

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.2750  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 10.03.2021**

**BRINGING INDIANS BACK DURING COVID**

**2750. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN:**

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details regarding the action taken by the Government to provide facility to arrange the journey of Indians from abroad to mother land during lock down and COVID-19 pandemic;
- (b) whether Indians are stranded in various countries due to lack of flight services, if so, the details of action taken by the Government thereon;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to introduce new rehabilitation scheme for Indians returning to India from different countries,if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government proposes to provide free air tickets to poor Indians stranded in different countries, if so, the details of action taken thereon; and
- (e) whether the Government proposes to give exemption to the returnees to start self employment and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
[SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN]**

(a) to (e) Government of India commenced operations under the Vande Bharat Mission on May 7, 2020 to facilitate the return of stranded Indian nationals abroad in a phased manner. The Vande Bharat Mission is the largest and most complex exercise ever undertaken by the government for repatriation of its nationals stranded overseas. As of 1 March 2021, more than 45 lakh people have returned under the Vande Bharat Mission. Most stranded Indians with compelling reasons have returned to India and those still wishing to return to India can do so under the various Vande Bharat flights. Our Missions arrange for the welfare of Indian nationals, where required, including through Indian community associations. In some cases, arrangements were also made for flight tickets, boarding and lodging and emergency medical assistance.

The Government of India has launched an initiative SWADES (Skilled Workers Arrival Database for Employment Support) to conduct a skill mapping exercise of returning citizens under the Vande Bharat Mission for re-employment purposes through the creation of a database.

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