

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO. 155
ANSWERED ON 13.03.2025

DEPORTATION OF INDIAN CITIZENS FROM UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

*155. SHRI ABDUL WAHAB:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that many Indian citizens who have been living in United States of America have been deported by the current US administration;
- (b) whether it is also a fact that many of Indian citizens have been hand cuffed, chained and humiliated during their long journey back to India;
- (c) the details of the people who have now been deported and the number of people who are expected to deport in the future and their domicile State in India;
- (d) whether this issue has been discussed with US administration recently; and
- (e) if so, the details therefor?

ANSWER

MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (E) IN RESPECT OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 155 FOR REPLY ON 13.03.2025 REGARDING DEPORTATION OF INDIAN CITIZENS FROM UNITED STATES OF AMERICA ASKED BY SHRI ABDUL WAHAB.

Foreign nationals who have entered the U.S. illegally, or who have overstayed their visa validity, or found to be staying in the U.S. without any valid documentation, or have criminal convictions against them are likely to be deported.

It is the obligation of all countries to take back their nationals, if they are found to be living illegally abroad. This is however subject to an unambiguous verification of their nationality. This is not a policy practiced only by India; it is a generally accepted principle in international relations.

The U.S. has been carrying out deportation operations for several years now. From 2009 to 2024, a total of 15,564 Indian nationals have been deported by the U.S. through chartered and commercial flights.

It may be noted that in the past, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) vertical carried out deportations of individuals through chartered or commercial flights after completion of the judicial process for issuance of removal orders in the US. During this time, the deportees are either kept under detention or are released within the territory of the United States. In addition, Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Protection (CBP) vertical has been carrying out deportation operations since January 2025 as part of the larger "National Security initiative" led by the White House – National Security Council (NSC) of USA.

From January 2025 till date, a total of 388 Indian nationals have been deported to India from the United States. Of these, 333 Indian nationals, after verification, were deported to India directly from the United States. Separately, the U.S. deported 55 Indian nationals through Panama.

The breakup of the 333 deportees (state-wise) who arrived in India in three separate flights is placed below:

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

Separately, the U.S. side also deported 55 Indian nationals through Panama. The travel of these deportees to India on commercial flights was facilitated by Panama with the assistance of the International Organization of Migration (IOM). Panama is undertaking this deportation on behalf of

the United States under a bilateral arrangement. The details of the Indian citizens (state-wise) who returned from the U.S. via Panama are as follows:

| State/UT-wise | Feb 20 | Feb 23 | Feb 27 | Feb 28 | Mar 2 | Total |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|-------|
| Punjab | 0 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 27 |
| Haryana | 2 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 22 |
| Uttar Pradesh | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 |
| Gujarat | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Rajasthan | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Total | 2 | 12 | 11 | 9 | 21 | 55 |

The US ICE authorities have recently shared with us information pertaining to 295 individuals who are detained in their custody with final orders of removal from USA. The Ministry, along with other concerned agencies, is currently verifying details for these 295 individuals.

The Ministry of External Affairs remains engaged with the US side regarding humane treatment of deportees during such operations. The Ministry has 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. side has mentioned that restraints are applied to ensure the safety and security of the mission and are used on both chartered aircraft as well as military aircraft. 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 been confirmed and recorded by our agencies after interviewing the deportees on their arrival in India.

The need to promote safe, orderly and legal migration while cracking down on illegal immigration networks was discussed during the recent visit of Prime Minister to the US on 12-13 February 2025. India's consistent stance against illegal immigration while seeking humane treatment of deportees was reiterated. Both sides acknowledged the need to cooperate closely in aggressively addressing illegal immigration and human trafficking by taking strong action against bad actors, criminal facilitators, and illegal immigration networks.
