

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-2760
ANSWERED ON- 04/08/2023

SAFE RETURN OF INDIANS

2760. SHRI MARGANI BHARAT
SHRIMATI GODDETI MADHAVI
SHRIMATI CHINTA ANURADHA

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

- (a) the details of measures taken by the Government to ensure safe return of Indians stuck abroad during the last five years;
- (b) the details of rescue operations conducted in this respect, country-wise;
- (c) the challenges faced in this regard; and
- (d) the total number of Indians rescued in the past five years, country-wise and year-wise?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a & c) Indians living abroad got stuck in foreign countries during the last five years for various reasons such as COVID-19 induced flight restrictions and the situation in Afghanistan, Ukraine and Sudan.

Government accords highest priority to the safety, security and well-being of Indians abroad. Due to COVID-19, international air services were suspended, and special arrangements were put in place through air bubble and Vande Bharat Mission.

Government had launched Operation Devi Shakti in August 2021, Operation Ganga in February 2022 and Operation Kaveri in April 2023 to bring back Indians stranded in Afghanistan, Ukraine and Sudan, respectively. Due to war and conflicts, security and logistic including safe shelter, food for evacuees and internal transport became a challenge. Government had been able to successfully evacuate stranded Indians from these places.

(b & d) Government of India successfully facilitated travel of approximately 3.20 crore people (with 1.59 crore inbound and 1.61 crore outbound) under Vande Bharat Mission including Air Bubble arrangements from various countries in the world during May 2020 to March 2022. Total number of Indians evacuated under Operation Devi Shakti, Operation Ganga and Operation Kaveri are as follows:

Year	Country & Name of the Operation	Total number of people evacuated
2021	Afghanistan Operation Devi Shakti	669 (including 206 Afghans, which includes members of the Afghan Hindu/Sikh minority)
2022	Ukraine Operation Ganga	18,282
2023	Sudan Operation Kaveri	4,097 (including 136 foreign nationals)
