

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2321
ANSWERED ON 12/03/2026

WELFARE OF INDIAN DIASPORA

#2321 SHRI HARSH VARDHAN SHRINGLA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of measures taken for welfare and protection of Indian diaspora abroad;
- (b) the details of grievance redressal mechanisms strengthened by Government;
- (c) the details of evacuation and assistance provided during crises abroad; and
- (d) how diaspora engagement contributes to national interest and soft power?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (c) Safety and security of the Indian diaspora is one of the foremost priorities of the Government of India. Indian Missions/Posts encourage and advise the Indian diaspora in their jurisdictions to register with them, join WhatsApp Group created for the Indian community and also to lodge their grievances on the MADAD Portal and CPGRAMS of this Ministry. The grievances of the Indian diaspora members are responded to almost on a real time basis through telephone calls, walk-ins, emails, social media, 24x7 emergency helplines, Consular Camps, Open Houses, the MADAD Portal and CPGRAMS. Indian Missions/Posts abroad also proactively reach out to distressed Indian nationals, either directly or through the local Indian Diaspora Associations within their jurisdiction and provide them all possible consular services, including legal assistance, emergency medical care and boarding/ lodging, whenever required.

The Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) has also been set up in Indian Missions/ Posts abroad for assisting overseas Indian nationals in distress. Under the ICWF, distressed Indian diaspora is extended counselling and other forms of assistance on a means tested basis. It is also extended for transportation of mortal remains of Indian diaspora overseas to India.

Indian Missions and Posts abroad, particularly in countries where there is political instability or economic crisis, remain vigilant and closely monitor any development that may adversely affect the Indian diaspora in such regions. From time to time, they issue advisories as required by developments in their respective countries of jurisdiction to caution Indian nationals to avoid unnecessary travel, remain in touch with them through published helpline numbers and follow safety guidelines and protocols issued by local authorities. Any unfortunate incident or challenges faced by members of the Indian diaspora community are immediately taken up with the concerned authorities of the host country to suitably resolve them. Such issues are also raised during meetings with Government officials of the concerned countries, including at the highest levels, as appropriate.

During emergencies or crisis situations in countries affected by political instability or economic crisis, Indian Missions/Posts help distressed /stranded Indians by providing them food, shelter, medicines and evacuate them to India, if necessary. Notable recent evacuation operations undertaken by the Government of India include Vande Bharat, Operation Devi Shakti (Afghanistan), Operation Ganga (Ukraine), Operation Kaveri (Sudan), Operation Ajay (Israel) and Operation Sindhu (Israel and Iran). These efforts demonstrate the Government's commitment to ensuring the safety and well-being of Indian diaspora in foreign lands.

(d) Government of India is taking comprehensive measures and several initiatives to encourage the Indian diaspora to proactively involve themselves in national development, nation building and holistic development of India through skill and technology transfer as also to assist in propagating India's soft power overseas. It is a vital aspect of the Diaspora Engagement policy framework of the Government of India, which is based on 4Cs: Care for our communities, Connect with global networks, Celebrate our shared heritage, and Encourage Contributions that drive positive change. This Ministry is thus implementing various schemes to engage with the Indian diaspora, and to leverage its expertise, resources and goodwill. These initiatives have strengthened India's bond with its diaspora, and encouraged the diaspora members to actively partner India's development in its march towards Viksit Bharat.

The Indian diaspora plays a crucial role in promoting India's rich cultural heritage, yoga, Ayurveda, and popular festivals like Diwali and Holi across the globe. For instance, the success and popularity of the annual celebration of the International Day of Yoga in every country across the world can be attributed to the proactive role played by the Indian diaspora to both promote and advocate it. Government of India's initiatives such as Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) and Know India Programme (KIP) also foster a deep connect of the Indian diaspora overseas to India's rich cultural and civilizational heritage, particularly amongst the second- and third-generation of diaspora youth, and help transform them to be India's cultural ambassadors across the globe.

Overseas Indians have contributed substantially to India's economic growth through remittances, investments, trade, and innovations, while also strengthening India's soft power through cultural outreach and people-to-people ties.

Government of India also encourages the Indian diaspora to invest in India by facilitating ease of doing business in India, promoting flexibilities in FDIs and by fostering ease of travel through extension of the Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Card. Holders of the OCI Cards can avail the benefits of lifelong visas, ownership rights to properties in India and are thus motivated to invest in India and contribute to skill development and technology transfer.

The diaspora has also played a pivotal role in promoting India's interests in foreign lands. Prominent leaders of Indian origin have acted as bridges between India and their host nations, strengthening diplomatic ties.

The aforesaid sustained efforts of the Government of India have strengthened India's partnerships with its global diaspora, contributing to its national development and amplification of soft power globally. The active involvement of the Indian diaspora has significantly supported India's growth trajectory and continues to play an important role in the country's progress towards Viksit Bharat.
