

Bringing back of Indians from Arab countries

†1200. SHRI NARAYAN LAL PANCHARIYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of countries with whom Government has made arrangements to bring back the Indian citizens, details thereof; and

(b) whether the Indian citizens living in Arab countries also want to return to India and are seeking help from the Government for the same and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): (a) Government of India enters into any arrangement for evacuation when there are such exigencies. It takes place when there are war like situations, disruption of State activities or threat to life of Indian citizens. There are no permanent arrangement/agreement to evacuate Indian citizens from abroad, though situation is always kept under observation.

(b) In view of volatile situation in West Asia and North Africa in recent past, the Government has evacuated Indian citizens from Iraq, Libya, Yemen and South Sudan. These all evacuations were warranted because of internal strife and war where law and order had broken down and Indian citizens faced threat to their lives.

There are 22 States which are members of League of Arab States and constitute the Arab countries in the world. So far, evacuation from three Arab countries namely, Iraq, Libya and Yemen was carried out. There are no indications that Indian citizens living in other 19 Arab countries are seeking help for evacuation as political conditions there remain normal and there are opportunities for Indian nationals to earn their livelihood and the State is able to exercise normal law and order function providing security to its citizens and guest workers like Indians living there.

Indians charged with visa fraud

1201. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether recently fourteen people of Indian origin are among nineteen people charged with involvement in visa fraud through fake green card marriages or by falsely making claims of being crime victims in US; and

(b) the details of the reaction by our Government?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): (a) According to a press release issued by the US Attorney's Office, Southern District of Mississippi, on 19 May 2016, the US authorities have charged 19 persons, including 14 Indian nationals, for submitting fraudulent claims to the US Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) for the purpose of obtaining long-term visas. These persons made fraudulent claims to seek U-visa, which is given to the victims of certain crimes, or by entering into marriages with US citizens solely for the purpose of obtaining immigration status that they would otherwise not be entitled to.

(b) This case is currently *sub-judice*. The Government has constantly emphasized to the US Government on all such matters that due process must be followed and there should be no harassment and injustice.

Fake passport rackets in Delhi

1202. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether fake passport racket is flourishing in Delhi and other States; and

(b) if so, the details of the steps taken to curb the racket?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. J. AKBAR): (a) and (b) Very few cases of fake passports have come to the notice of the Ministry. The involvement of any racket, however, has not been identified in the recent past.

Launching of earth observation satellite

1203. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state whether Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched earth observation satellite, if so, the details thereof, and the objectives thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): Yes, Sir. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully launched an earth observation satellite namely CARTOSAT-2 series satellite on board Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle 'PSLV-C34' on June 22, 2016 from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. The CARTOSAT-2 series of satellite, weighing 727 kg, is placed in a sun synchronous orbit with a designed mission life of 5 years. The main objective of this satellite is to provide high resolution images of earth's surface at sub-meter resolution (Black and White image) and at 2 meter resolution (4-band coloured image).