

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-721
ANSWERED ON 05/02/2026

THREAT TO EMPLOYMENT OF INDIAN DRIVERS IN USA

#721. SHRI NEERAJ DANGI

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

- (a) whether Indian drivers have been adversely affected in terms of employment due to new visa or transport security regulations recently implemented by the United States;
- (b) whether Government has held any formal discussions or made any diplomatic intervention with the US administration on this matter to protect the employment of drivers;
- (c) the number of Indian nationals currently working as truck or heavy vehicle drivers there and the changes in their number during the last five years; and
- (d) the details of policy to address employment-related issues of Indian drivers there?

ANSWER

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

(a to d) There is no official data available on the number of Indian nationals working in the U.S. as truck or heavy vehicle drivers.

On 29 September 2025, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) issued an emergency interim final rule that changes how U.S. States issue and monitor non-domiciled Commercial Driver's Licenses (CDLs) and Commercial Learner's Permits (CLPs). The rule follows a nationwide audit that uncovered widespread noncompliance, weak oversight, and several fatal crashes involving drivers with invalid or expired CDLs. While the DOT emergency rule aimed to prevent fraud, a nationwide court stay was granted in November 2025, temporarily pausing some of these strict restrictions while legal challenges proceed. Despite the stay, many states have started to implement stricter checks.

Regulations relating to the issuance of visas and employment of foreign nationals in the United States fall within the sovereign jurisdiction of the Government of the United States.

The welfare of the Indian community in the United States is of the highest priority for the Government. Indian Mission/Posts in the United States provide consular assistance on priority to grievances and distress calls through 24x7 emergency helplines, walk-ins, emails, social media and the MADAD portal. The Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) is also utilised to assist Indian nationals in distress. The Ministry continues to engage U.S. authorities to underscore the importance of people-to-people ties and skilled mobility in the long-term interest of both countries.
