	Guinea	38	0	38

58	Guyana	26	670	696
59	Hungary	0	2000	2000
60	Iceland	67	23	90
61	Indonesia	0	17	17
62	Iran	35	2930	2965
63	Iraq	0	0	0
64	Ireland	10,000	10,000	20,000
65	Israel	0	900	900
66	Italy	Data not available	5196	5196
67	Jamaica	300	390	690
68	Japan	1909	1532	3441
69	Jordan	90	1	91
70	Kazakhstan	95	9064	9159
71	Kenya	1863	551	2414
72	Korea (ROK)	Data not available	1714	1714
73	Kuwait	50,000	0	50,000
74	Kyrgyzstan	50	16500	16550
75	Laos	0	0	0
76	Latvia	Data not available	2708	2708
77	Lebanon	39	3	42
78	Liberia	126	0	126

79	Libya	0	0	0
80	Lithuania	Data not available	1557	1557
81	Madagascar	4	0	4
82	Malawi	400	10	410
83	Malaysia	4787	4412	9199
84	Maldives	Data not available	0	N/A
85	Mali	50	0	50
86	Malta	120	800	920
87	Mauritania	0	0	0
88	Mauritius	272	1510	1782
89	Mexico	Data not available	15	15
90	Mongolia	0	4	4
91	Morocco	0	0	0
92	Mozambique	0	0	0
93	Myanmar	2	0	2
94	Namibia	05	0	5
95	Nepal	Data not available	2200	2200
96	Netherlands	Data not available	3512	3512
97	New Zealand	Data not available	7931	7931
98	Niger	20	0	20
99	Nigeria	1550	0	1550

100	North Macedonia	Data not available	2	2
101	Norway	Data not available	95	95
102	Oman	44547	300	44847
103	Pakistan	0	0	0
104	Palestine	0	0	0
105	Panama	5	0	5
106	Papua New Guinea	0	0	0
107	Paraguay	1	0	1
108	Peru	40	5	45
109	Philippines	Data not available	9500	9500
110	Poland	500	5000	5500
111	Portugal	1300	50	1350
112	Qatar	47846	1500	49346
113	Romania	Data not available	195	195
114	Russia	222	27000	27222
115	Rwanda	0	0	0
116	Sao Tome	0	0	0
117	Saudi Arabia	75000	830	75830
118	Senegal	100	0	100
119	Serbia	20	650	670

120	Seychelles	43	14	57
121	Sierra Leone	60	0	60
122	Singapore	30000	3250	33250
123	Slovak Republic	3	300	303
124	Slovenia	20	392	412
125	South Africa	11240	536	11776
126	South Sudan	0	0	0
127	Spain	Data not available	1192	1192
128	Sri Lanka	45	20	65
129	Sudan	1	0	1
130	Suriname	3	250	253
131	Sweden	Data not available	2500	2500
132	Switzerland	0	2064	2064
133	Syria	0	0	0
134	Tajikistan	0	1234	1234
135	Tanzania	870	56	926
136	Thailand	2394	485	2879
137	Timor Leste	Data not available	Data not available	Data not available
138	Togo	150	0	150
139	Trinidad & Tobago	6	1	7
140	Tunisia	0	26	26

141	Turkiye	0	334	334
142	Turkmenistan	0	0	0
143	Taiwan	62	2524	2586
144	Uganda	0	0	0
145	Ukraine	0	1802	1802
146	UAE	2,47,325	6,507	2,53,832
147	U.K.	Data not available	1,73,190	1,73,190
148	U.S.A.	200	255247	255447
149	Uzbekistan	0	7500	7500
150	Venezuela	0	0	0
151	Vietnam	400	300	700
152	Zambia	650	50	700
153	Zimbabwe	23	0	23
Total		628305	1254013	1882318
