

- (b) if so, the response of Government;
- (c) whether it would affect the movement of Indian professionals to the US for assignments;
- (d) whether Indian software companies which have units in the US have represented for exemption of the order to Indian professionals and specialists going to the US; and
- (e) if so, whether Government took up the matter with the US administration for the exemption so that the business is not affected?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) On 22 June 2020, President Trump issued a proclamation, temporarily suspending entry of certain category of non-immigrant visa holders and their families till 31 December, 2020.

(b) Government of India closely consulted all stakeholders and engaged with the U.S. Administration and Congress on issues related to movement of Indian professionals, including those pertaining to the H-1B programme. These issues were also raised during the India-U.S. Foreign Office Consultations held virtually on 7 July 2020. We have emphasized that this is a mutually-beneficial partnership which should be nurtured by easing mobility of skilled professionals.

(c) This may temporarily affect movement of Indian skilled professionals who avail of non-immigrant visa programmes of the U.S.

(d) and (e) Yes. On 12 August 2020, the U.S. Department of State issued a list of exceptions to the temporary suspension of non-immigrant visas including H-1B and L-1 categories based on national interest. The exceptions have been expanded to include IT workers as essential workers which was a key demand of Indian IT industry.

#### **Steps to bring workers and students back from abroad**

†569. CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV:

SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:

SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the steps taken to bring back workers who have become unemployed and students from foreign countries due to lockdown in the corona period;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) the countries from where workers along with students have been brought back to India;

(c) the details of the facilities being given to the workers brought back to the country; and

(d) whether it is a fact that Government took delayed steps to bring back a huge number of workers to India who were stuck in various countries of Saudi region during lockdown?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) The Vande Bharat Mission commenced on 7 May 2020 in order to facilitate return of Indian nationals stranded in various countries due to restriction imposed in view of Covid-19 pandemic. These operations involved non-scheduled commercial flights by Air India, charter flights, ships of the Indian Navy in Op Samudra Setu and land border crossings. Since then, more than 13,74,237 Indians (as on 10 September 2020) have returned to India.

(b) The requested details are given in the Statement (*See* below), as per data shared by the passengers with our Missions.

(c) With the aim of making the best of our skilled workforce returning to the country due to the ongoing pandemic, the Government of India launched an initiative SWADES (Skilled Workers Arrival Database for Employment Support) to conduct a skill mapping exercise of the returning citizens under the Vande Bharat Mission. SWADES, a joint initiative of the Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship, the Ministry of Civil Aviation and the Ministry of External Affairs, aimed to create a database of qualified citizens based on their skill sets and experience to tap into and fulfill demand of Indian and foreign companies. This was done to facilitate reintegration of migrant workers into the labour market and promote effective employment opportunities. For facilitating employment opportunities, details of SWADES registrations have been integrated with Skill India's ASEEM (Aatmanirbhar Skilled Employee Employer Mapping) portal which was launched on 10 July 2020. Further, all data regarding Indians returning under Vande Bharat Mission was also shared with relevant State Governments, on a real time basis.

(d) There was no delay in bringing back workers who were stuck in various countries in the Gulf region. In fact, priority has been given to countries in the Gulf region for scheduling flights to bring back the stranded workers under the Vande Bharat Mission.

***Statement****Details of workers and students brought back to India*

| Country           | Student | Workers |
|-------------------|---------|---------|
| Afghanistan       | 0       | 0       |
| Algeria           | 0       | 584     |
| Anguilla          | 0       | 193     |
| Argentina         | 2       | 0       |
| Armenia           | 516     | 12      |
| Australia         | 1005    | 405     |
| Bahrain           | 1342    | 14920   |
| Bangladesh        | 939     | 1517    |
| Barbados          | 0       | 0       |
| Belarus           | 191     | 1       |
| Belgium           | 21      | 32      |
| Benin             | 4       | 83      |
| Botswana          | 1       | 60      |
| Brazil            | 29      | 19      |
| Brunei Darussalam | 0       | 88      |
| Bulgaria          | 239     | 6       |
| Burundi           | 0       | 0       |
| Cambodia          | 1       | 99      |
| Cameroon          | 3       | 37      |
| Canada            | 1698    | 951     |
| Chad              | 0       | 5       |
| Chile             | 1       | 6       |
| China             | 181     | 184     |

| Country                      | Student | Workers |
|------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Colombia                     | 3       | 1       |
| Republic of Congo            | 6       | 372     |
| Cote d'Ivoire                | 14      | 270     |
| Cyprus                       | 79      | 24      |
| Czech Republic               | 1       | 0       |
| Democratic Republic of Congo | 2       | 365     |
| Denmark                      | 1       | 1       |
| Djibouti                     | 0       | 11      |
| Egypt                        | 7       | 92      |
| Eritrea                      | 0       | 29      |
| Ethiopia                     | 2       | 139     |
| Fiji                         | 1       | 9       |
| Finland                      | 38      | 8       |
| France                       | 1229    | 613     |
| Georgia                      | 493     | 9       |
| Germany                      | 481     | 328     |
| Ghana                        | 5       | 339     |
| Guatemala                    | 0       | 0       |
| Guinea                       | 0       | 0       |
| Hungary                      | 0       | 0       |
| Indonesia                    | 78      | 517     |
| Iran                         | 160     | 156     |
| Iraq                         | 1       | 3960    |
| Ireland                      | 101     | 4       |
| Israel                       | 24      | 73      |

| Country                   | Student | Workers |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Italy                     | 240     | 565     |
| Jamaica                   | 16      | 266     |
| Japan                     | 72      | 125     |
| Jordan                    | 8       | 212     |
| Kazakhstan                | 1874    | 584     |
| Kenya                     | 18      | 78      |
| Korea Republic of (South) | 10      | 1       |
| Kuwait                    | 847     | 44248   |
| Kyrgyzstan                | 5917    | 28      |
| Lebanon                   | 1       | 503     |
| Madagascar                | 0       | 79      |
| Malawi                    | 8       | 53      |
| Malaysia                  | 652     | 149     |
| Maldives                  | 69      | 4584    |
| Malta                     | 25      | 57      |
| Mauritania                | 0       | 139     |
| Mauritius                 | 42      | 246     |
| Mexico                    | 50      | 8       |
| Morocco                   | 0       | 8       |
| Mozambique                | 0       | 131     |
| Myanmar                   | 0       | 5       |
| Nepal                     | 13      | 3       |
| Netherlands               | 226     | 78      |
| New Zealand               | 61      | 205     |
| Nigeria                   | 188     | 2207    |

| Country          | Student | Workers |
|------------------|---------|---------|
| Norway           | 5       | 243     |
| Oman             | 2409    | 50536   |
| Papua New Guinea | 0       | 0       |
| Philippines      | 3168    | 204     |
| Poland           | 1       | 119     |
| Portugal         | 19      | 24      |
| Qatar            | 442     | 30509   |
| Russia           | 7551    | 262     |
| Rwanda           | 0       | 0       |
| Saudi Arabia     | 823     | 49000   |
| Senegal          | 4       | 84      |
| Seychelles       | 3       | 215     |
| Sierra Leone     | 6       | 188     |
| Singapore        | 1628    | 5043    |
| Somalia          | 2       | 52      |
| South Africa     | 101     | 261     |
| South Korea      | 9       | 5       |
| South Sudan      | 0       | 2       |
| Spain            | 120     | 5       |
| Sri Lanka        | 32      | 1268    |
| Sudan            | 1       | 105     |
| Suriname         | 0       | 0       |
| Sweden           | 148     | 122     |
| Switzerland      | 2       | 0       |
| Tajikistan       | 956     | 18      |

| Country             | Student      | Workers       |
|---------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Tanzania            | 44           | 167           |
| Thailand            | 99           | 39            |
| Togo                | 0            | 18            |
| Trinidad and Tobago | 0            | 1             |
| Tunisia             | 3            | 1             |
| Turkey              | 20           | 34            |
| UAE                 | 3867         | 84497         |
| Uganda              | 53           | 247           |
| Ukraine             | 6941         | 41            |
| United Kingdom      | 4099         | 1098          |
| USA                 | 4743         | 2390          |
| Uzbekistan          | 75           | 82            |
| Venezuela           | 0            | 0             |
| Vietnam             | 20           | 135           |
| Zambia              | 0            | 0             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        | <b>56630</b> | <b>308099</b> |

#### **Repatriation of Indian citizens under Vande Bharat Mission**

570. SHRI K.K. RAGESH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise details of people who were repatriated under Vande Bharat Mission; and

(b) the nation-wise number of Indian citizens who are registered and waiting to avail repatriation through Vande Bharat Mission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) As on 13 September 2020, the State-wise details of