

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA  
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1031  
TO BE ANSWERED ON 03.12.2021**

**FLIGHT OPERATIONS TO AFGHANISTAN**

**1031. SHRI HIBI EDEN:**

Will the Minister of **External Affairs** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government had conducted flights from Afghanistan to India during the period of internal disturbances, free of cost, if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the existing flights from Afghanistan to India are with any concession for the safety and security of Indian nationals and if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;
- (c) whether the Government has received number of petitions from Indian citizens residing in Afghanistan, if so, the details including the number of petitions received; and
- (d) whether the Government is in constant touch with the representatives of Afghan Sikh and Hindu communities, if so, the details of the community-wise outreach in Afghanistan?

ANSWER

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

(a) to (d) The Government of India operated several special Indian Air Force and Air India flights under the "Operation Devi Shakti" to evacuate stranded Indian and Afghan nationals from Afghanistan, from 16 to 25 August 2021.

In view of the rapid deterioration in the security situation in Afghanistan, especially after 15 August 2021, a 24 x 7 Special Afghanistan Cell was set up in the Ministry of External Affairs to facilitate repatriation and other requests from Afghanistan. In the month of August alone, the Special Afghanistan Cell responded to 3,436 telephone calls, 9,581 Whatsapp messages and 4,569 emails. As a result, a total of 565 stranded people were evacuated under the "Operation Devi Shakti". A few Indians, who had contacted the Special Afghanistan Cell and desired to be evacuated, still remain stranded. The Special Afghanistan Cell is in touch with these Indians as well as the members of the Afghan Hindu-Sikh minority community.

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