

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-3646
ANSWERED ON- 21/03/2025

ARRIVAL OF DEPORTEES AT AMRITSAR AIRPORT

3646. SMT. HARSIMRAT KAUR BADAL

SHRI SELVAGANAPATHI T.M.

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

(a) whether the US has sought prior permission to land their military planes on our land for deporting Indian citizens, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the details of the reasons and basis for choosing Amritsar as the landing site for deportation flights, despite deportees belonging to multiple States;

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure fair representation of all affected States in media coverage to prevent the defamation of Punjab;

(d) whether the Government is considering a more equitable distribution of deportation arrivals across States in the country in view of the fact that illegal migration is a national issue; and

(e) whether the Ministry has raised any concerns with the US regarding the treatment of Indian deportees, particularly their deportation in handcuffs and chains, if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a to e) US aircraft ferrying deportees have landed in India after securing necessary permissions.

The landing site for any repatriation flight carrying deportees is decided based on operational convenience, the specific route for entry into Indian air space, and particularly, proximity to final destinations of the arriving deportees.

From January 2025 till date, a total of 388 deportees arrived in India from U.S. Of these, a total of 333 Indian nationals arrived in Amritsar from the U.S. on three deportation flights that landed on 5th, 15th and 16th February 2025 respectively. State/UT-wise distribution of the 333 deportees is placed below:

State/UT-wise	Feb 5	Feb 15	Feb 16	Total
Punjab	30	65	31	126 (38%)
Haryana	33	33	44	110 (33%)
Gujarat	33	8	33	74 (22%)
Uttar Pradesh	3	3	2	8 (2%)
Maharashtra	3	2	0	5 (1.5%)
Chandigarh	2	0	0	2 (0.6%)
Goa	0	2	0	2 (0.6%)
Rajasthan	0	2	0	2 (0.6%)
Himachal Pradesh	0	1	1	2 (0.6%)
Jammu & Kashmir	0	1	0	1 (0.3%)
Uttarakhand	0	0	1	1 (0.3%)
Total	104	117	112	333

Separately, 55 Indian deportees arrived in New Delhi from the U.S. via Panama on commercial flights. State/UT-wise distribution is placed below:

State/UT	Feb 20	Feb 23	Feb 27	Feb 28	Mar 2	Total
Punjab	0	4	8	6	9	27 (49%)
Haryana	2	5	3	3	9	22 (40%)
Uttar Pradesh	0	3	0	0	0	3 (5%)
Gujarat	0	0	0	0	2	2 (4%)
Rajasthan	0	0	0	0	1	1(2%)
Total	2	12	11	9	21	55

The Government of India remains engaged with the U.S. side regarding the need for humane treatment of Indian nationals during deportation operations. The Ministry strongly registered its concerns with the U.S. authorities on the treatment meted out to deportees on the flight that landed on February 5th, particularly with respect to use of shackles, especially on women. The U.S. Standard Operating Procedure to organize and execute deportations effective from November 2012 calls for the use of restraints on deportees. The U.S. authorities have conveyed that restraints are applied to ensure the safety and security of the mission. While women and minors are generally not shackled, the flight officer in charge of a deportation flight has the final say on the matter. The U.S. side has confirmed

that no women or children were restrained on the deportation flights that landed in India on February 15th and 16th respectively. This has also been confirmed and recorded by our agencies after interviewing the deportees on their arrival in India.
