

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 2153

ANSWERED ON – 01/08/2025

WELFARE OF TAMIL DIASPORA

2153. SHRI THARANIVENTHAN M S

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the steps taken by the Government to safeguard the interests and welfare of the Tamil diaspora living in countries such as Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and the Middle East;**
- (b) whether the Ministry consults or coordinates with the Government of Tamil Nadu on matters affecting the Tamil diaspora or cultural exchanges abroad, if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) the initiatives taken to promote trade, investment and cultural ties between Tamil Nadu and foreign countries, particularly in sectors like textiles, IT and manufacturing;**
- (d) the measures adopted to address concerns related to the repatriation of Tamil workers facing distress abroad; and**

(e) whether the Government plans to establish a dedicated Tamil diaspora cell within the Ministry to better address the specific needs and issues of Tamils overseas?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) Safeguarding the interest and welfare of Indian diaspora living overseas is a top priority for the Government of India. The Government has a robust policy framework to engage with the vast Indian diaspora spread across the globe and protect their interests and welfare, irrespective of the Indian state that they hail from.

Government of India closely monitors developments affecting the Tamil diaspora, particularly in regions with high concentration of Tamil diaspora, such as Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and West Asia, and responds to their welfare concerns through Indian Embassies and Consulates.

Consular assistance, particularly to address legal, labour, and immigration issues, is extended to affected persons on a priority basis.

Indian Embassies and Consulates in these countries also closely coordinate with local authorities and the Tamil community associations to address the specific grievances of the Tamil diaspora.

(b) The Government of India coordinates with all State Governments of India on matters pertaining to its Diaspora engagement policies across the globe. It regularly conducts Videsh Sampark Programme (VSP) with the State Governments of India and regularly engages with them to promote Cooperative Federalism. Such interactions enable the Government of India to consult and coordinate with the State governments to promote safety and welfare of the Indian diaspora. Requests received from State Governments, including that from Tamil Nadu, are examined and acted upon in coordination with the concerned Indian Embassies and Consulates abroad.

(c) During the interactions of the Government of India with the State Governments under the VSP, several trade and investment opportunities for commercial enterprises from the State in foreign lands are presented. Moreover, Indian Embassies and Consulates abroad assist the State Governments, including that of Tamil Nadu, to organize special events to promote trade, investment and cultural ties between the Indian states and the respective foreign countries. This Ministry also supports visits of business and official delegations from Indian States, B2B meetings in foreign countries, cultural events, and Investor Summits, particularly in focus sectors such as Textiles, IT, and Manufacturing.

(d) Government of India has established institutional mechanisms to assist Indians in distress in foreign countries. Indian Missions and Posts pro-actively help distressed/stranded Indians by providing food, shelter, medicine and evacuation to India, if necessary, irrespective of the State to which they belong. Operation Devi Shakti, Operation Ganga, Operation Kaveri, Operation Ajay and Operation Sindhu are some of the operations launched during recent years through which Government of India evacuated Indian nationals stranded in Afghanistan, Ukraine, Sudan, Israel and Iran, respectively.

(e) While this Ministry has not established State/region specific Diaspora Cell, matters concerning the Indian diaspora are promptly addressed through its concerned Divisions and Embassies/Consulates. This Ministry has also deployed dedicated and well-trained Community Welfare Officers in Indian Embassies and Consulates in countries with high concentration of Indian diaspora to handle issues concerning the diaspora while factoring in their linguistic and cultural sensitivities.
