

(c) whether the Government is soliciting services of Buddhist monks to develop bond with India; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to attract students from the countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) Buddhism is practiced in many parts of the world including Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Lao PDR, Cambodia, Vietnam, China, Mongolia, Japan and Republic of Korea. India has long standing historical ties with these countries.

The Government will continue to engage proactively with these countries through high level visits, development partnerships, cultural cooperation and people-to-people contacts. The number of citizens/tourists from these countries visiting Buddhist holy places in India has been growing rapidly over the years. India is partnering in conservation and preservation of important archaeological, religious and cultural heritage monuments/sites in many of these countries.

(b) Indian Cultural Centres have been established in most of the above mentioned countries. Chair of Indian Studies have also been set in several universities of many of these countries.

(c) Conferences and seminars on Buddhist themes organised in India have been attended in large numbers by scholars, monks and Indologists from these countries. The six International Buddhist Enclaves organised so far in India have witnessed large participation from these countries.

(d) Government of India offers scholarships to students from these countries to study in various educational institutions in India, including courses in Buddhist history and literature.

Database of Indian working abroad

3696. DR. SASIKALA PUSHPA RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has made a comprehensive data base of Indians working abroad to solve various problems that are being faced by them while working in foreign countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) to (c) The data of Indian nationals holding Emigration Check Required (ECR) category passports and emigrating for employment purpose to any notified ECR country is captured in the e-Migrate system that provides the Government a comprehensive and online database of Emigrant workers, Missions, Recruiting Agents, Foreign Employers, and Insurance Agencies. e-Migrate is aimed at making the emigration process faster, transparent and allows online authentication/verification of credentials of all stakeholders. In addition, the data in e-Migrate also includes those persons going for employment under Emigration Check Not Required (ECNR) category if they voluntarily register in the system. The numbers of such persons as per e-Migrate for the last three years are given in Statement (*See* below).

Currently, except for Emigration Check Required (ECR) passport holders going for employment to ECR countries, ECNR passport holders seeking employment or ECR passport holders going to non-ECR countries are not required to mandatorily register with the e-Migrate system. Further, it is advisable but not mandatory for Indians working abroad to register themselves with the concerned Indian Mission.

Statement

Number of Emigration Clearances granted to ECR passport holding Indian workers, country-wise, during the last three years

Sl. No.	Name of Countries	2016	2017	2018
1.	Afghanistan	0	0	0
2.	Bahrain	11964	11516	9142
3.	Indonesia	01	10	10
4.	Iraq	0	0	0
5.	Jordan	2742	2341	1941
6.	Kuwait	72384	56380	57613
7.	Lebanon	316	110	109
8.	Libya	0	0	0
9.	Malaysia	10604	14002	16370

Sl. No.	Name of Countries	2016	2017	2018
10.	Oman	63236	53332	36037
11.	Qatar	30619	24759	34471
12.	S. Arabia	165355	78611	72399
13.	Sudan	0	1	0
14.	South Sudan	0	0	0
15.	Syria	0	0	0
16.	Thailand	01	0	6
17.	U. A. E.	163716	149962	112059
18.	Yemen	0	0	0
TOTAL		520938	391024	340157

Source: e-Migrate portal.

Cap on H-1B work visa

3697. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received any communication from US Administration regarding the cap on H-1B work visa to Indian citizens;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of action taken by Government to safeguard the interests of Indian Citizens working in the US; and

(d) the number of people who are likely to be affected by this move?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) and (b) No.

(c) and (d) Government of India has closely consulted all stakeholders and engaged with the U.S. Administration and Congress on issues related to the movement of Indian professionals, including those pertaining to the H-1B programme. In our engagements, we have emphasized that this has been a mutually-beneficial partnership