

**11**

**COMMITTEE  
ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
(2025-26)**

**EIGHTEENTH LOK SABHA**

**MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee on the subject 'Indian Diaspora Overseas including NRIs, PIOs, OCIs and Migrant Workers: All Aspects of their Conditions and Welfare, including the Status of the Emigration Bill'

**ELEVENTH REPORT**



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI**

*DECEMBER, 2025 /Agrahayana, 1947 (Saka)*



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*Presented to Lok Sabha on 18 December, 2025*  
*Laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 18 December, 2025*



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT**  
**NEW DELHI**

***DECEMBER, 2025 /Agrahayana, 1945 (Saka)***

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## COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (2025-26)

**Dr. Shashi Tharoor, Chairperson**

### **Lok Sabha**

2. Smt. D. K. Aruna
3. Shri Vijay Baghel
4. Shri Mitesh Patel Bakabhai
5. Shri Abhishek Banerjee
6. Shri Arun Govil
7. Shri Deepender Singh Hooda
8. Shri Naveen Jindal
9. Shri Navaskani K.
10. Shri Brijendra Singh Ola
11. Shri Asaduddin Owaisi
12. Shri Sanatan Pandey
13. Dr. Pradeep Kumar Panigrahy
14. Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad
15. Shri Y. S. Avinash Reddy
16. Smt. Aparajita Sarangi
17. Shri Arvind Ganpat Sawant
18. Ms. Praniti Sushilkumar Shinde
19. Ms. Bansuri Swaraj
20. Shri Akshay Yadav
21. Vacant

### **Rajya Sabha**

22. Shri Ayodhya Rami Reddy Alla
23. Dr. John Brittas
24. Shri Raghav Chadha
25. Smt. Sagarika Ghose
26. Dr. K. Laxman
27. Shri Satnam Singh Sandhu
28. Shri Rajeev Shukla
29. Shri A. D. Singh
30. Shri Ratanjit Pratap Narain Singh
31. Dr. Sudhanshu Trivedi

## INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Committee on External Affairs (2025-26) having been authorized by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Eleventh Report (18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) on action taken by the Government on the Observations /Recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee on External Affairs (18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) on the subject "Indian Diaspora Overseas including NRIs, PIOs, OCIs and Migrant Workers: All Aspects of their Conditions and Welfare, including the status of the Emigration Bill'

2. The Sixth Report was presented to the Lok Sabha and laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha on 01 April, 2025. The Action Taken Replies of the Government on all the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Report were received on 01 July, 2025 (English version) and 11<sup>th</sup> July, 2025 (Hindi version).

3. The Committee considered and adopted this Action Taken Report at their Sitting held on 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2025. The Minutes of the Sitting of the Committee have been given at Appendix-I to the Report.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee on External Affairs is given at Appendix-II.

**NEW DELHI**  
**16 December, 2025**  
**25 Agrahayana, 1947 (Saka)**

**Dr. Shashi Tharoor,**  
**Chairperson,**  
**Committee on External Affairs**

## CHAPTER-I

This Report of the Committee on External Affairs (2024-25) deal with the action taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in their Sixth Report on the subject 'Indian Diaspora Overseas including NRIs, PIOs, OCIs and Migrant Workers: All Aspects of their Conditions and Welfare, including the status of the Emigration Bill' which was presented to the Lok Sabha and laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha on 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2025.

2. The Action Taken Notes have been received from the Ministry of External Affairs on all the 72 observations/recommendations contained in the Report. These have been categorized as follows:

**(i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government:**

Recommendation Nos. 1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 39, 42, 44, 45, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67, 68, 69, 71 and 72.

**Total- 46**

**Chapter-II**

**(ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies:**

Nil

**Total- 0**

**Chapter-III**

**(iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and require reiteration:**

Recommendation Nos. 8, 10, 28, 35, 37, 38, 40, 43, 46, 47, and 65

**Total- 11**

**Chapter-IV**

**(iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited: -**

Recommendation Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 17, 18, 19, 20, 41, 50, 54 and 70

**Total- 15**

**Chapter-V**

3. **The Committee desire that the final replies to the comments contained in Chapter-I and observations/recommendations contained in Chapter-V of this Report may be furnished to the Committee within three months of the presentation of this Report.**

4. The Committee will now deal with the action taken by the Government on some of their observations/recommendations that require reiteration or merit comments.

**Comprehensive Labour Market Information Database**

**(Recommendation No.8)**

5. The Committee in their report had observed/recommended as under:

“To facilitate future migration, the Committee desire that a comprehensive Labour Market Information (LMI) database for the Indian Diaspora should be developed. This database must include, but not be limited to, real-time data on employment trends, wage patterns, occupational sectors, skill mismatches and remittance flow among NRIs, PIOs and OCIs. Such data would not only improve migration management but also help migrants make informed decisions, matching their skills with available opportunities abroad. Strengthening such data collection and sharing mechanisms for the same is also essential for ensuring efficient and transparent migration governance.

6. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The Ministry maintains data in respect of Indian workers, holding Emigration Check Required (ECR) passports, proceeding for employment overseas through e-Migrate portal to any of the 18 notified ECR countries. The database is quite comprehensive and provides,

inter alia, gender-wise, destination country-wise, job category-wise and state-wise data of Indian workers migrating with Emigration Clearances (Ecs).

The Ministry intends to expand the scope of e-Migrate portal and include the recruitment of workers to ECNR countries through e-Migrate portal as well. In its recent interactions with some of the ECNR countries, such as Japan, Portugal, Russia, and Fiji, the Ministry has been highlighting the benefits of safe, legal and orderly recruitment of Indian workers through e-Migrate portal. The recruitment of workers to ECNR countries through e-Migrate portal would help in generating reliable and real-time data on workers, including employment trends, wage patterns, occupational sectors, and skilling needs. The LMI data sets can also be customised to cater to the needs of ECNR countries.

Further, a new emigration bill replacing the Emigration Act, 1983, is being worked upon. A comprehensive and over-arching framework is being proposed through the upcoming bill which would incorporate current as well as futuristic aspects to effectively meet the modern day challenges in the emigration sphere.

**7. With regard to the recommendation of the Committee for development of a comprehensive Labour Market Information database of Indian Diaspora, the Committee note from the Action Taken Reply that the Ministry is maintaining comprehensive data in respect of Indian workers proceeding for employment overseas through e-Migrate portal to any of the 18 notified Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries. The database is quite comprehensive and provides, inter alia, gender-wise, destination country-wise, job category-wise and state-wise data of Indian workers migrating with Emigration Clearances (ECs). The Committee also note that the Ministry intends to expand the scope of e-Migrate portal and include recruitment of workers to Emigration Check Not Required (ECNR) countries as well. This would help in generating reliable and real-time data on workers, including employment trends, wage patterns, occupational sectors, and skilling needs. The Committee also note from the reply that a comprehensive and over-arching framework is**

being proposed through the upcoming Emigration Bill which would incorporate current as well as futuristic aspects to effectively meet the modern-day challenges in the emigration sphere. The Committee are of the view that development of a Labour Market Information database of Indian Diaspora would not only improve migration management but help migrants in taking informed decisions about various opportunities available abroad matching their skills. In essence, a comprehensive LMI database will act as a bridge between the Indian diaspora and the global labor market, facilitating better employment outcomes, economic empowerment, and contributing to the overall development of both the Diaspora and the country. Since a comprehensive LMI database as desired by the Committee is yet to be developed, the Committee once again reiterate their earlier recommendation that Labour Market Information database of Indian Diaspora including, but not to be limited to, real-time data on employment trends, wage patterns, occupational sectors, skill mismatches and remittance flow among NRIs, PIOs and OCIs may be developed. The Committee are also hopeful that the new Emigration Bill would provide for comprehensive and modern framework for building a robust, real-time Labour Market Information database.

**Policy of 'Care, Connect, Celebrate and Contribute'**

**(Recommendation No. 10)**

8. The Committee in their report had observed/recommended as under:

The Committee observe that India's Diaspora policy framework is centered around the four 'C's' namely Care, Connect, Celebrate and Contribute. The Committee note that the shift in the Diaspora policy was brought about with the merger of the Ministry of Overseas Indian

Affairs and the Ministry of External Affairs in January 2016. While acknowledging that the 4Cs uphold the welfare and protection of our Diaspora, connect them to their roots, and celebrate their achievements, the Committee feel that India's Diaspora policy is still at nascent stage. Much needs to be done to tap into the potential of Indians living abroad and policy document on its Diaspora needs to be drafted by the Government. The Committee do not agree with the Ministry's perception that the diversity of Indian Diaspora does not permit formulation of a single, tight and unique policy. The Committee are of the considered view that lack of a dedicated Diaspora policy document hinders our ability to fully leverage the potential of the large overseas Indian community, impacting economic growth, foreign relations, knowledge transfer, and overall national development by limiting engagement with skilled professionals and investors living abroad, while also failing to adequately address the concerns and needs of the Diaspora population. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry bring out a policy document on Indian Diaspora in tune with their aspirations to serve as a guiding principle for deeper and wider engagement with the Diaspora community.

9. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

"The Government of India's approach to engaging with the Indian Diaspora is focussed on the four foundational pillars: Care, Connect, Celebrate, and Contribute. These four 'C's form the core of a pragmatic, inclusive and dynamic Diaspora Engagement Policy, designed to protect the interests of Indians abroad while maximizing the mutual benefits of this global community's links with India. Since the merger of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in 2016, this integrated approach has led to more coherent, responsive, and effective outreach, which can be outlined as follows.

(I) Care for the Indian communities overseas: Safeguarding the Welfare of Our Diaspora

The "Care" pillar reflects the government's commitment to the protection and welfare of Indian citizens and persons of Indian origin abroad, especially the vulnerable and distressed.

Key schemes and mechanisms of the Government to promote the Pillar:

- i. Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) – Emergency support for distressed overseas Indians, including repatriation, shelter medical aid, legal assistance, and transfer of mortal remains.
- ii. One Stop Centers (OSC) – Centers in select Indian Embassies and Consulates to provide emergency shelter, police help, and medical and legal assistance to women in distress.
- iii. e-Migrate System – Ensures safe and transparent emigration processes, especially for ECR passport holders.

- iv. Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY) – A welfare scheme providing insurance coverage to Indian workers abroad to ensure their safety and support in cases of emergencies.
- v. MADAD Portal – Online platform for consular grievance redressal in a time bound manner.
- vi. Pre-Departure Orientation Programme (P-DOT) - One-day training programme on soft skills for migrant workers imparted by MEA in collaboration with National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), State Governments and other stake holders.
- vii. Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC) – Financial assistance for the children of Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) for pursuing undergraduate education at Indian universities and institutions.
- viii. Migration and Mobility Agreements – Partnership agreements with key countries to harness India’s demographic dividend and foster mobility for Indian students, academics, business people, and professionals.
- ix. Assistance in Marital & Child Custody Matters – Support for Indian women facing abandonment or abuse abroad.
- x. Support in NRI Property Disputes and Student Grievances – Coordination with law enforcement and educational institutions.

(II) Connect with the global network of Indian diaspora: Bridging Indians Worldwide with Their Roots

Under “Connect”, the focus is on forging deeper links between India and its global communities through institutional networks and cultural ties.

Key schemes and mechanisms of the Government to promote this Pillar:

- i. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) - A flagship event that provides a platform for engagement between the Government and the Diaspora.
- ii. Know India Programme (KIP) – Designed for diaspora youth to explore India’s history, heritage, and governance through firsthand experience
- iii. Global Pravasi Rishta Portal – A two-way digital portal to connect the Indian Diaspora with the Government of India for dissemination of important information and to foster a robust database of the Diaspora through voluntary registrations.
- iv. Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD) – Grants extended to Indian Embassies/Consulates for organizing cultural events abroad for promoting heritage and for encouraging the diaspora to stay connected to their cultural roots.
- v. Videsh Sampark Programme – Outreach to State governments to address the challenges faced by the Indian States to deal with diaspora related

issues and to suggest efforts to promote robust dialogue between the Indian States and their respective Diaspora.

- vi. Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojna (PTDY) – Offers an opportunity for the Indian diaspora to visit places of religious and cultural significance in India.
- vii. Bharat Ko Janiye (BKJ) Quiz – Quiz contest for diaspora youth to deepen their knowledge of India and organisation of exposure trips for the winners to India.
- viii. Social Media Outreach – Daily engagement campaigns like Diaspora India Connect on social media platforms

(III) Celebrate India's shared heritage with the wide network of global Indian diaspora: Honoring Shared Culture and Achievements of the Diaspora

“Celebrate” emphasizes the acknowledgement of India's rich heritage and the remarkable contributions of overseas Indians not only to their host countries, but also to the Indian community, society and economy.

Key schemes and mechanisms of the Government directed towards promoting this Pillar:

- i. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) – Biennial Convention with special sessions to recognize and discuss the contributions of the Indian diaspora in diverse domains.
- ii. Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards (PBSA) – India's highest honor for overseas Indians, awarded for their outstanding achievements in myriad fields.
- iii. Girmitiya Engagement – Research, outreach, and future establishment of Girmitiya Study and Research Center to connect with descendants of indentured Indians and celebrate their legacy.

(IV) Encourage Contributions of the Indian diaspora that drive positive change in India: Tapping Diaspora Potential for National Development

The “Contribute” pillar encourages the diaspora to participate in India's developmental journey by sharing their knowledge, skills, etc and through investments, and innovation.

Key schemes and mechanisms of the Government to promote this Pillar:

- i. Knowledge sharing initiatives such as VAJRA (Visiting Advanced Joint Research Faculty Scheme), PRABHASS (Pravasi Bharatiya Academic and Scientific Sampark) and Vaishvik Bharatiya Vaigyanik (VAIBHAV)

fellowships, to promote collaborations between global Indian scientists and researchers with Indian institutions.

- ii. Promotion of Start-up India, Digital India, and other key programmes that welcome diaspora-led innovations and investments.
- iii. Ministry also works closely with the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Commerce, RBI, and other relevant institutions to ensure seamless remittance channels for Indian diaspora, promotes Unified Payments Interface (UPI) linkages, disseminates updated information regarding tax laws, FEMA provisions, Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements, FDI norms, etc.

While this Ministry has a reasonably well-defined Diaspora Engagement Policy based on the aforesaid enumerated 4Cs and has devised effective strategies/schemes to promote the same, still it is the considered view and experience of this Ministry that the vast diversity of the Indian diaspora demands flexibility. So, although this Ministry takes note of the Committee's recommendation to create a tighter, codified Diaspora Policy, it would prefer to maintain that a "single, tight and unique policy document" on Indian diaspora may not be conducive to serve the growing and dynamic aspirations of the Indian diaspora spread across the globe because of the inherent diversity and complexity of the diaspora itself. Their needs, expectations, legal status, socio-economic contexts vary dramatically across regions, from the Silicon Valley to the Gulf region or the Giritiya countries. A central and rigid policy could also undermine or overlook state-level priorities, which are often more attuned to specific community needs. A dedicated Diaspora policy should also align with the laws of the host country, which differ across regions, and may have specific elements such as dual citizenship restrictions, data privacy laws, labour rights, etc.

The 4C-based Diaspora Policy of the Government functions as a comprehensive and dynamic mechanism to engage with the large and diverse Indian diaspora that encompasses addressing their welfare, cultural preservation, economic collaboration, and institutional dialogue. Going forward, efforts can focus on strengthening coordination, enhancing digital access, and expanding the scope of existing schemes, so that the 4Cs continue to be the most effective and inclusive pathway to fostering a vibrant, connected, and empowered Indian diaspora across the globe."

**10. The Committee had observed that India's Diaspora policy framework is centered around the four 'Cs' namely Care, Connect, Celebrate and Contribute, and at a nascent stage. The Committee, therefore, had desired that the Ministry bring out a policy document on Indian Diaspora in tune with their aspirations to serve as a guiding principle for deeper**

and wider engagement with the Diaspora community. In response, the Ministry while taking note of the recommendation of the Committee have submitted that the vast diversity of the Indian diaspora demands flexibility, and a “single, tight and unique policy document” on Indian diaspora may not be conducive to serve the growing and dynamic aspirations of the Indian diaspora spread across the globe. The Committee have also been informed that future efforts can focus on strengthening coordination, enhancing digital access, and expanding the scope of existing schemes, so that the 4Cs continue to be the most effective and inclusive pathway to fostering a vibrant, connected, and empowered Indian diaspora across the globe. The Committee note that the Ministry has designed various strategies/schemes to promote the 4Cs. While fully appreciating the view of the Ministry, the Committee are constrained to note that lack of a dedicated Diaspora policy document has hindered our ability to fully leverage the potential of the large overseas Indian community, while also failing to adequately address the concerns and needs of the Diaspora population. To address these issues, the Committee are of the view that the present India’s Diaspora policy framework which is centered around the four ‘Cs’ needs a review. The Committee, therefore, would like the Ministry to once again consider the earlier recommendation and draft for implementation of a specific policy document on the Indian Diaspora or take further necessary steps so as to leverage the potential of the large overseas Indian community, which will also adequately address the concerns.

**Prioritization of State-Run Recruitment Agencies**  
**(Recommendation No. 28)**

11. The Committee in their report had observed/recommended as under:

“The Committee find that in States like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, etc. there are Recruitment Agencies which have received license from the MEA and act as State recruitment agencies. As of now, there are 13 such State Recruitment Agencies in various States. In order to ensure safe and ethical recruitment practices, the Committee are of the opinion that the Government should prioritize such State-run recruitment agencies, which can even adhere to a zero-cost migration model, where employers bear the recruitment costs. They, therefore, desire that the Ministry to take it up with all high-emigration States to encourage them to have their own State-run Recruitment Agencies and replicate the best practices of the best performing States in this regard. In addition to working out ways and means to strengthen them, without prejudice to the rights of legitimate private recruitment agencies, the Government should also incorporate at least one State-run Agency into bilateral labour agreements to widen their scope and impact.

12. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee. The Ministry recognizes the role of the state-run recruiting agencies in facilitating overseas employment, often aligned with the zero-cost migration model. These agencies have played a vital role in reducing migrant vulnerability to exploitation and ensuring greater transparency in the recruitment process.

As of now there are 14 State-run Recruiting Agencies viz. (i) NORKA Roots & (ii) Overseas Development and Employment Promotion Consultants of Kerala (iii) Overseas Manpower Corporation Ltd. of Tamil Nadu (iv) Uttar Pradesh Financial Corporation of Uttar Pradesh (v) Overseas Manpower Company Andhra Pradesh Ltd. of Andhra Pradesh (vi) Telangana Overseas Manpower Company Ltd. of Telangana (vii) Rajasthan Skill & Livelihoods Development Corporation of Rajasthan (viii) Karnataka State Unorganized Workers Society Security Board of Karnataka (ix) Karnataka Vocational Training & Skill Development Corporation of Karnataka (x) M/s Pan IIT Alummi Reach for Jharkhand Foundation of Jharkhand (xi) Bihar State Overseas Placement Bureau of Bihar, (xii) World Skill Center, Odisha, (xiii) Punjab GharGhar Rozgar and Karobar Mission, Punjab and (xiv) Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam Limited, Haryana. The Ministry is engaged with high-emigration States to encourage the establishment of State-run Recruitment Agency where such mechanism is currently absent. With the active support of the Ministry the Haryana state has recently registered its state-run recruiting agency ‘Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam Limited’ with the Ministry.

In order to prioritize the state-run RAs and to protect female domestic workers from exploitation/harassment in the destination country, the Ministry has made the process of issuance of EC for female workers going for employment in the 18 notified ECR countries mandatory only through the above 14 State-run RAs.

The Ministry also organized a one-day Conclave with the representatives of the MEA registered State-run and private Recruiting Agents (RA) Associations on 11 March 2025, which was inaugurated by the Minister of State for External Affairs and Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh. The Conclave aimed at fostering stronger collaboration among key stakeholders involved in overseas recruitment including State-run recruiting agencies. The event served as a platform for open dialogue between recruiting agents, government officials, and other industry participants, with the objective of promoting ethical recruitment practices and enhancing transparency in the process. The conclave also highlighted best practices in overseas employment and addressed common challenges faced by recruiting agents. This initiative reflects the Ministry's continued commitment to ensuring safe, legal and seamless emigration for Indian workers seeking employment abroad.

The Ministry would assess the feasibility of including at least one State-run Recruitment Agency in future bilateral labour agreements or Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), thereby enhancing their institutional role in managing ethical recruitment in priority destination countries.”

**13. With a view to ensuring safe and ethical recruitment practices, the Committee had desired that the Government prioritize State-run recruitment agencies and take up the matter with all high-emigration States to encourage them to have their own State-run Recruitment Agencies to widen their scope and impact. They had further desired to incorporate at least one State-run Agency into bilateral labour agreements. From the Action Taken Reply, the Committee note that these state-run agencies have played a vital role in reducing migrant vulnerability to exploitation and ensuring greater transparency in the recruitment process, and the Ministry is engaged with high-emigration States to encourage the establishment of State-run Recruitment Agency where such mechanism is currently absent. The Committee are happy to note that in order to prioritize the state-run RAs and to protect female domestic workers from exploitation/harassment in the destination country,**

the Ministry has made the process of issuance of EC for female workers going for employment in the 18 notified ECR countries mandatory only through the 14 State-run RAs. The Committee also note the assurance given by the Ministry to assess the feasibility of including at least one State-run Recruitment Agency in future bilateral labour agreements as recommended by the Committee. The Committee are of the view that leveraging state agencies would help in ensuring setting high standards for ethical recruitment practices, making the migration journey safer, ultimately contributing to better working conditions and robust oversight of the entire overseas employment lifecycle. The Committee would like to be kept apprised of the developments in the matter.

#### **Need for a Mechanism to Track Labour Migration to Non ECR Countries**

##### **(Recommendation No. 35)**

14. The Committee in their report had observed/recommended as under:

The Committee find that the e-Migrate system captures key data related to the Emigration Check Required (ECR) category migrant workers right from when she/he applies for foreign employment in the system. Emigrant data is also shared with Embassies and Consulates to facilitate easy tracking and assistance when needed. However, the Committee note that the Government only tracks people moving to ECR countries with an ECR Passport and not migration to non ECR countries. Though the e-Migrate portal has also opened registration for non-ECR countries, such an online registration for Indian Emigration Check Not Required (ECNR) passport holders is voluntary and not mandatory. Hence, the data is not captured. While noting that the Government only tracks people moving to ECR countries with an ECR Passport, the Committee are convinced that it is quite important to have a mechanism to detect/track labour migration to even non ECR countries. Hence, they recommend that the Government may come up with possible options to capture the data despite the constraints faced and apprise the Committee of the same.

15. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The concern raised by the Committee is duly acknowledged. As of now, the Ministry maintains data in respect of Indian workers, holding Emigration Check Required (ECR) passports, proceeding for employment overseas through e-Migrate portal to any of the 18 notified ECR category countries. The Ministry would have to work with the Bureau of Immigration and the Ministry of Labour and Employment to capture the data of labour migration to all countries.”

16. While noting that the Government only tracks people moving to ECR countries, the Committee had expressed the importance of having a mechanism to detect/track labour migration to even non ECR countries. The Committee note from the Action Taken Reply that the Ministry maintains data in respect of Indian workers, holding Emigration Check Required (ECR) passports, proceeding for employment overseas through e-Migrate portal to any of the 18 notified ECR category countries. This indicates that the registration for Indian Emigration Check Not Required (ECNR) passport holders remain voluntary and not mandatory. The Committee note from the reply that the Ministry would have to work with the Bureau of Immigration and the Ministry of Labour and Employment to capture the data of labour migration to all countries. The Committee are of the view that labour migration to non-ECR countries is too significant to remain untracked, and the same can be resolved through creation of a shared framework with standardized data formats, collection methods, and validation processes to ensure consistency across Ministries/Departments. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Government may come up with a mechanism to detect/track labour migration even to non-ECR countries. The data collected, including from the Governments of the receiving countries, can be shared with

**the embassies and consulates to facilitate easy tracking and assistance when needed. In this regard, it is important that MEA works with the Bureau of Immigration and the Ministry of Labour and Employment to capture the data of labour migration to all countries.**

### **Integration of Returnee Migrants**

#### **(Recommendation No. 37)**

17. The Committee in their report had observed/recommended as under:

The Committee note that as per the information available with the Ministry, about 5,95,101 emigrants have returned to Indian from foreign countries from 2019 to 2024. This is a significant number. This surge, largely driven by COVID crisis, economic disruptions, stricter immigration policies and a reduction in job opportunities abroad has created considerable reintegration challenges. The Committee note that a national level policy on re-integration of migrant returnees is still awaited. The Committee further note that Kerala is the only State in India that offers economic reintegration and welfare programmes for returning migrants, all of which are worth emulating by other States and even other countries. The Committee are of the view that though the responsibility for rehabilitation of Indian migrants is currently placed on State Governments, with the Central Government providing neither logistical nor financial support, it is high time that this gap is addressed. To address this gap, the Government, in coordination with States, should develop a sustainable rehabilitation and reintegration policy with shared responsibilities between the Centre and State Governments. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Centre should assist State Governments through grants and soft loans to help integrate the returnee migrants into the domestic industries so that they continue to be economically productive. Such a collaborative approach only would ensure a more comprehensive and sustainable system for migrant reintegration across India.

18. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee. It may, however, be noted that responsibility of reintegration of returned Indian migrants rests with respective State Governments from where the emigrants belong and not with the Central Government. Various State Governments have, therefore, developed ways and means to reintegrate workers returning from abroad.

During the pandemic, under the Vande Bharat Mission, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Civil Aviation, and Ministry of External Affairs jointly launched ‘SWADES – Skilled Worker Arrival Database for Employment

Support'. The initiative aims at empowering the returning citizens with relevant employment opportunities by creating a database of qualified citizens based on their skill sets and experience to tap into and fulfill demand of Indian and foreign countries. The returning citizens are required to fill up an online SWADES Skills Card. The database thus generated has been integrated with India's ASEEM portal. The portal provides employee connect for prospective employers."

19. The Committee had noted that about 5,95,101 emigrants have returned to India from foreign countries from 2019 to 2024. Noting that rehabilitation of Indian migrants is currently left to State Governments, the Committee had recommended that the Centre should assist State Governments through grants and soft loans to help integrate the returnee migrants into the domestic industries. The Ministry in the Action Taken Reply have informed the Committee that the responsibility of reintegration of returned Indian migrants rests with respective State Governments and not with the Central Government, and various State Governments have, therefore, developed ways and means to reintegrate workers returning from abroad. The Committee further note from the reply that the Ministry has jointly launched 'SWADES – Skilled Worker Arrival Database for Employment Support' with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, and Ministry of Civil Aviation during the pandemic. It aims at empowering the returning citizens with relevant employment opportunities by creating a database of qualified citizens based on their skill sets and experience to tap into and fulfill demand of Indian and foreign countries. The Committee are of the considered view that the Ministry could play a more constructive role to assist the states in reintegrating workers returning from abroad. There is no hiding the fact that States often lack the financial capacity to design and sustain reintegration programmes. The

Committee are of the view that reintegration of returnee migrants requires national coordination, especially in areas like skill mapping, and industry linkages for their gainful reemployment. Treating reintegration as the responsibility of the state only may risk wasting this human capital. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier suggestion that the Government, in coordination with States, develop a sustainable rehabilitation and reintegration policy with shared responsibilities between the Centre and State Governments. The Committee are hopeful that the Ministry would give proper consideration to this recommendation of the Committee.

### **Need to Prioritize New Emigration Bill**

#### **(Recommendation No. 38)**

20. The Committee in their report had observed/recommended as under:

Keeping in view the contemporary global migration dynamics and the requirements of Indian citizens, the Committee have underscored the pressing need for a comprehensive legislative overhaul to replace the outdated provisions of the Emigration Act 1983 and the Committee find that a legislation on Emigration [Overseas Mobility (Facilitation and Welfare) Bill, 2024] for the same is on the anvil. This presents a long overdue opportunity to reform the recruitment process for seeking overseas employment. The Ministry has informed the Committee that the proposed draft is under internal consultation and, thereafter, will be put up for public consultation which will be followed up by Inter-Ministerial consultations along with the Draft Cabinet Note. Though the efforts to revamp the migration management framework through the introduction of a new Bill is commendable, the Committee are not happy with the delay in the process despite witnessing harrowing incidents of illegal emigration from our country day in and day out. The Committee, hence recommend that the Bill should be prioritized and the Committee may be intimated about the timelines for presenting the new Bill in both houses of Parliament.

21. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The draft of the Emigration Bill 2024 has been under active consideration with the aim to introduce it in the Parliament after finishing due consultation and procedure. The Ministry has completed internal consultations and the draft Bill has been sent for inter-ministerial

consultations in end May 2025. Upon completion of these consultations, the draft bill will be put up for public consultation. The final draft will thereafter be submitted for Cabinet's approval and presented to the Parliament.

**22. The Committee had recommended that the introduction of Emigration [Overseas Mobility (Facilitation and Welfare) Bill, 2024] be prioritized and the Committee intimated about the timelines for presenting the new Bill in both houses of Parliament. The Ministry in their action taken reply have informed the Committee that internal consultations on the Bill have been completed and the draft Bill had been sent for inter-ministerial consultations in end of May 2025. They have submitted that upon completion of these consultations, the draft bill will be put up for public consultation, whereafter, the final draft will be submitted for Cabinet's approval and presented to the Parliament. The Committee are constrained to note that there has been delay in the timely enactment of the Bill. A comprehensive bill that will promote mobility and address the welfare of Indians abroad is the need of the hour. The Committee, therefore, while reiterating their earlier recommendation that the Bill should be prioritized also urge upon the Ministry to accelerate the timelines in respect of the enactment to ensure timely implementation of the proposed reforms. The Committee also urge that the Bill be referred to it for Parliamentary consideration.**

### **Consultations Required for Finalising the New Emigration Bill**

#### **(Recommendation No. 39)**

**23. The Committee in their report had observed/recommended as under:**

The Committee understand that the proposed Bill to replace the Emigration Act, 1983 aims at establishing a hassle-free, robust, transparent and comprehensive emigration management framework that facilitates safe and orderly migration for Overseas Employment aspirants. However, to address the challenges posed by evolving landscape,

wider consultations are required beyond putting it up for public consultation. In this regard the Committee urge that once the elements of the Bill are identified, specific consultations should be made with the Standing Committee, the State Governments and the Diaspora Organisations to make it a healthy Bill worthy of implementation.

24. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The recommendation by the Committee is duly noted. The Ministry will hold wide-ranging consultation with the objective of incorporating views of various stakeholders appropriately.”

25. **The Committee are glad to note that in compliance to the recommendation of the Committee, the draft bill to replace the Emigration Act, 1983 has been uploaded on the MEA’s website for the process of public consultations. The Ministry of External Affairs vide its communication dated 10 October 2025 has also requested the Committee to furnish any comments/suggestions with regard to the bill. The considered suggestions/comments of the Committee on the Draft Bill will be forwarded in due course.**

### **Need to Address Student Migration in the Emigration Bill**

#### **(Recommendation No. 40)**

26. The Committee in their report had observed/recommended as under:

The Committee also note that under emigration, the student migration is generally not covered and currently, the Emigration Bill does not cover student migration. But the Committee see from the available data and surveys that the student community form a sizeable per cent of all emigrants from the country. When irregular and unscrupulous recruitment elements misguide students about universities and job opportunities abroad, a large number of students end up doing menial jobs, not wanting to come back empty-handed and become a socio-economic problem in the countries from where they migrate. So, the Committee desire that the Ministry should give due importance to student migration also in the new Emigration Bill and student recruitment agencies need to be put under the scanner.

27. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The growing trend of Indian students seeking education abroad is evident. While the Emigration Bill’s focus would be primarily on migration for overseas employment, the Ministry recognises the importance of student welfare. As an instrument for ensuring the welfare of Indian students, safety and security abroad, the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreements have explicit provisions for facilitating the ease of mobility as well as furthering opportunities for students. Provisions to facilitate post-study pathways, such as employment search periods and internships are also included. The MADAD Portal allows for voluntary registration of Indian students abroad. Database of students collected through the portal enables us to contact the students in the event of an emergency.”

**28. Given the large share of student community amongst the emigrants and their vulnerability to unethical recruiters, the Committee had desired that student migration also be given due importance in the new Emigration Bill and student recruitment agencies be put under the scanner. The Committee note that the Ministry, in their Action Taken Reply, while acknowledging the importance of student welfare have, however, remained silent on putting the recruitment agencies under the scanner as recommended by the Committee. While the Committee agree that the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreements have provisions for facilitating the ease of mobility as well as furthering opportunities for students, there is no refuting the fact that these are bilateral and selective, covering only certain countries. This, in the opinion of the Committee, leaves a large number of students in countries outside such agreements without adequate protection or support. The Committee also note that MADAD Portal allows for voluntary registration of India students abroad. However, the Committee are of the considered view that the portal does not present a complete picture. Since registration is voluntary, there is a strong likelihood that many students remain outside its ambit. Furthermore, the Committee observe that the portal is limited to facilitating emergency contact and does not extend to sustained welfare measures such as mentorship, and career guidance. The Committee are of the view that this would have left a**

large number of students vulnerable to exploitation by irregular and unscrupulous recruitment agents. There is an urgent need for legislation to explicitly address the issues being faced by the student community, particularly the absence of oversight over student recruitment agencies. Accordingly, the Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation and desire that the Ministry incorporate dedicated, comprehensive measures to address the challenges faced by the student community in the new Emigration Bill.

### Utilisation of the Indian Community Welfare Fund

#### (Recommendation No. 43)

29. The Committee in their report had observed/recommended as under:

Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) has been set up in all Indian Missions and Posts abroad to meet the contingency expenditure incurred by them for carrying out various on-site welfare activities for Overseas Indian citizens on a means-tested basis. This is a self-sustained fund without any budgetary support and sourced from service charges on issuance of Visa/OCI/PIO cards; Passport services and attestation of documents; voluntary contribution by Indian community; and income from interests accrued through investments and deposits. The Committee note that the ICWF guidelines cover three key areas namely Assisting Overseas Indian nationals in distress situations (Boarding and Lodging, Air passage, Legal Assistance, Emergency Medical Care, Transportation of Mortal Remains), Community Welfare activities and Improvement in Consular services. However, the Committee are surprised to note that the overall utilisation of the Indian Community Welfare Fund is apparently less than fifty per cent of the collected fund despite sizeable Indian Diaspora in requirement of assistance on all aspects covered under the fund. It is felt that even after expanding the scope of the fund, not enough assistance could be extended to the distressed Indian nationals and, hence, desire to be apprised of the reasons for the same. The Committee, while underscoring the need for a more generous approach to the requirements of assistance by our Diaspora also desire that our missions should generate more awareness regarding the ICW Fund, the assistance provided therein and the way to get in touch with the Missions/Posts in case of emergencies rather than resorting to the plea that Indian emigrant workers proceeding abroad are apprised about ICWF during PDOT.

30. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The Government has established various mechanisms to enable Indian nationals abroad to reach out to the Indian Missions in case they need any assistance. Indian nationals can contact the Missions/Posts through various channels like walk-in, email, social media,

multilingual 24x7 emergency numbers and also grievance redressal portals like MADAD, CPGRAMS, eMigrate etc. In addition, Indian Missions/Posts abroad have established Toll Free Helplines, whatsapp numbers and have launched mobile Apps to enable Indian nationals contact respective Indian Missions/Posts when in distress or in emergency situation.

Whenever any Indian national approaches the Mission with a grievance, all possible help is provided promptly whether through ICWF or other means, as the situation demands. All the above-mentioned means of approaching the Mission for grievance redressal are widely known in the diaspora community through WhatsApp groups of the community, website of the Mission and social gathering places like temples, gurudwaras, etc

**31. Concerned to note that the overall utilization of the Indian Community Welfare Fund, which is a self-sustained fund, remains below fifty per cent of the amount collected, the Committee had desired that they be apprised of the reasons. The Committee had also desired that our missions abroad to generate more awareness regarding the Fund. However, the Action Taken Reply has only indicated the various mechanisms put in place to enable Indian nationals abroad to reach out to the Indian Missions in case they need any assistance, such as walk-in, email, social media, multilingual 24x7 emergency numbers, grievance redressal portals like MADAD, CPGRAMS, eMigrate etc. No reasons have been provided in the reply for low utilization of funds under ICW fund. The concern of the Committee is that low utilization of fund could be due to reasons, such as not extending enough assistance to the distressed Indian nationals despite sizeable Indian Diaspora in requirement of assistance on all aspects covered under the fund. While appreciating the Ministry for various measures put in place to enable Indian nationals abroad to reach out to the Indian Missions, the Committee once again impress upon the Ministry to apprise the Committee of the reasons for low utilization of funds under the Indian Community Welfare Fund. The Committee further reiterate their earlier recommendation that our missions**

should generate more awareness regarding the ICWF Fund so that Indian diaspora in distress may avail assistance under this fund.

### **Fund for Transportation of Mortal Remains**

#### **(Recommendation No. 46)**

32. The Committee in their report had observed/recommended as under:

The Committee are aware that the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) is used for transportation of mortal remains of deceased Indian nationals to India, under the provisions of ICWF guidelines. In 2002, an amount of Rs. 8,45,83,770/- was used for the same whereas in 2023, the expenditure incurred out of ICWF on transportation of mortal remains was Rs. 2,32,51,964/-. The Committee find from the data provided by the Ministry that since 2012 till June 2024, airlifting of 3808 mortal remains of Indian nationals were done by Missions/Posts using ICWF. The Committee are of the feeling that as of now Indian Community Welfare Fund is being utilized in limited cases which is evident from the small number of cases. According to the Committee, the right to get the mortal remains transported to the homeland at the expense of the Government, particularly with less well-off people should be recognized. While urging the empowerment of the Missions with adequate funds, the Committee desire that the procedure for utilizing the Indian Community Welfare Fund for transportation of mortal remains may be further simplified and the authorities vested with discretionary powers in our Missions to take action without awaiting clearance from New Delhi. Missions may also be sensitized to take a humane approach rather than a bureaucratic one in offering help, especially financial assistance, in such cases.

33. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The Ministry fully understands the emotional situation during the transportation of mortal remains or cremation/burial of deceased Indian nationals. Accordingly, Indian Missions abroad and the staff of the Consular wing give utmost importance to prompt resolution of such cases and extend all possible support to the family of the deceased Indian national. Indian Missions/Posts coordinate with the host government for expeditious issuance of death certificate and other documents. Transportation of mortal remains, being a delicate situation, is handled with care and sensitivity by the Missions/Posts and all assistance under ICWF is rendered in an expeditious manner.

34. **Noting that since 2012 till June 2024, airlifting of 3808 mortal remains of Indian nationals were done by Missions/Posts using Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF), the**

Committee had recommended that the procedure for utilizing the ICWF for transportation of mortal remains be further simplified and the authorities vested with discretionary powers in our Missions may be allowed to take action without awaiting clearance from New Delhi. It is comforting for the Committee to note that Indian Missions abroad and the staff of the Consular wing give utmost importance to the prompt resolution of such cases and extend all possible support to the family of the deceased Indian national by coordinating with the host government for expeditious issuance of death certificate and other documents. Transportation of mortal remains, and all assistance under ICWF is rendered in an expeditious manner. However, no reply has been furnished by the Ministry on the recommendation of the Committee to simplify the procedure for utilizing the ICW Fund. The Committee would greatly appreciate if the Ministry could provide the measures taken towards simplification of procedure for utilizing the Indian Community Welfare Fund for transportation of mortal remains, and vesting of discretionary powers with Missions in such matters as suggested by the Committee. The Committee are of the view that procedural delay in taking administrative approval should not come in the way of rendering timely assistance to the affected families and individuals. The Committee desire that the Ministry looks into the issue and apprises them of the steps taken in this regard.

### **Videsh Sampark Programme**

**(Recommendation No. 60)**

35. The Committee in their report had observed/recommended as under:

The Committee note that the Videsh Sampark Programme aims at engaging with the relevant stakeholders within the State Governments. It gives a platform for organizing

brainstorming sessions with the State Governments on various challenges faced by the Indian Diaspora overseas and to enhance engagement with the Indian States to address the same. The Committee have been informed that under this programme, conferences are held in the State capital where MEA officials brief senior State Government officials and other stakeholders in the State about the initiatives, programmes and schemes implemented by the Ministry. The Ministry is, in fact, enthused that the utility of this Programme in sensitizing the State Governments on issues pertaining to the overseas Indians cannot be overstated. However, much to the surprise and anguish of the Committee, it is observed during the examination of the subject that many States are left uncovered under the programme for years together as the Ministry has been conducting on an average one or two Videsh Sampark Programmes in a year. So far Videsh Sampark Programmes have been conducted with State Governments of Telengana in May 2017, Maharashtra in August 2017, Kerala in September 2017, Gujarat in August 2018, Madhya Pradesh in September 2018, Karnataka in February 2020, Punjab and Haryana in June 2023, Bihar in July 2024, Tripura in July 2024 and Uttarakhand in September 2024. The Committee feel that there is serious need to look into the schedule of Videsh Sampark Programme to ensure frequent and wider engagement/ consultation with the States. The Committee, urge the Ministry to look into the feasibility of conducting the programme zone-wise, so that representatives from more than one State can benefit from the engagement.

36. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee. The Ministry has been actively pursuing the matter of organizing the Videsh Samapark Programme with the State Governments of India and to seek their consent for mutually agreed dates to host them. In recent months, Ministry has written to the State governments of Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and West Bengal, to seek interest for organizing Videsh Sampark Program in their States. However, Ministry has not yet received any response from the Governments in these States.

The issues that are raised during such Programmes are usually state specific in nature. Different State Governments face different challenges concerning its Diaspora and possess different comparative advantages for offering varying opportunities for trade, investment and tourism to the Indian diaspora community overseas. Therefore, it is this Ministry’s considered view that organizing Zonal VSPs may not be effective.

**37 Observing that many States are left uncovered under the Videsh Sampark programme aimed at engaging with relevant stakeholders within the state governments, the Committee had expressed the view that there is a serious need to look into the schedule of**

Videsh Sampark Programme to ensure frequent and wider engagement/ consultation with the States. The Committee had also urged the Ministry to look into the feasibility of conducting the programme zone-wise, so that representatives from more than one State can benefit from the engagement. In response the Ministry have informed the Committee that the State governments of Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and West Bengal have been approached by the Ministry for organizing Videsh Sampark Program in their States. Response from these State Governments are still awaited. The Ministry have also submitted that since the issues raised during such Programmes are usually state specific in nature, therefore organizing Zonal VSPs may not be effective. While acknowledging the Ministry's views as justified, the Committee desire that the Ministry continue to pursue the matter with states for organizing state-level Videsh Sampark programme at various states.

### **Standard Operating Procedures for Student Outreach**

#### **(Recommendation No. 65)**

38. The Committee in their report had observed/recommended as under:

The Committee have been informed that the Indian Missions/Posts abroad invite students enrolled in various Universities under their jurisdiction for welcome ceremonies organized almost as soon as they reach the foreign shores for pursuing higher studies. Heads of Indian Missions/Posts also organize Orientation Programmes for Indian students and brief them on challenges / threats, if any, that they may confront during their stay in foreign lands and mechanisms to take counter measures. Senior Embassy officials visit Educational Institutions, interact with Indian students and their associations. However, these efforts do not seem to yield much. Being a country having the highest number of students studying abroad, next only to China, the Committee urge the Ministry to put in place Standard Operating Procedures regarding student outreach and engagement by our Missions abroad. In the absence of such SOPs, emergency response mechanism of the Missions/posts in crisis situations would be far from effective.

39. The Ministry in its Action Taken Reply has stated as under:

“This Ministry reassures the Committee that safety and welfare of the Indian student community abroad is amongst the top priorities of the Government of India. India has among the largest student communities studying abroad, and such students are not a monolithic or homogenous group. Their academic levels, fields of study, cultural and linguistic diversity vary greatly, and they are spread across the globe. The needs of students differ from region to region, especially in terms of support systems, academic stress, and job prospects. Moreover, host countries differ significantly in terms of their domestic legal frameworks, educational structure, and immigration policies. It is possible that a particular type of outreach that is considered as a support to Indian students in one country may be seen as an interference in another. Since the issues and the support required vary greatly from country to country and from university to university, they are best addressed on a case-to-case basis. Therefore, having a uniform Standard Operating Procedure for engaging with the Indian students might prove counterproductive.

The Heads of Embassies/Consulates and the staff are sensitized and well versed on the issues faced by the Indian students abroad, resulting from their frequent interactions with the student bodies, university officials and local authorities. Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad encourage Indian students travelling abroad for higher studies to register with them as also on the MADAD Portal so that their grievances and outstanding issues can be addressed in a time bound manner. They are also encouraged to remain connected on a regular basis and all possible efforts are made to respond to the outstanding issues faced by them on a priority basis. The grievances of the students are responded to almost on a real time basis through telephone calls, walk-ins, emails, social media, 24x7 emergency helplines, open houses and the MADAD Portal. Any complaint received from the Indian students abroad are taken up with the concerned University/Institution and the host Government, as the case may be for requisite action.

Cases of untoward incidents are immediately taken up by the Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad with the concerned authorities of the host country to ensure that they are properly investigated and the perpetrators are punished. During emergencies or crisis situations, Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad pro-actively help distressed/stranded Indian students overseas by providing them food, shelter, medicines and ensure their return/evacuation to India as soon as possible. During the last few years, stranded Indian students were evacuated to India under the Vande Bharat Mission, Operation Ganga (Ukraine) and Operation Ajay (Israel) from countries around the world. The return of many Indian students from Bangladesh was also facilitated by the High Commission of India in Dhaka.

This Ministry notes and welcomes the Committee’s valuable observation to ensure effective emergency response mechanism for Indian students living abroad during crisis situations.”

40. India, being a country having the highest number of students studying abroad, next only to China, the Committee had urged the Ministry to put in place Standard Operating Procedures regarding student outreach and engagement by our Missions abroad. In response, the Ministry, while assuring that safety and welfare of the Indian student community abroad is amongst the top priorities of the Government of India, have however submitted that having a uniform Standard Operating Procedure for engaging with Indian students might prove 'counter-productive', considering *inter-alia* that students are not a monolithic or homogenous group. Their academic levels, fields of study, cultural and linguistic diversity vary greatly, and they are spread across the globe. The Ministry have further submitted that the issues and the support required with respect to students vary greatly from country to country and from university to university and are best addressed on a case-to-case basis. The Committee highly appreciate the exemplary service rendered by India Mission abroad to evacuate students under the Vande Bharat Mission, Operation Ganga (Ukraine) and Operation Ajay (Israel), the return of many Indian students from Bangladesh which was also facilitated by the High Commission of India in Dhaka. The Committee, however, feel that many challenges such as safety, emergency response, financial vulnerability, and grievance redressal, etc are common across geographies. A baseline SOP would provide minimum guaranteed standards of support, while still allowing flexibility for country-specific adaptations. While acknowledging that certain issues may best be handled on case-to-case basis, the Committee are of the view that Standard Operating Procedures regarding student outreach and engagement by our Missions abroad could be put in place. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation and

**urge the Ministry to have a relook to put in place Standard Operating Procedures regarding student outreach and engagement by our Missions abroad.**

## **Chapter-II**

### **OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT**

#### **Recommendation No. 1**

##### **Conversion of PIO Cards to OCI Cards**

The Committee note that a Person of Indian Origin (PIO) is one who is presently holding a foreign passport and whose any of the ancestors was an Indian national while a Non-Resident Indian (NRI) is a citizen of Indian holding an Indian Passport and is ordinarily residing outside India. An OCI Cardholder is a person registered as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) under section 7A of The Citizenship Act, 1955 and enjoys benefits like multiple entry, multi-purpose lifelong visa to visit India and parity with NRIs in financial, economic and educational fields except in the acquisition of agricultural or plantation properties. The Committee further note that the Scheme of PIO cards has been discontinued since 2015 and all PIO cardholders (handwritten and machine-readable) have been advised to convert their PIO card to OCI card before December 31, 2025. While appreciating the merger of PIO and OCI Cards, the Committee note that despite a decade of discontinuation of the PIO Scheme, there are still a large number of PIO Card holders who are yet to convert them to OCI cards. As per available data, only 51,58,262 OCI cards have been issued so far. Considering the fact that there are over 19.57 million PIOs spread across the globe, the response under the OCI Card Scheme has been slow and the number of OCI cards issued is far inadequate. The Committee, hence, feel that there is an urgent need to dispel any apprehensions that the overseas Indians may have in this regard and urge the Ministry to take proactive steps towards wider dissemination of the information that the process is not automatic and the PIO Card holders need to formally apply for an OCI card to receive a physical, machine-readable document as handwritten PIO cards are no longer accepted for travel due to international standards. Concerted efforts through social media platforms, Diaspora organisations, State Governments and other stakeholders may be taken so as to ensure the completion of conversion of all PIO cards to OCI cards by the deadline of 31 December 2025.

#### **Reply of the Government**

Ministry has taken note of the suggestions of the Parliamentary Standing Committee. Vide O.M. No. 26011/MISC/71/2018-OCI dated 02 January 2025, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) informed Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) that the Bureau of Immigration (BoI) will accept PIO cards as valid travel documents till 31.12.2025 alongwith valid foreign passport and Indian Immigration Check Post(s) will continue to consider all PIO cards valid for exit / entry into India

till 31.12.2025. This extension of timeline is subject to the condition that if in the meantime any deadline is notified by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) thereby making hand written PIO cards invalid, then PIO cardholders may have to obtain appropriate visa from Indian Missions / Posts. Further, existing PIO cardholders were to be informed that no further extension will be given and they will have to get their PIO cards converted to OCI card by 31.12.2025, else they will have to get Visa from the Indian Missions / Posts abroad for travel to India and service of 'New Visa' from FRROs on the e-FRRO online portal if they are already living in India. Accordingly, MEA vide circular dated 13 January 2025 conveyed to all the Indian Embassies / Consulates abroad and advised them to give wide publicity about the discontinuation of PIO as a valid travel document by 31 Dec 2025 and need for applying for OCI card for existing PIO card holders through the Embassy's/Consulate's websites and social media handles and also through community groups and diaspora organizations. At the same time our Embassies/Consulates were also directed to continue advising existing PIO cardholders to apply for conversion of PIO cards to OCI cards, as per the extant guidelines at the earliest.

The latest reminder on this was sent to all Embassies and Consulates on 26 May 2025.

### **Recommendation No.11**

#### **Working Group on Schemes/Programmes for the Welfare of Diaspora**

**The Committee note that a Working Group was constituted under the Chairmanship of Secretary (CPV&OIA) to analyze the objectives, working and challenges of various schemes/programmes/initiatives for the welfare of the Indian Diaspora and the group met for the first time on 22 December, 2021. However, no meeting is seen to have been held since then. The Committee underline that regular meetings of the Working Group are imperative for identifying potential issues in the implementation of schemes, facilitating communication between different departments, and making informed decisions to achieve better policy outcomes. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to ensure biannual meeting of the Working Group to analyze the objectives, working and challenges of various schemes/programmes/initiatives for the welfare of the Indian Diaspora and intimate the Committee about the schedule worked out for holding the meetings.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Joint Working Group (JWG) was constituted under the Chairmanship of Secretary (CPV & OIA) and Heads of Divisions of the erstwhile OIA-I, OIA-II (now Emigration Policy & Welfare

and Diaspora Engagement Divisions, respectively), CPV, PSP and OE&PGE Divisions as its members. The Working Group met on 22.12.2021 to carry out a comprehensive review of all the existing schemes and programmes, as well as new initiatives undertaken by MEA since transition of these Divisions from the erstwhile Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) to MEA, besides to review the Programmes which have since been closed/wound up. The Working Group had recommended inclusion of medical courses under the Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC) Scheme of Ministry and provision of 50% reservation of seats for women under SPDC. Both these recommendations have been implemented since then.

Since Secretary (CPV & OIA) chairs weekly meetings with the Heads of the afore-mentioned respective Divisions (who are also members of the JWG) under his charge to discuss issues in their respective domains and thus continuously monitors the progress of various schemes, it was found that further continuation of the Working Group would be superfluous and redundant. As the purpose of the Working Group had been achieved, it was subsequently dissolved.

However, subsequent to the recommendation of the Committee, this Ministry has decided to hold meetings of the Working Group, as and when necessary, to deliberate upon effectiveness of various schemes/ programmes/ initiatives of the Government for engaging with the Diaspora and to address challenges for securing the latter's welfare.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.12**

#### **All-of-Government Approach in Diaspora Matters**

**The Committee understand that India's engagement with its Diaspora has moved from 'All of Ministry approach' towards an 'All-of-Government approach' in which other wings of the Government, other Ministries and Departments as well as the State Governments are involved in all aspects of Diaspora affairs. The Committee have been informed that the collaborative model of 'All-of-Government approach' ensures that the diverse and evolving needs of the Diaspora are met more effectively by drawing on the expertise and resources of multiple government stakeholders. The Committee, however, note from the testimony received from the State representatives that the State Governments do not feel connected most of the time. Since the concerns of Indian Diaspora transcend Ministries and are largely State specific, the Committee recommend that regular consultations are held with States to align concerns/issues of the Diaspora with the policy priorities.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry agrees with the Committee's observation that participation and cooperation of multiple government stakeholders, particularly the State governments, is crucial in ensuring

effective engagement with the diaspora. The State governments have a significant and increasingly strategic role in shaping diaspora-related policies, since the concerns of the Indian diaspora are largely state specific. Therefore, this Ministry organizes 'Videsh Sampark Programmes' whereby the States are apprised of the various Diaspora Engagement initiatives and the Consular and Visa related issues, besides taking feedback from the State government and its agencies. Ministry regularly reaches out to the State governments soliciting interest in holding Videsh Sampark Programs and to partner in other diaspora related initiatives such as Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and Know India Programme. Ministry has recently written to the State Governments of Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and West Bengal for organizing Videsh Sampark Program in these States. The response from these States is awaited. The Ministry will endeavour to increase the frequency of such programmes in order to connect more strongly with the State governments on diaspora issues.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.13**

#### **Missions as Home Away from Home.**

**The Committee are informed that the Indian Missions/Posts abroad works with the motto 'Indian Embassies: Home away from Home' and a robust system of grievance redressal which includes walk-in, email, multilingual 24x7 emergency numbers, grievance redressal portal like MADAD, CPGRAMS, e-Migrate, and social media etc. is in place in all Embassies. However, the Committee are concerned about the extent to which our missions abroad are accessible or inaccessible to NRI workers and students. Despite having every mechanism possible to help and facilitate our Diaspora in our Missions, the experience of many members of the common Diaspora appears to be on the contrary. The Committee, therefore, recommend that all mission staff should be given specialized training in gender sensitivity, cultural awareness, labour laws, and rights of migrant workers to equip them provide more empathetic and informed support to our Diaspora facing diverse challenges abroad so that our Missions actually become 'Home away from Home'.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry agrees with the Committee's emphasis on the importance of having a robust system of grievance redressal. Ministry constantly strives to realize the motto 'Indian Embassies: Home away from Home', in order to ensure the safety and welfare of the Indian diaspora living abroad. Indian Embassies and Consulates abroad remain vigilant and closely monitor any

possible untoward incident concerning the Indian diaspora. Such incidents are immediately taken up with the concerned authorities of the host country to ensure that the cases are properly investigated and the perpetrators are punished. These issues are also raised during meetings with Government officials of the countries concerned, including at the highest levels, as appropriate. Any issue pertaining to Indians abroad is thus dealt with by Indian Embassies/ Consulates on priority and distressed Indian nationals are provided all possible consular assistance, including emergency medical care and boarding/ lodging, whenever required. The Heads of Indian Embassies/ Consulates play a crucial leadership role in setting the tone and standards for how the Embassies/ Consulates serve the Indian diaspora and ensure that the staff are gender sensitive, culturally aware, well-versed in labour rights etc. Feedback through various channels, such as walk-in, email, multilingual 24x7 emergency numbers, Town Halls, grievance redressal portals like MADAD, CPGRAMS, e-Migrate, Open Houses, and social media etc., which are in place in all Embassies and Consulates, have been largely positive. The Ministry has noted the Committee's recommendation and will continue to actively monitor the systemic grievances of the Indian diaspora to support them in their challenges and to serve them better.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

#### **Recommendation No.14**

##### **Handling Grievances of Diaspora**

**Keeping in view the fact that the Indian Missions/Posts are the direct link between India and its Diaspora community, the Committee desire that Embassies adopt standardized and transparent policies for handling grievances, ensuring that all cases are reviewed systematically rather than through ad-hoc consular outreach and contact. Responses should focus on addressing root causes and offering long-term solutions to migrant issues. The presence of multiple contact points and the lack of standardized operating procedures hinder timely resolution of grievances affecting migrants. The Committee, hence, desire that our Embassies should maintain a publicly accessible database that tracks complaints and ensure transparency in providing essential information including contact details of Nodal Officers.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry has noted the recommendations concerning the need for greater standardization, transparency, and systemic handling of grievances in Indian Missions and Posts abroad.

MEA has instituted a uniform grievance redressal mechanism across Embassies through the MADAD portal, which offers a centralized platform for registering, tracking, and resolving

consular grievances. Each complainant receives a unique reference number and its progress and the escalation levels are publicly visible and time-bound. The Ministry closely monitors the status of the pending grievances and reminders/ instructions are given to the concerned Embassy/ Consulate, as and when required. The performance of the consular and community affairs wings of the Embassies/ Consulates are periodically evaluated by the Ministry. Additionally, Indian Embassies/ Consulates respond to citizen complaints received via the CPGRAMS portal and integrates that data into performance reviews. Through such efforts, the Ministry strives to improve the consular services provided by its Embassies/ Consulates abroad, avoid ad-hoc approaches and ensure timely redressal of grievances.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for common grievance categories such as passport issues, employment disputes, repatriation of dead bodies, emergency repatriation, etc., are provided in the Consular Manual and are implemented across Indian Embassies/ Consulates abroad. The Consular camps, prison visits, labour camp visits and other consular outreach activities are held in a time bound manner and are documented to avoid ad-hoc methods. All Indian Embassies and Consulates have designated Nodal Officers for addressing different grievances, whose names, functions and contact details are published on the website of the Embassy/ Consulate. A 24x7 emergency helpline is available in all Indian Embassies/Consulates, which is prominently displayed on their websites.

Indian emigrants can also contact the Indian Embassies/Consulates through various channels like walk-in, email, Open Houses, other grievance redressal portals like CPGRAMS, eMigrate, social media, toll free helplines and Whatsapp numbers. Embassies/Consulates have also launched Mobile Apps to enable Indian nationals contact respective Indian Embassies/Consulates when in distress or in emergency situations. Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendras (PBSK) have also been set up in New Delhi and at Dubai (UAE), Riyadh & Jeddah (Saudi Arabia), Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) and London (UK) to provide assistance, guidance and counselling to Indians in distress.

This Ministry also endeavours to take concrete steps to address systemic migrant welfare issues, such as signing Migration, Mobility and Labour related MOUs with other countries to ensure structured dispute resolution and protection frameworks. Pre-Departure Orientation Programs (PDOT) and e-Migrate reforms are instituted to address root causes of grievances such as contract fraud and lack of awareness.

The Ministry reiterates its commitment to providing transparent, responsive, and standardized consular services to every Indian citizen abroad.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.15**

#### **Local Language Capacity in Missions**

**The Committee observe that there is not enough local language capacity in our missions in terms of the languages spoken by the migrant labourers. This lack of State-specific liaisons within embassies complicates communication and delays necessary interventions. Though the Ministry has maintained that communication so far has not been a hindrance in addressing labour issues and that the officers/officials in the Ministry of External Affairs, coming from different States of India with diverse social background, have the ability to directly interact with the migrant labourers in their native language to address their issues, the Diaspora Organisations which cater to grievances affecting migrants at ground level belie the claim. The Committee feel that it is important to address the issue of local language capacity so that poor emigrants do not feel that they cannot understand what is being said to them by the representatives of their own country. Hence, the Committee desire that the Ministry take into consideration the language of the major Diaspora groups present in a particular country while deploying officers/staff in our Missions, especially in Gulf countries.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry acknowledges that effective communication is critical to consular outreach and grievance redressal. While the Embassy/Consulate officials are drawn from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, the Ministry takes several steps to bridge the language gaps. In countries with significant Indian diaspora of a particular language, such as Malayalees in the Gulf region or Punjabis in Canada, Embassies/Consulates make sure that sufficient local staff are recruited who are able to speak that language. Embassies and Consulates routinely conduct consular outreach programmes in regional languages, often using diaspora leaders and welfare organizations to facilitate communication. Embassies/Consulates also maintain close coordination with State/linguistic diaspora associations in their respective jurisdictions to address state-specific grievances.

While Embassies/Consulates are not structured by state-based quotas, the Ministry acknowledges the importance of regional and cultural familiarity. Therefore, Officers and officials with relevant language skills or regional experience are preferentially considered for postings in high-migrant-density regions, within the bounds of Service rules, diplomatic requirements and administrative feasibility.

The Ministry is committed to strengthening the linguistic and cultural responsiveness of Indian Embassies/Consulates to better serve all segments of the overseas population, especially migrant labourers. While considerable progress has already been made through hiring practices, outreach innovations, and partnerships with diaspora organizations, the Committee's suggestions offer valuable direction for further reforms.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.16**

#### **Community Welfare Wing in Missions**

**The Committee note that a dedicated Community Welfare Wing has been established in Missions and Posts where there is a sizeable Indian community. The Committee are of the view that such wings could facilitate closer contact between Indian Diaspora and Indian Missions/Posts. The Committee urge the Ministry do apprise them about the objectives achieved through such community welfare wings in Missions/Posts and establish Community Welfare Wing in all important Indian Missions/Posts on priority basis.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has established Community Welfare Wings in Embassies/Consulates with large Indian populations, especially in Gulf countries, Southeast Asia, and select Western nations. These wings serve as dedicated units and focus on grievance redressal of migrant workers, labour welfare and outreach programs, coordination with diaspora organisations, emergency assistance and repatriation, etc. Besides the India based officials, locally recruited staff who possess community-level outreach experience, are also deployed in these wings.

This Ministry agrees with the Committee's recommendation to expand Community Welfare Wings to all important Embassies in principle and is already moving in that direction. Currently, such wings are operational in all Embassies/Consulates with significant population of Indian

workers. The Ministry remains fully committed to strengthening the Community Welfare Wing model as a vital component of India's global diaspora engagement architecture. Expansion of these units to additional Embassies is under active consideration in line with need assessment and resource optimization.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.21**

#### **Impact Assessment of MMPAs and LMAs**

**The Committee acknowledge that Migration and Mobility Agreements (MMPAs) and Labour Mobility Agreements (LMAs) are aimed at providing safe and legal migration opportunities to Indian workers in potential employment destinations all over the world. However, the impact of such MoUs/Agreements and the manner in which they have translated into better deals and more job opportunities for potential migrant workers are not known. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should carry out an impact assessment of the existing Migration and Mobility Agreements and Labour Mobility Agreements while monitoring the implementation aspect of such MoUs/Agreements to ensure that the issues of interest of the migrant workers, including their grievances, are actually addressed through the said MoUs/Agreements'.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of the Committee is duly noted. The Ministry has been working towards establishing institutional mechanisms to foster the global mobility of Indian workers, students, academicians, researchers, business persons and so on. The Ministry has been proactively furthering the mobility for the Indian workforce through diverse MoUs and agreements such as Migration and Mobility Partnerships and Labour Mobility and Labour Welfare Agreements with destination countries, which establish a robust framework for legal migration. These agreements/MoUs seek to achieve fostering people-to-people ties, streamlining visa procedures, preventing irregular migration, strengthening bilateral relations, and supporting skill development.

While the MMPAs have been recently concluded and are at different stages of implementation, there is no concrete data available for the actual number of Indian workers who have been able to utilise the opportunities provided by MMPAs. However, under the Young Professional Scheme (YPS) in the MMPA with UK, 3000 Indians can avail two-year visa every year to study, work

and holiday in the UK. So far, the slots for YPS are in high demand amongst the youth of 18-30 years in India since its launch in 2023. 6,000 Indians have availed YPS in 2023 and 2024 so far.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.22**

#### **Bilateral Labour Agreements Safeguarding the Rights of Migrant Workers**

**The Committee desire that the Government should enter into Bilateral Labour Agreements (BLAs) and Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with many more countries with clear stipulations regarding working condition, wages, accommodation, health care, repatriation rights and dispute resolution mechanism in the employment contract, monitoring of recruitment agencies, granting migrants equal rights as locals, etc. to safeguard the rights of migrant workers. The Committee further desire that the existing bilateral agreements on labour mobility should be strengthened through periodic monitoring and evaluation.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of this recommendation. Labor mobility arrangements contain comprehensive provisions relating to migrant worker welfare, social protection, recruitment procedures, and employment contracts. These arrangements also establish Joint Working Groups, which convene periodically to review progress, address implementation challenges, and discuss emerging issues to ensure effective implementation of the agreements.

In addition, India has also operationalized Social Security Agreements with several countries. Social Security Agreements are binding reciprocal instruments that help in avoiding double security contributions, easy remittances of benefits and aggregating contributions to prevent loss of benefits. Further, recognizing the vulnerability of certain migrant groups, especially Domestic Sector Workers (DSWs) and female workers, the Government has implemented specific protective measures such as authorizing only state-run recruitment agencies to facilitate the overseas employment of female workers and with certain conditions to mitigate exploitation risks.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

## **Recommendation No.23**

### **International Instruments for Protection of Diaspora**

**The Committee take cognizance that apart from bilateral arrangements on migration & mobility and labour migration, the Government is also deeply engaged with international and multilateral organisations for enhancing the horizon of India's initiatives in fostering safe, orderly, and regular migration pathways. However, it is observed that India is not yet a party to any international instrument for protection of Diaspora. The reason for choosing not to become a party to certain specific instruments is based on the implications of such international convention/ instrument on national policies and priorities. While honouring our multifaceted approach allowing for flexibility and context-specific solutions that are responsive to the unique circumstances in different countries, the Committee are concerned about the limited range of bilateral agreements/MoUs and welfare measures we have in place as on date in comparison to the extent and spread of our Diaspora. Hence, the Committee recommend that the Government may actively explore ways to strengthen cooperation and collaboration on Diaspora-related matters at international as well as multilateral levels. Efforts may also be taken to examine the feasibility of being a party to key international instruments aimed at protecting and promoting the welfare of Diaspora communities which work to ensure humane treatment and address potential exploitation of migrant populations across borders.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee. It may be noted that this Ministry is committed to improving the protection, welfare, and representation of the Indian overseas community. India's cautious approach towards becoming a party to certain international conventions stems from a considered evaluation of their implications on India's sovereignty, domestic policy priorities, and operational flexibility. Many international instruments on migration and diaspora protection adopt a uniform framework, which may not align with India's diverse bilateral engagements and the context-specific needs of the migrant communities. Furthermore, India's non-participation in select instruments does not imply disengagement. Instead, India actively contributes to global migration discourse through different mechanisms. India is a committed participant of non-binding consultative forums focusing on migration and diaspora, such as The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM), the Colombo Process, the Abu Dhabi Dialogue, the Budapest Process, etc. India is currently the Chair of the Colombo Process, and has introduced Diaspora Engagement as a core theme during its tenure. India also engages regularly with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and International Labour Organization (ILO), and UN Network on Migration, which allows India

to shape global norms while maintaining the ability to address issues specific to its diverse Diaspora.

The Ministry also recognizes the importance of expanding the scope of bilateral labour and migration agreements, and efforts are already underway. India has signed numerous MoUs and Labour Mobility Agreements (LMAs) with key destination countries in the Gulf, Southeast Asia, and parts of Europe. These MoUs often go beyond general protections, encompassing issues such as skill recognition, dispute resolution mechanisms, social security coverage, and safe return and reintegration.

India remains open to reviewing key international instruments on a case-by-case basis, ensuring alignment with its national interests, and will continue to explore strategic ratifications or accessions where the benefits to the Indian citizens are clearly established.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

#### **Recommendation No.24**

#### **Global Compact for Migration**

**The Committee find that India is one among the 152 countries that adopted the Global Compact for Migration, the first-ever UN global agreement on a common approach to international migration, in December, 2018. The compact strives for better management of migration at local, national, regional and global levels. Since the State Governments are the key stakeholders in the migration discourse, the Committee desire that a co-ordination committee, including the Centre and State Governments, may be set up to ensure effective implementation of global compact objectives.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee and would like to mention that the policies and initiatives of the Government of India are broadly in consonance with the objectives and guiding principles laid out in the Global Compact for Migration (GCM). India's Emigration framework aims at strengthening safe, legal and regular pathways and improving recruitment process and decent work in line with objective 5 and 6 of the GCM respectively. India has entered into several bilateral agreements/ MoUs/ MoCs with destination countries showcasing India's commitment towards fostering regular pathways for migration and mobility.

Additionally, the government has put a major focus on skill development and recognition, migrant and diaspora contributions and international cooperation aligning with the objectives of GCM. The same is being achieved through coordination between different Ministries such as the Ministry of External Affairs, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Labour and Employment, other line ministries and in collaboration with State and private agencies, international organizations and civil societies. Furthermore, the Government of India has been taking steps to improve data and information on international migration which align with the objectives of the GCM. For instance, the newly revamped eMigrate-2.0 portal, launched to regulate the safe and ethical recruitment of Indian workers abroad, embodies GCM objectives by ensuring ethical recruitment practices and providing transparency in the entire migration process.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.25**

#### **Setting up of More Protector of Emigrants (PoE) Offices**

**The Committee note that the process of emigration of Indian workers, with Emigration Clearance Required (ECR) category passports is regulated under the Emigration Act, 1983, which is administered by the Ministry of External Affairs through the Protector General of Emigrants (PGE). The Protector General of Emigrants oversees the functioning of all Protector of Emigrants (PoE) offices across India. As of now there are 16 offices of the Protector of Emigrants located Mumbai, Chennai, Delhi, Kolkata, Chandigarh, Hyderabad, Cochin, Thiruvananthapuram, Jaipur, Raebareli, Patna, Bengaluru, Guwahati, Ranchi, Bhubaneswar and Agartala. However, the Committee note that PoE offices are not there in States like Gujarat and Telangana which account for a large number of emigrants. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry may explore the feasibility of establishing PoE offices in States where currently such offices do not exist in addition to setting up additional PoE offices in migration hotspots including States like Punjab, Kerala, etc. to ensure better outreach and support for emigrants.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry of External Affairs acknowledges the recommendation of the Committee regarding the need for expanding the network of Protector of Emigrants (PoE) offices across the country, particularly in States such as Gujarat and Telangana, which contribute significantly to India's emigrant workforce but currently do not have dedicated PoE offices. The Ministry recognizes the

critical role played by the PoE offices in regulating emigration processes and in ensuring the welfare and protection of Indian workers, particularly those holding the Emigration Clearance Required (ECR) category passports. The suggestion to enhance the outreach and support mechanisms through the establishment of additional PoE offices is both timely and pertinent, especially in light of the evolving patterns of overseas employment.

In this regard, the Ministry would like to inform the Committee that currently there are 16 PoE offices in 15 States / UTs of India. For better coordination with state governments in the matters of emigration, Ministry has been exploring the possibility of opening up of PoE offices in those states, where such offices currently do not exist. PoE Offices in Odisha, Jharkhand and Tripura have been opened recently. The Ministry is in the process of opening PoE offices in Uttarakhand and Andhra Pradesh in near future.

As far as opening of additional POE Offices in States like Punjab and Kerala is concerned, the POE Offices in Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala and in Chandigarh for the State of Punjab, are currently fully functional and catering to the needs of emigrants from these States. Ministry would consider opening of additional POE Offices based on the need and demand analysis.

Furthermore, the Ministry is exploring new outreach initiatives to complement the physical infrastructure of PoE offices, thereby enhancing accessibility for emigrants in remote or underserved regions. The Ministry has entered into an agreement with the Common Services Centres (CSCs), a SPV of the MeitY for delivery of emigration related services at more than 5 lakh CSC centres across India.

The Ministry remains committed to strengthening the emigration ecosystem and will continue to take proactive measures to safeguard the interests and welfare of Indian emigrants.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.26**

#### **Criminalization of Recruitment Malpractices**

**The Committee observe that the Recruiting Agents (RA) are required to obtain Registration Certificate (RC) from the Protector General of Emigrants (PGE) before they can engage in recruitment of Indian workers for overseas employment. The process of**

registration of RA is done through a web-based application, e-Migrate portal, which brings all the stakeholders, including the RAs, Foreign Employers (Fes) and the prospective emigrants on a common platform. The Committee was further informed that the Ministry initiates action against agents involved in exploitation, abuse, or other illegal practices through issuing Show Cause Notices or suspending the licenses, etc. and publishes the list of unregistered Ras on the e-Migrate portal. Till October 2024, a total of 3,094 unregistered agents in country have been notified. However, the proliferation of unregistered/illegal Ras and illegal migration through them is indicative of the lacunae in the existing system which is extremely disconcerting. The Committee are of the opinion that the penalties and fines provided for in the Emigration Act are insufficient considering the severity of crimes committed by unscrupulous recruiters. Hence, in addition to having a vigorous oversight mechanism for RAs, the Committee recommend that the Government should bring in provisions to effectively criminalize illegal recruitment practices and impose stringent punishment, including imprisonment, to address the widespread exploitation of migrant workers and to deter fraudulent recruitment practices.

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry concurs with the Committee's concern about the proliferation of unregistered Recruiting Agents and the associated risks of exploitation, abuse, and illegal migration. The current registration and monitoring mechanism, facilitated through the e-Migrate portal, has significantly enhanced transparency and accountability among stakeholders including RAs, Foreign Employers, and emigrants. As per Section 24 of the Emigration Act, 1983, the violation of the provisions of the Act is a criminal offence. The punishment for offences such as illegal emigration, violating emigration rules, providing false information, altering documents, charging excessive fees, and cheating an emigrant, includes imprisonment up to two years and/or a fine of up to 2,000 rupees.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.27**

#### **Coordination Among Stakeholders in Cracking Fraudulent Practices in Emigration**

The Committee have been informed that the Protector of Emigrants maintains close coordination with law enforcement agencies, like police and cybercrime units, to tackle fraudulent practices and reinforce the integrity of the emigration process. Similarly, regular coordination is maintained with Bureau of immigration for discussing

**patterns/trends in emigration and sharing details of violations with each other. However, the reality on ground speaks volumes on how the scamsters circumvent the efforts already in place. The Committee, hence, recommend that inter-agency co-ordination among law enforcement agencies and inter-ministerial exchanges may be stepped up through frequent assessment exercises of all stakeholders to track down and prevent operations of illegal networks which dupe citizens with fake job offers.**

### **Reply of the Government**

Government accords utmost priority to the safety, security and well-being of Indian nationals proceeding for employment abroad. As and when complaints against the illegal agents/dubious firms luring Indian youth in false recruitment offers through various channels are received, such matters are referred to the State police for investigation and prosecution under the relevant legal provisions of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS) and other legislations in place including the ones enacted by some State Governments.

In the cyber domain, action is also taken against illegal recruiting agents in association with Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C), MHA and State Police authorities. Requests to take down social media posts of illegal Recruiting Agents from all over India have been regularly shared with I4C.

Ministry also issues advisories through eMigrate portal, social media handles and other modes of publicity about the perils of fake job rackets and ways to prevent the same. Till December 2024, a total of 3,111 unregistered agents in country have been notified on the eMigrate portal. The awareness campaign on safe and legal migration is carried out by the Ministry and the POEs across the country from time to time by conducting workshops, trainings, information sessions, digital campaigns for media groups, police officials and law enforcement agencies, local administration, aspiring recruiting agents, entrepreneurs and general public. During these sessions awareness on emigration regulations, schemes beneficial for emigrants like Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY), Pre-Departure Orientation Training (PDOT), eMigrate portal and various advisories issued by Indian Embassies are brought to the notice of all stakeholders, including job seekers, and advise them to verify all antecedents of Recruiting Agents before accepting any kind of employment offer and not be enticed and entrapped in fraudulent job offers.

In order to enhance inter-agency coordination, the Ministry organized a one-day Conclave with the representatives of the MEA registered Recruiting Agents (RA) Associations on 11 March

2025, which was inaugurated by the Minister of State for External Affairs and Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh. The Conclave was organized with the objective to forge greater synergies among the stakeholders in the emigration process and minimize the space for illegal recruitment. The Conclave was attended by the senior officers from the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Ministry of External Affairs, Resident Commissioners of State Governments/UTs and subject domain experts. The Conclave also provided an opportunity to discuss and deliberate upon various facets of emigration process.

The Ministry has also requested State/UT governments to nominate a nodal officer for effective collaboration in tracking and redressal of grievances and complaints against the unregistered recruiting agents. A number of States/UTs have nominated such nodal officer so far and the office of PGE and the POEs are engaging and working with the nodal officers to resolution of grievances against the illegal RAs in effective and transparent manner.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.29**

#### **Recruitment of Female Domestic Workers Through State Recruitment Agencies**

**The Committee understand that since 2016, women who are ECR (Emigration Clearance Required) passport holders can travel abroad to ECR countries for employment only through 13 State Government recruitment agencies, if they are 30 years and above. These agencies are NORKA Roots and ODEPC of Kerala; OMCL of Tamil Nadu; UPFC of Uttar Pradesh; OMCAP of Andhra Pradesh; TOMCOM of Telangana; RSLDC of Rajasthan; KUWSSB of Karnataka; KVTSDC of Karnataka; M/s Pan IIT alumni Reach for Jharkhand Foundation of Jharkhand and Bihar State and Overseas Placement Bureau of Bihar. Basically, only State-run Recruitment Agents have the mandate to recruit women domestic workers going to the ECR countries and the private recruitment agents are kept out of the process. The Committee consider this as a laudable step in ensuring this very vulnerable category of overseas job seekers are not exploited by private agents. However, the Committee are worried that the prospective domestic workers from most of the States are not lucky to be under this safety net and are at the mercy of unscrupulous agents. The Committee, hence, recommend that the Ministry may immediately take up with all the States to set up State-run Recruitment Agents, especially in States likes Punjab, Gujarat, Orissa and the North East. The Ministry should keep strict vigilance through the Protector of Emigrants that no loophole is there in the system and the private agents violating the provisions are punished strictly.**

## **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry acknowledges high vulnerability of female domestic workers seeking employment abroad and affirms that safeguarding their dignity, safety and rights remains a priority. As observed by the Committee, the Ministry has restricted the recruitment of ECR-category women domestic workers (aged 30 years and above) exclusively through State-run Recruitment Agencies since 2016. This policy has proven effective in minimizing exploitation, ensuring accountability, and providing a secure channel for overseas employment.

As of now there are 14 State-run Recruiting Agencies viz. (i) NORKA Roots & (ii) Overseas Development and Employment Promotion Consultants of Kerala (iii) Overseas Manpower Corporation Ltd. of Tamil Nadu (iv) Uttar Pradesh Financial Corporation of Uttar Pradesh (v) Overseas Manpower Company Andhra Pradesh Ltd. of Andhra Pradesh (vi) Telangana Overseas Manpower Company Ltd. of Telangana (vii) Rajasthan Skill & Livelihoods Development Corporation of Rajasthan (viii) Karnataka State Unorganized Workers Society Security Board of Karnataka (ix) Karnataka Vocational Training & Skill Development Corporation of Karnataka (x) M/s Pan IIT Alummi Reach for Jharkhand Foundation of Jharkhand (xi) Bihar State Overseas Placement Bureau of Bihar, (xii) World Skill Center, Odisha, (xiii) Punjab GharGhar Rozgar and Karobar Mission, Punjab and (xiv) Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam Limited, Haryana with Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam Limited being latest in the list.

The Ministry concurs with the Committee's concern that women from States currently lacking such agencies are disproportionately exposed to the risk of exploitation by illegal or unregistered agents. In this regard, it may be noted that high emigration states such as Punjab, Haryana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana and Odisha have their own state-run recruiting agencies. The Ministry is promoting and providing all assistance to State governments and their agencies in applying for registration certificate for overseas recruitment. The State governments of Mizoram and Himachal Pradesh are also in the process of applying for registration of their agencies as State RAs.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.30**

#### **Outcome Oriented Awareness Campaigns Against Illegal Recruitment Practices**

**The Committee have taken note of the various efforts undertaken by the government to raise awareness about illegal recruitment practices including advisories/alerts, press releases, outreach activities, etc. But the ever-increasing instances of illegal migration highlights a persistent lack of awareness, necessitating alternative solutions to combat the issue. According to the Committee, the problem calls for a multi-pronged approach with MEA coordinating and working in tandem with several other Ministries for effectively organizing awareness campaigns. The Committee desire that in high-out emigration states, outcome- oriented campaigns in vernacular languages using local channels, social media platforms, civil society organisations and Panchayati Raj Institutions may be resorted to for wider coverage and adaptation.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry concurs with the Committee's observation that despite various initiatives undertaken such as issuing public advisories, alerts, and press releases, along with periodic outreach programs, there remains a critical gap in public awareness, particularly in high-emigration States. The rise in incidents involving illegal recruitment and fraudulent job offers underscores the urgent need for a more targeted, localized, and collaborative approach to public sensitization.

The Ministry is actively collaborating with other government departments, including the Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C), to combat the growing menace of fake recruitment offers and overseas job scams including on virtual domain. As part of this coordinated effort, MEA is collaborating with I4C to educate the public about fraudulent schemes and the importance of verifying job offers through official channels. This inter-agency cooperation aims to protect Indian citizens, particularly prospective emigrants, from exploitation and ensure safe and legal migration practices.

The Ministry organized a one-day Conclave with the representatives of the MEA registered Recruiting Agents (RA) Associations on 11 March 2025, which was inaugurated by the Minister of State for External Affairs and Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh. The Conclave was organized with the objective to forge greater synergies with the RA

fraternity for effective implementation of the Emigration Act 1983 and minimize the space for illegal recruitment. The Conclave also provided an opportunity to discuss and deliberate upon various facets of emigration process. Three thematic panel discussions focusing on Skill Development; streamlining Foreign Employer Registration; and Grievance Redressal, were held during the Conclave in addition to a Q&A Session with the Joint Secretary (OE) & PGE. The Conclave was also attended by the senior officers from the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoLE), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), Ministry of External Affairs, and Ministry of Home Affairs. As a major initiative for dissemination of information on safe and legal ways of migration in form and content easily understood by the masses, Hon'ble MoS also launched a Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendra (PBSK) social media Channel to disseminate information on safe and legal channels of migration on real-time basis.

The awareness campaigns (including those in regional languages) on safe and legal migration are being carried out by the Ministry and POEs across the country by conducting workshops, trainings, information sessions, digital campaigns for media groups, police officials and law enforcement agencies, local administration, aspiring recruiting agents, entrepreneurs and general public. The POE Offices have been working closely with the State Government officials, civil society, and media to raise awareness about safe and legal channels of migration. Digital Outreach Programme using social media platforms to disseminate information about eMigrate portal, emigration rules and regulations, safe and legal mobility pathways, PBBY policy etc. are being carried out by the PoEs.

Some of the specific campaigns to generate awareness on safe and legal migration among emigrants, are as follows:

(a) Publication of advertisements in theaters in Chennai City and other prominent districts of Tamil Nadu and Radio FM ads by PoE, Chennai.

(b) “Paathu Ponga” campaign by POE Chennai, during which a walkathon was organized in Chennai in February 2025 at Elliot beach road involving participation of local celebrities, eminent dignitaries, senior government officials, media and stakeholders including authorised Recruitment Agents (RAs).

(c) Regular posting of short videos on social media platforms in Hindi, Punjabi and English on safe and legal migration, emigration rules and regulations by PoE, Chandigarh.

(d) Outreach programmes to educate migrants, stakeholders and the public about the Emigration Act, 1983 and differentiate between legal and illegal migration with Educational institutions, emigrants, agents and law enforcement officials conducted by PoE, Mumbai.

(e) Distribution of Do's and Don'ts Pamphlets along with ECR passports: The PoE Offices are collaborating with Regional Passport Offices (RPOs) for distribution of a Do's and Don'ts pamphlets along with emigration check required passports. The Pamphlets have information related to safe and legal pathways of emigration as well as emergency contact details.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.31**

#### **Deportation of Illegal Immigrants from United States**

**In the wake of deportations of illegal Indian immigrants back to the country from the United States and probable mass deportations in the future, the Committee had expressed their feelings in unequivocal terms about the humanitarian concerns surrounding the issue. In this regard, the Committee have been apprised that since India is against illegal immigration, the country is committed to taking back its national who is an illegal immigrant to another country. Further, it was informed that most countries have necessary SOPs in place to handle deportation-related matters and, accordingly, MEA too has an SOP in place, whereby nationality and security verification process is undertaken by MEA in coordination with other agencies. Responding to the Committees' shared feelings about detainees restrained by handcuffs, waist chains, and leg irons during flights by US Air Force, it was informed that the US actions were in accordance with the Restraints Policy No. 11155.1, Section 5.10, effective from November 19, 2012. The Committee were further informed that honouring the repeated requests from MEA not to shackle deportees, particularly women and children, in the second deportation flight undertaken on 15 February, 2025, women and children were not shackled by the US Immigration and**

**Customs Enforcement.** Though the Committee also view that it is the mandated responsibility of any government to take back its citizens who have entered and lived in a country without proper documentation, they desire that the Government should deal with situation in a more empathetic manner upholding the human rights of migrants and explore ways and means to facilitate the return of such illegal immigrants to India without hurting their self-respect.

### **Reply of the Government**

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

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 Ministry of External Affairs has strongly registered its concerns with the U.S. authorities on the treatment meted out to deportees on the flight that landed on 5 February 2025, particularly with respect to the use of shackles, especially on women. The U.S. side has confirmed that no

women or children were restrained on the deportation flights that landed in India on 15 and 16 February 2025 respectively. This has been confirmed and recorded by the 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 visit of the Prime Minister to U.S. on 12-13 February 2025.

The Ministry of External Affairs remains engaged with the US side regarding the humane treatment of deportees during deportation operations. Over the last several weeks, the U.S. Government has been carrying out deportations by charter or commercial flights to India, wherein no restraints were used. From 20th January 2025 to 14th May 2025, a total of 1,011 Indian nationals have been deported back to India.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.32**

#### **Reintegration of Returned Indian Deportees**

**The Committee have been informed that the responsibility of reintegration of returned Indian deportees rests with the respective State governments from where the emigrants belong. However, since involuntary returns and reintegration in countries of origin have repercussions on the human rights of migrants, the Committee are of the view that solid reintegration programs are required mainly by the Central Government to prevent those who have already been returned do not risk their lives by undertaking dangerous journeys again. Hence, they recommend specific and detailed re-integration programmes by the Government, integrating the inputs, expertise and experience of those States which have developed ways and means to reintegrate workers returning from abroad.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee. It may, however, be noted that responsibility of reintegration of returned Indian migrants rests with respective State Governments from where the emigrants belong and not with the Central Government. Various State Governments have, therefore, developed ways and means to reintegrate workers returning from abroad.

During the pandemic, under the Vande Bharat Mission, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Civil Aviation, and Ministry of External Affairs jointly launched ‘SWADES – Skilled Worker Arrival Database for Employment Support’. The initiative aims at empowering the returning citizens with relevant employment opportunities by creating a database of qualified citizens based on their skill sets and experience to tap into and fulfill demand of Indian and foreign countries. The returning citizens are required to fill up an online SWADES Skills Card. The database thus generated has been integrated with India’s ASEEM portal. The portal provides employee connect for prospective employers.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.33**

#### **Streamlining Legal Migration**

**The Committee observe that E-Migrate is a comprehensive e-Governance portal developed to facilitate safe and legal migration of Indian workers abroad. The e-Migrate project, launched in 2015, is designed to facilitate emigration of ECR category workers emigrating to notified countries for employment purposes. The Committee are happy to note that e-Migrate (Version 2.0) was launched on 14 October, 2024 and was integrated with the Passport Seva Project (PSP) of MEA for validation of Passport details of migrant workers registering on this portal and with the Bureau of Immigration (BoI) of the Ministry of Home Affairs for online validation of EC granted by POEs. The new portal has also been integrated with UMANG, Bhashini, Digilocker, SPV- CSC (Meity) DG Shipping systems and SBI e-payment gateway. The Portal provides for a contactless and paperless process to conduct recruitment process for FEs (Foreign Employers) and Recruiting Agents (RAs) as a fully digitized B-2-B platform. The portal also provides a comprehensive and online database of emigrants to Missions, RAs, FEs and insurance agencies to make the whole emigration cycle faster and transparent. While acknowledging the importance of e-Migrate portal as a transformation initiative of the Ministry of External Affairs aimed at making the emigration process easy, organized & humane, the Committee desire that the portal is kept up to date with easy to navigate provisions and free of technical glitches.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry agrees with the recommendation of the Committee. The process of overseas employment of Indian nationals holding Emigration Check Required (ECR) passports and emigrating to any of the 18 notified ECR countries is done through e-Migrate portal. The web-based application makes the process of emigration fully digital, transparent, safe, legal, humane,

efficient, convenient, and faster. It seamlessly brings all stakeholders, including Foreign Employers (FEs), registered Recruiting Agents (RAs) and the prospective emigrants on a common platform and enables MEA to capture comprehensive and online database. A dedicated helpline and support system is also available to assist emigrants and other stakeholders to address any query/issue.

An updated, revamped and user friendly eMigrate V2.0 portal was inaugurated on 14 October 2024. The revamped portal has been integrated with DigiLocker to provide for storage and access by users of documents across the world; Common Services Centers (CSC) to enable delivery of emigration related services through its network of over 5 lakh centers across the country; UMANG for providing access to pan-India e-Gov services; BHASHINI to enable access to information in regional languages; SBIPay for provisioning of an additional digital payment gateway with zero transaction charges; Bureau of Immigration for seamless and hassle free travel of emigrants; Passport Seva Portal for e-verification of Passports, insurance companies for procurement of mandatory PBBY policy etc., among others. The eMigrate Mobile App has also been developed for the first time which allows the stakeholders to have easy access to major services available on the portal, including tracking of application status, obtaining list of registered as well as unregistered recruiting agents, filing grievances etc.

The portal is functioning efficiently with multiple online features and information available to the users. There is no complaint regarding fraudulent activities. The functioning of the portal is being monitored regularly by a dedicated 24x7 technical team.

The revamped eMigrate application has been developed with the latest technology and security features. There is a 24x7 dedicated Network Operating Team (NOC) for real time monitoring and prevention of threats. The Application Security and Vulnerability Assessment is regularly done by the nodal Government Agency. Regular security audit of the application is also carried out to counter any vulnerability and make it robust and secure.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.34**

#### **Make the Campaign 'Surakshit Jayen Prashikshit Jayen' More Meaningful**

**The Committee have been informed that, as per the Emigration Rules, the Recruitment Agent can collect only the prescribed amount in respect of services rendered from the**

prospective emigrant by giving a receipt for the amount collected and any act contrary to it, is punishable. But, a 2023 International Labour Organisation (ILO) report found that nearly 60 per cent of low-skilled Indian workers migrating to Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries paid exorbitant recruitment fees, leading to debt bondage. Though the Government has introduced the e-Migrate system to streamline ethical overseas recruitment, the Committee are sure that its effectiveness depends on accessibility and awareness. The Committee, therefore, desire that the campaign 'Surakshit Jayen Prashikshit Jayen' (Go Safe, Go Trained) live up to its name by highlighting the recruitment fees to be paid to agents, provisions for ensuring self-protection, etc. and strive for well-informed migrant youths who are prepared for a seamlessly integrated and safe stay abroad.

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation made by the Committee. The Ministry and the PoE Offices have been carrying out awareness campaigns which also include targeted messaging on migrant rights, grievance redressal mechanisms, health and safety protocols, financial literacy, and consular support services. Migrants are sensitized on recognizing fraudulent agents and verifying job offers through official portals like e-Migrate.

Ministry has taken several initiatives such as the Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojna (PBBY) and Pre-Departure Orientation & Training (PDOT) to ensure that migrant workers undertake safe migration, have decent working and living conditions in destination countries, are aware of their rights and have access to GoI welfare schemes.

The Government of India accords highest priority to the safety, protection and well-being of Indian workers abroad by various mechanisms in place to ensure safety and protection of Indian workers. The Government has established various mechanisms to enable Indian workers abroad to reach out to the Indian Embassies/Consulates in case they need any assistance. Indian workers can contact the Embassies / Consulates through various channels like walk-in, email, social media, multilingual 24x7 emergency numbers and also grievance redressal portals like MADAD, CPGRAMS etc. In addition, Indian Embassies / Consulates abroad have established Toll Free Helplines, WhatsApp numbers and have launched mobile Apps to enable Indian nationals contact respective Indian Embassies / Consulates when in distress or in emergency situation.

The Embassies in Gulf Countries have provisions for shelter home to assist Indian women in distress by providing boarding and lodging, medical treatment and arranging for their

repatriation. Female workers who are stranded and are in distress can approach the Embassies at any time of the day and they are accommodated and provided all facilities till their repatriation to India. Besides, Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayata Kendras (PBSK) have been set up in New Delhi and at Dubai (UAE), Riyadh & Jeddah (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia) and Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia) to provide assistance, guidance and counselling to Indian nationals in distress.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.36**

#### **Professionals Trapped in Job Rackets in Southeast Asia**

The Committee have noted instances of dubious firms involved in fake recruitment job offers having lured Indian nationals mostly through social media channels to South-East Asian countries including Cambodia, Myanmar, Lao PDR to keep them as bonded labourers to carry out cybercrime and other fraudulent activities from scam centers operating in these countries. Though the exact number of Indian nationals stuck in these countries is not known, the Committee have been informed that through concerted efforts, 1091 Indian national from Cambodia, 770 from Laos and 497 from Myanmar, including software engineers have been rescued till date. This, further highlights the vulnerabilities faced by Indian job seekers, even professionals, in the hands of unscrupulous agents and middlemen. The Committee find that the advisories and social media posts about the fake job rackets or similar communications issued by the Ministry or respective Indian Missions/Posts abroad through their official websites are unable to prevent our nationals from getting enticed and entrapped in the fraudulent job offers in these countries. The Committee, hence, recommend that the Ministry may need to go much beyond mere listing out fake agents in its efforts to protect Indians from trafficking and cyber slavery. Even the educated Indian professionals need to be educated through all channels possible that genuine foreign employers usually require educational certificates attested by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (HRD) and the MEA and legitimate companies have professional websites with clear contact details and overall feedback from employees on platforms like Glassdoor or LinkedIn. Above all, the Committee desire that our embassies or consulates in the destination countries should always be available for assistance in verifying the employer through email or phone calls.

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendations of the Committee. It has come to the notice of the Ministry instances of dubious firms involved in fake recruitment job offers have lured Indian nationals mostly through social media channels to the South-East Asian countries including Cambodia, Myanmar, Lao PDR, and made them to carry out cyber crime and other

illegal activities from scam centres operating in these countries. In the last two years, countries in South-East Asia including Cambodia, Myanmar, Lao PDR have witnessed an increase in online cyber crimes.

The exact number of Indian nationals stuck in Cambodia, Myanmar, Lao PDR is not known, as Indian nationals often reach these scam centres in the country on their own volition through fraudulent/unscrupulous recruitment agents/agencies and through illegal channels. They approach the Government or any other authority for rescue when they realise that they were trapped.

The Government accords utmost priority to the safety, security and well-being of Indian nationals abroad. The Ministry through Indian Embassies / Consulates abroad takes pro-active measures to rescue Indian nationals trapped in foreign countries, whenever such cases come to the notice of the Ministry. Our Embassies in Cambodia, Myanmar and Lao PDR remains vigilant and is actively monitoring the situation. They coordinate the rescue and repatriation of affected Indian nationals with active support of the local authorities. The Embassies respond promptly if a case of an Indian national is reported and takes appropriate action for registering the case with the local police, issues travel documents, help them contact their family in India, and coordinate till their rescue and final repatriation to India.

Ministry frequently issues advisories, including on social media platforms and media briefings, about fake job rackets. Such communications have also been issued by the Indian Embassies in Cambodia, Myanmar, and Lao PDR through its websites and social media handles. Complaints against the unregistered agents and the dubious firms luring Indian youth in false recruitment offers through various channels are regularly shared with the respective State Governments and Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) for suitable action. Information about unregistered agents is also uploaded and updated on regular basis on the e-Migrate Portal.

To spread awareness on cyber crimes, the Central Government has taken steps which, inter-alia, include dissemination of relevant information through SMS, Indian Cybercrime Coordination Centre (I4C), MHA's social media account, radio campaigns, engaged MyGov for publicity in multiple channels, organizing cyber safety and security awareness weeks in association with States/UTs, newspaper advertisement on digital arrest scams, announcements in Delhi Metros on digital arrest, and other modus operandi of cyber crimes.

The Government has established various channels to enable Indian nationals abroad to reach out to the Embassy/Consulate in case they need any assistance or in distress. They can contact the

Embassy/Consulate through email, multilingual 24x7 emergency numbers, grievance redressal portal like MADAD, CPGRAMS, and eMigrate, and social media etc. Our Missions in Cambodia, Myanmar, and Lao PDR hold regular meetings with the local authorities on rescue and repatriation of Indian nationals from scam centres. Embassies have put in place an emergency contact numbers, and email so that victims can reach out to the Embassy any time.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.39**

#### **Consultations Required for Finalising the New Emigration Bill**

**The Committee understand that the proposed Bill to replace the Emigration Act, 1983 aims at establishing a hassle-free, robust, transparent and comprehensive emigration management framework that facilitates safe and orderly migration for Overseas Employment aspirants. However, to address the challenges posed by evolving landscape, wider consultations are required beyond putting it up for public consultation. In this regard the Committee urge that once the elements of the Bill are identified, specific consultations should be made with the Standing Committee, the State Governments and the Diaspora Organisations to make it a healthy Bill worthy of implementation.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation by the Committee is duly noted. The Ministry will hold wide-ranging consultation with the objective of incorporating views of various stakeholders appropriately.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.42**

#### **Settlement of Claims under Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY) Scheme**

**Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY) is a mandatory insurance scheme initially launched in 2003 for Emigration Check Required (ECR) category workers going to ECR countries for overseas employment. PBBY provides an insurance cover of Rs. 10 lakhs in case of accidental death or permanent disability and some other benefits at a nominal insurance premium of Rs. 275/ Rs. 375 for a period of two/three years. The Scheme has been comprehensively revamped in 2017 with facility for online renewal. The Committee find with dismay that only 2197 claims have been settled out of 80,37,200 policies issued**

since its inception. From FY 20-21 to FY 23-24, out of 418 claims, only 156 have been settled showing a dismal settlement ratio. Given the large number of migrants, having very limited claims seems odd to the Committee making them feel that there is a problem in the way the scheme is working. This is especially so, when the PBBY scheme provides for reimbursement of medical expenses up to Rs.1 lakh on hospitalization in emergencies, reimbursement of cost of transportation of mortal remains in accidental death along with cost of return airfare of one attendant, etc. This, the Committee feel might be on account of not honouring most of the claims by insurance companies on flimsy grounds. Since migrants workers are the most vulnerable section of the Diaspora community, the Committee are of the view that they should not be left at the mercy of insurance companies making the scheme infructuous. The Committee, hence, recommend that our missions should assist and guide the emigrant during the claim process and direct the insurance companies not to deny the claims without proper justification. Further, the missions may also help emigrants navigate the complaint process when their claims are not honoured. The Missions may also ensure that the cost of transportation of mortal remains in accidental death of an insured emigrant is reimbursed by the companies and apprise the Committee of the details of such reimbursement done in the last five years.

#### **Reply of the Government**

Subscription to the Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana (PBBY) is mandatory for all Emigration Check Required (ECR) category passport holding workers going to ECR countries. Migrant workers who emigrated to ECR countries through legal route after getting Emigration Clearance from the Protector of Emigrants, are insured against accidental death or permanent disability under PBBY policy.

Number of claims under Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana (PBBY) are likely to be on the lower side as the Scheme covers accidental death or permanent disability only. As such natural deaths are not covered under the Scheme.

On receipt of all required documents, the PBBY claims are processed within a week's time by insurance companies. However, major reasons for delay in settlement of claims is discrepancy in documents or absence of all requisite documents.

The claimant can approach the Ministry for help if an insurance company denies to settle a claim on flimsy grounds. Ministry then directs the concerned insurance company to re-examine into the

matter for resolution of claimant’s grievance. An emigrant can also approach the Indian embassy located in that country for help and guidance.

Data of insurance claims under PBBY settled and amount paid during period 2019-2023 by the insurance agencies is as follows:

IFFCO Tokio			New India Assurance	
Year	Total Claim Nos.	Amount Paid	Total Claim Nos.	Amount Paid
2019	47	43,632,184	6	5,000,000
2020	37	35,706,709	9	6,000,000
2021	35	35,416,405	14	13,013,000
2022	20	15,200,535	13	12,024,400
2023	41	29,005,995	27	18,359,437
Total	180	158,961,828	69	54,396,837

The Committee’s recommendation is duly noted.

[File No. AA/Par/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

#### **Recommendation No.44**

##### **Setting Up of Legal Panels in Missions/Posts**

**It is seen that under ICWF, provisions are there for setting up legal panels in countries with sizeable Indian Diaspora, paying of fines/penalty for petty crimes for release of prisoners and assisting Indian women in distress. However, the Committee find that till June 2024 only 4213 Indian nationals were extended legal assistance from the fund. Keeping in view the fact that migrant workers and distressed Indian women are the most vulnerable sections of the Diaspora community and may not have the resources for legal assistance in case of need, the Committee recommend that legal panels may be set up in all the Indian Missions/Posts having Diaspora community, irrespective of the size of the Diaspora and immediate legal assistance should be provided when requested for the same.**

## **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry shares the concerns of the Committee for migrant workers and vulnerable Indian women, and remains committed to providing legal aid to distressed Indian nationals abroad.

While the figure of 4,213 Indian nationals to whom legal assistance was extended from the ICWF may appear modest relative to the overall size of the Indian diaspora, it must be emphasized that ICWF is intended as a targeted support for those in genuine distress or legal vulnerability, and not as a blanket legal cover for all Indian nationals abroad. Many members of the diaspora, particularly those in developed countries or on long-term visas, either do not require such assistance or are covered under local legal systems, employer support, or private insurance. The ICWF is specifically targeted, and the usage reflects careful screening, need-based disbursement, and resource optimization.

The number of diaspora members receiving legal assistance through ICWF fund has been steadily increasing due to enhanced awareness, proactive outreach by Indian Embassies/Consulates, and improved implementation practices. The Ministry agrees that access to timely legal assistance is critical for vulnerable diaspora groups. Nevertheless, universal deployment of legal panels in all Embassies regardless of diaspora size may not be a judicious way of optimally using the available resources, especially in countries where the Indian community is extremely small or transient, or where there is minimal incidence of distress or legal vulnerability, or where local legal frameworks offer robust, affordable public defenders or legal aid. Retaining a panel of lawyers is often expensive, and therefore a context-specific approach may be more practical and efficient, where legal panels are prioritised in high-need locations where migrant workers are concentrated and face greater legal exposure. Indian Embassies/Consulates in such countries are instructed to maintain active legal panels, with clear protocols for urgent intervention. Accordingly, as per the existing ICWF guidelines, Embassies can set up panels of lawyers for giving legal assistance to Indian nationals in distress in GCC countries and 20 other countries with large Indian diaspora, as per the list approved by the Ministry.

This Ministry remains committed to protecting the legal interests of vulnerable Indians abroad. In this context, Ministry is reviewing its mechanisms to increase the number of empanelled lawyers in Embassies dealing with large Indian diaspora, expand awareness campaigns so that more vulnerable individuals can seek help, and evaluate the feasibility of additional legal panels in emerging diaspora locations.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

## **Recommendation No.45**

### **Expeditious Transportation of Mortal Remains**

**The Committee are informed that the CPV Division in the Ministry of External Affairs is the nodal Division to coordinate with all Missions / Posts abroad to provide help to Indian nationals in distress including in cases of deaths, local cremation/burial or transportation of mortal remains to their hometowns in India and settlement of insurance / compensation claims. Transportation of mortal remains involves completion of certain formalities by the local authorities before such body/bodies are allowed to be transported to India and, in case of unnatural deaths, police investigations are to be completed, the procedures of which differ from country to country resulting in no fixed time frame for eventual transportation. Though the Committee note that our Missions attach highest importance to the issue of expeditious transportation of mortal remains of Indians who die abroad, there are instances galore when extreme difficulties were faced by the kith and kin of the deceased in bringing the dead bodies back home. In view of the emotions involved in such cases, the Committee desire that the nodal division in MEA and the Missions/Posts abroad should accord utmost priority to ensuring expeditious transportation of the mortal remains by making all efforts needed to obtain the necessary clearances. In this regard, it would be advisable for all Missions to have a Death Registration Desk with a designated email id to be monitored all the time. The details of the same should be made available in the website of the Ministry and the Mission.**

### **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry has noted the recommendations of the Committee and have initiated steps to implement the suggestions made by the Committee at the earliest. Indian Embassies/Consulates accord utmost priority to the safety, security and well-being of Indian nationals abroad and render consular services to distressed Indian nationals on a priority basis. Given the sensitive nature of the issue of transportation of mortal remains of Indian citizens from foreign countries, our Embassies/Consulates have been directed to further streamline the process of repatriation of mortal remains by liaisioning with local authorities in the countries of accreditation thereby striving to obtain faster clearances and documents necessary for the repatriation.

Indian Embassies/Consulates with large Indian Diaspora already have a Death Registration Desk along with a designated email id whereas in other smaller Indian Embassies/Consulates, death registration services are provided by the Consular Wing on a priority basis. All our Embassies/Consulates have a working 24x7 emergency consular distress helpline number which

is published on the Embassy/Consulate's website apart from media handles and other social media platforms to attend to such cases in particular.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.48**

#### **PoEs as Actual First Point of Contact in Case of Deaths of Indians Abroad**

**The Committee have been informed that in case of death, Protector of Emigrants (PoE) works closely with Indian Missions for the timely dispatch of mortal remains and it acts as the first point of contact between the emigrant's family and agencies abroad. It was further given to understand that POEs also work in assisting the family in obtaining insurance claims by coordinating with Missions to gather necessary legal and medical documents. The Committee, however, are a bit apprehensive about the actual experience of many families who have faced the death of a bread winner abroad vis-a-vis the handholding offered by the PoEs in the respective States. The Committee, hence, desire PoEs to actually live up to what is being claimed by becoming the actual first point of contact between the emigrant's family and agencies abroad and in ensuring the settlement of their Insurance claims. The name and contact details of the nodal officer for the same from PoE should be prominently shown in the website. The Committee also desire to see the PoE-wise data of instances of dispatch of mortal remains and settlement of insurance claims handled by them during the last three years.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry acknowledges that the loss of a loved one overseas, especially the family's primary breadwinner, poses immense emotional and economical challenges. In this context, the Ministry fully agrees with the Committee's recommendation that PoEs must function as the first point of contact for bereaved families and take proactive responsibility in facilitating the repatriation of mortal remains and the settlement of insurance claims in a humane and efficient manner. However, it may be noted that a number of such cases are directly handled by the Indian Embassies / Consulates abroad in coordination with the family of the deceased, without involving the PoEs. In light of the Committee's concerns and suggestions, the POEs have been instructed to coordinate with the Embassies / Consulates in assisting repatriation of mortal remains and assist the family of deceased in settlement of insurance claims. The POEs have also been advised to maintain a database of such instances where they have assisted in repatriation of mortal remains and settlement of insurance claims.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

## **Recommendation No.49**

### **Utilization of Pre-Departure Orientation Training Programme Funds**

**Pre-Departure Orientation Training Programme was launched by the Ministry of External Affairs in January, 2018 under the ‘Surakshit Jaayein Prashikshit Jaayein’ campaign of the Government of India, for enhancing soft skills of Indian emigrant workers, going abroad specially to Gulf and other ECR countries. Under this programme, the emigrant workers are given one day free of cost orientation training aiming to help them understand local rules and regulations of the destination country and their culture, tradition, language etc. PDOT also sensitizes migrant workers about pathways to safe and legal migration and various government programmes for their welfare and protection. The Committee are given to note that since the inception of the PDOT programme in 2018, a total of 1,72,220 emigrant workers have been imparted orientation training till 31st December 2024 and financial assistance from the allocated budget is disbursed to the State government run departments/agencies. However, the Committee are startled to see that in 2022-23, out of the Budget Grant, nil was the funds released to the State Agencies in 2023-24, Rs. 79.77 lakhs out of Rs. 1.20 Crore was given out and in 2024-25, out of Rs. 1 crore Budget grant, only Rs. 16.08 lakhs have been released till January 2025. The Committee are really concerned about the performance of the scheme and hence recommend that a review of the PDOT scheme may be undertaken to identify the issues in its effective implementation under intimation to this Committee within three months.**

### **Reply of the Government**

During the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Pre-Departure Orientation Training was stopped from March 2020 to November 2021. The PDOT Centers which were closed-down during the pandemic, were gradually re-opened. After resumption of PDOT in November 2021 in some centres, initially the training did not pick up pace due to low demand as the pandemic had led to large scale job loss for emigrants going abroad and there were restrictions in-place during the subsequent waves of the pandemic. The training started to gradually pick up pace in most centres from late 2022 onwards. A proposal for opening of 58 new PDOT centres in 11 states had been approved by the Ministry in July, 2022 and the same was conveyed to the concerned states. The Ministry reached out to the States in September, 2022 requesting them to send requisition of funds for PDOT. Keeping in view the expansion of the programme, the Division had requested for a budget grant of Rs. 3 crore for FY 2023-24.

In the Financial Year 2023-24 on receipt of demands for funds from the states of Telangana, Punjab and Karnataka, funds amounting to Rs. 79.77 lakhs were disbursed accordingly out of the

allocated budget amount of Rs. 3 Crore. In January, 2024, the Ministry again reached out to the concerned State Governments to seek their proposals for allocation of funds to carry out the PDOT. Additionally, in March, 2024, the Ministry reached out to the Principal Secretaries of the concerned States seeking their intervention to operationalise the approved new PDOT centres in their states and send their budget proposals for running of the centres. Subsequent reminders to follow-up on the subject matter were sent in July, October and December, 2024 and February, 2025.

On receipt of demands from the states of Assam, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana during 2024-25, a total amount of Rs. 45,71,300/- was disbursed to the State Agencies of Assam, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana out of the allocated budget. Since the inception of the PDOT programme in 2018, a total of 1,90,362 emigrant workers have been imparted orientation training till 28th February, 2025. The pace of PDOT is expected to pick up during the current Financial Year as Ministry has been closely coordinating with all State Governments/Training Partners to expand the PDOT outreach.

As recommended by the committee, the Ministry will re-examine the PDOT programme to make it more effective and useful for prospective emigrants.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.51**

#### **Revision and Updation of PDOT Manuals and Booklets**

**The Committee note that the PDOT curriculum content has been standardized all over the country and Comprehensive PDO Manuals for Master Trainers have been developed in seven languages i.e. Hindi, English, Bangla, Malayalam, Punjabi, Tamil and Telugu. In this regard, the Committee desire to be informed about the details of country-specific pre-departure handbooks/booklets prepared by the India Centre for Migration so far. They also recommend that these booklets are revised and updated periodically so that prospective emigrants are acquainted with the latest rules and regulations of the destination countries as well as about safe and legal migration.**

## **Reply of the Government**

The Committee's recommendation is duly noted. This is to inform that the updated (March 2024) Handbook for Migrant workers traveling to Thailand, Sudan, South Sudan, Malaysia, Libya, Lebanon, Jordan, Indonesia is available on the eMigrate Portal. The handbooks were updated based on the inputs provided by the Embassies abroad.

The Ministry is currently in the process of finalizing the draft of the country-specific handbooks for 6 GCC countries (Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and UAE) and Mauritius. Following this finalization, the handbooks will be translated into Hindi, Bengali, Malayalam, Punjabi, Tamil, Urdu and Telugu.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

## **Recommendation No.52**

### **Outcome of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Conventions**

**The Committee note that the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is being celebrated since 2003 to recognize the contribution of Overseas Indian Community in the development of India and celebrate Indian Diaspora's connection with its roots. The biennial Convention provides a platform to the overseas Indian community to engage with the government and people of the land of their ancestors for mutually beneficial activities. These conventions facilitate networking among the overseas Indian community residing in various parts of the world and enable sharing of experiences in various fields. The Committee note that for the last few years, the Government of India has been organizing the PBD Convention in partnership with one of the State Governments and the recent ones were held in the cities of Gandhinagar (Gujarat), Bengaluru (Karnataka), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), Indore (Madhya Pradesh) and with the very latest being held in Bhubaneswar from 8-10 January, 2025. The Committee are however surprised to note that no Outcome Report of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is being prepared by the Ministry. The Committee fail to understand how in the absence of Outcome Reports the Ministry is able to assess tangible benefits or failure of the Convention or to make improvements in areas where it is lagging. To make PBDs meaningful and outcome oriented, beyond being just grand celebrations, the Committee recommend that the Ministry prepare Outcome Report and, to begin with, the Outcome Report of the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD held at Bhubaneswar may be prepared and placed before this Committee.**

## **Reply of the Government**

As recommended by the Committee, the Ministry has prepared a Report on the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held in Bhubaneswar from 8-10 January, 2025. It is enclosed as **Annexure – I**.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.53**

#### **Participation in PBDs**

**The Committee note that on an average over 3500 members of Indian Diaspora participate per edition in the Convention. It is stated that the revision of the format of the PBD in 2015 has enhanced the participation of the Diaspora besides having participation from HoGs/ HoSs & Ministers of Indian origin from other countries, renowned businessmen, eminent members of the Diaspora abroad and experts from various fields. The Ministry has endeavored to get Diaspora participants from various sectors and disciplines, including but not limited to, trade, business, youth, sports, science & technology, academics, research, engineering and culture as well as from various segments of society, including youth Diaspora, migrant workers and women. The Committee are further informed that the participation in PBD celebration is open to all members of the Indian Diaspora, including the semi-skilled emigrant workers. The Committee, however, regret to note that the Ministry does not maintain any data detailing the profile or statistics about the jobs of the participants. In the absence of such data, the Committee apprehend that participation may be limited to high profile participants and the benefits of the Convention may not extend to the low / semi-skilled and blue-collar workers. The Committee desire that the Ministry evolve a mechanism whereby data with respect to the participants are collected and regularly maintained so as to ensure that the participation and involvement in these Conventions is accommodative of the vulnerable sections of the Diaspora community too.**

## **Reply of the Government**

Ministry has noted the Committee's concern that lack of data on details of participants in the PBD Conventions may lead to a bias towards participation of high-profile individuals and limit the benefits of the Conventions for low/semi-skilled and blue-collar workers within the Indian Diaspora. However, the available empirical evidences are reassuring, particularly considering the fact that participants from the blue-collar workers dominated Gulf countries of Oman, Qatar, etc. have constituted the largest proportion of the total in the recent PBD Conventions. In view of the Committee's suggestion for encouraging more participation from low/semi-skilled and blue-collar workers, Ministry proposes, as a first step, to revise the registration form by including fields such as profession, skill levels, sectors of employment, etc., which will help in identifying skill levels of various participants. Based on the collated data, Ministry will devise and re-design

the different diaspora engagement programmes and events to attract and encourage more participation from the vulnerable sections of the Indian diaspora in the future editions of the PBDs.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.55**

#### **Loka Kerala Sabha**

**The Committee find that in 2017, the State Government of Kerala introduced the Loka Kerala Sabha, a platform designed to involve Non-Resident Keralites in policy making process. The Committee have been informed that the initiative allows Non- Resident Keralites from around the world to share their ideas, discuss issues, and submit policy suggestions directly to the Government of Kerala. Given that State Governments are often the primary entities interacting with migrants and managing migration-related challenges, the Committee welcome such initiatives as it empowers the Diaspora community to play an active role in shaping policies that impact their lives. The Committee urge the Ministry to encourage other State Governments also, especially the ones with large Diaspora community, to look into the feasibility of providing similar platforms allowing NRIs from their State engage with their government and contribute to the society where their roots are.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

Since the adoption of a collaborative ‘All-of-Government approach’ for the diaspora policy, this Ministry has endeavoured to involve other wings of the Government as well as the State Governments in all aspects of Diaspora affairs. State governments, particularly those with large diaspora community, can play an important role in shaping and ensuring optimum effectiveness of the diaspora-related policies, especially since much of the Indian diaspora maintains strong cultural and family ties with their states of origin.

This Ministry encourages the State governments to set up NRI Departments or Commissions to serve as a bridge between the diaspora and state agencies, and to coordinate the welfare schemes, investment facilitation and other diaspora related initiatives of the State governments. Ministry also organizes the Videsh Sampark Programmme whereby the States are apprised about the Diaspora Engagement initiatives and Welfare schemes run by the Government of India. It also provides a platform where the State governments can channel the feedback gathered from their diaspora to this Ministry, which in turn helps in shaping the larger diaspora policy of the Government. The latest recommendations of the Loka Kerala Sabha are being examined by the

Ministry. The details of the best practices in the states, such as the Loka Kerala Sabha, when shared with this Ministry, are also disseminated to other State Governments for their perusal.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.56**

#### **Know India Programme**

**The Committee note that the Know India Programme was launched with the purpose of familiarizing the People of Indian Origin (PIO) youth between the age group of 21-35 years with contemporary India, through a three-week orientation programme and providing them an exposure to the country of their origin. It aims to promote awareness on different facets of life in India and the progress made by the country in various fields. The Committee note that 81 editions of KIP have been completed since its inception in 2003, with the participation of more than 2800 Indian Diaspora Youth from 54 countries. The programme was revamped to widen its scope and coverage and the Ministry is currently conducting eight to nine editions of KIP during each financial year since FY 2023-24. Considering the fact that the programme envisages direct engagement of the Government with the Overseas Indian youth, most of whom visit India for the first time, the Committee urge the Ministry to consider incorporating more diverse regional experiences, facilitating meaningful interactions with local communities, providing tailored learning tracks based on participants' interests while ensuring accessibility and inclusivity to a wider range of participants beyond merely a tourist's experience. The Ministry may also consider creating online platforms for KIP alumni to network, share experiences, collaborate on projects and offer mentorship opportunities to guide participants in applying their learning in their professional lives.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry takes note of the Committee's valuable suggestions to make the Know India Program (KIP) more meaningful, tailored and collaborative. The Ministry has been steadfast in its effort to incorporate experiences from different regions of India for the KIP participants by facilitating their visits to at least two States in India during each edition of the programme. The participants of the Know India Programme are thus showcased various aspects of India's rich cultural heritage, technological advancements, historical places, etc. of different states. Ministry is trying to further evolve this programme by making the editions more subject-oriented and tailored. For example, the 79th Edition of the KIP was exclusively undertaken for the journalists/media professionals from the Indian diaspora community. Further, Ministry also

factors in comments/ suggestions from Indian Embassies/ Consulates abroad for enhancing the robustness and efficiency of this programme. Most KIP beneficiaries have continued to remain connected with India even after the conclusion of the different editions of the programme. Such participants have also posted positive content on social media handles of their experiences during the KIP and have encouraged their friends to participate in it. Ministry has also been sharing the alumni database of the KIP with Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad for continued engagement with these members of the Indian diaspora overseas with the view to enhance the outreach of the Government of India in foreign countries.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.57**

#### **Participation of Girmitiya Countries in Know India Programme**

**The Committee note that the participation level of some of the Girmitiya countries is very low or nearly negligible in Know India Programmes. The Committee are concerned to note that in comparison to 2023-2024, participation of Girmitiya countries has decreased in 2024-25. The Committee urge the Ministry to utilize its embassies and consulates in Girmitiya countries to actively promote the programme through dedicated campaigns, information sessions and social media initiatives collaborating with community leaders/ organizations in these countries and tailor the programme itinerary to include cultural experiences related to the Girmitiya legacy.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Committee's recommendation is duly noted. A multi-pronged approach has been adopted to increase awareness and outreach of the Know India Programme amongst the youth diaspora from the Girmitiya Countries, by effective utilization of the social media and digital platforms. Ministry has also worked towards creating an engaging and attractive content for the youth members of the diaspora, such as videos, infographics, and interactive quizzes, to catch their attention and share information with the latter in a more dynamic manner. Indian Embassies and Consulates abroad have also been reaching out to the Indian diaspora communities abroad to further disseminate the unique opportunities offered by this Programme. The response of the youth diaspora of Girmitiya Countries towards the KIP has always been exceptionally positive as is manifested by an over subscription of applications for each edition of the programme from these countries. During the last three years, 658 members of the youth PIOs from 8 Girmitiya Countries have participated in the Know India Programme. This Ministry will continue its efforts

to select KIP beneficiaries with the objective to expand the geographical spread of participation in the programme, particularly from the Girmitiya countries.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.58**

#### **Bharat Ko Janiye (BKJ) Quiz**

**The Committee are aware that Bharat KoJaniye (BKJ) Quiz is an initiative of the Government started in 2015 to motivate overseas Indians and foreign youth to enhance their knowledge about India. The BKJ Quiz was revamped in 2024 with an aim to increasing the level of participation that had remained low since 2015. Accordingly, the age limit has been expanded to 14-50 years from the previous range of 18-35 years and the quiz was held for two categories PIO / Foreign Nationals and Non-Resident Indians. The Committee are happy to see that the efforts have resulted in the participation of a total of around 1,08,876 from 203 countries in the 5<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Quiz and the top 15 winners in two categories (NRI and PIO) have been invited to visit India on a two-week long BKJ Yatra along with their participation in the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD Convention held in Bhubaneswar. The Committee hope that through effective publicity and collaboration with Social Media Influencers, etc. and taking innovative steps like issuing digital participation certificates, the Ministry is able to further enhance participation in the next edition of Bharat Ko Janiye (BKJ) Quiz and motivate overseas Indians and foreign youth to enhance their knowledge about India.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee. The Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz is an effective tool to connect with the Indian Diaspora, particularly the youth, and also to engage foreigners who are keen to learn about India. All efforts would be made to effectively publicize the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the BKJ Quiz to be held in the future in the last quarter of 2026 using social media handles and the Embassies and Consulates abroad. Ministry will abide by the suggestions by the Committee for this purpose.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

## Recommendation No.59

### Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora

The Committee note that under the Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD), the Ministry provides grants to Indian Missions/Posts abroad to support their initiatives aimed at strengthening ties with the Overseas Indian Community to preserve, maintain and showcase Indian heritage and legacy. The scheme aims to nourish and strengthen the cultural bonds between India and its Diaspora and reinforce the cultural identity of the persons of Indian origin. However, the Committee note with dismay that the Budget provided for PCTD in both BE 2023-24 and 2024-25 was only Rs. 4 crores and the funds released to Missions/Posts for financial year 2023-24 & 2024-25 are Rs. 3,48,38000 and Rs. 3,80,50000 respectively. For BE 2025-26 the provision is Rs. 6 crores. The Committee wonder, how the Indian Missions and Posts are expected to organize cultural events with such limited resources available to them and are surprised that the Ministry had projected only Rs.10 crores for 66 Missions in the current FY despite knowing that it is difficult to meet the expectations of growing Indian community living abroad to organize cultural events by the Indian Missions in their countries with limited funds. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to make further improvements in its Budgetary projections taking into consideration the requests received from Missions/Posts and impress upon the Ministry of Finance to provide adequate Budgetary provisions so that the Missions are able to support their initiatives to strengthen ties with the Overseas Indian Community without being hindered by financial constraints.

### Reply of the Government

This Ministry is grateful for the Committee's concern pertaining to inadequate allocation of financial resources for the Diaspora engagement programmes. During the Current Financial Year (CFY) 2025-26, the Ministry has received an enhanced budget allocation under PCTD of Rs 6 crores, which represents a 50% increase in the budget allocation compared that of FY 2024-25. It is pertinent to mention that during the CFY, Ministry had received proposals from over 100 Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad to the tune of over Rs. 16 crores to organise various events under PCTD. Accordingly, Ministry had projected additional Rs. 10 crores under the PCTD Budget head which was not allocated. We also share the Committee's sentiment that the expectations of the growing Indian community living abroad from the Indian Embassies/Consulates to organize cultural events in their countries cannot be met with the limited resources provided. Keeping this in view, Ministry will strive to impress the necessity to allocate more funds to the PCTD budget so that Indian Embassies/ Consulates are able to continue and further enhance their diaspora engagement initiatives. Ministry has also urged Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad to explore the possibility of securing partnership stakes/ local sponsorships from stakeholders in their respective countries of accreditation to further expand the ambit, outreach and effectiveness of the events conducted under the PCTD.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

## **Recommendation No.60**

### **Videsh Sampark Programme**

**The Committee note that the Videsh Sampark Programme aims at engaging with the relevant stakeholders within the State Governments. It gives a platform for organizing brainstorming sessions with the State Governments on various challenges faced by the Indian Diaspora overseas and to enhance engagement with the Indian States to address the same. The Committee have been informed that under this programme, conferences are held in the State capital where MEA officials brief senior State Government officials and other stakeholders in the State about the initiatives, programmes and schemes implemented by the Ministry. The Ministry is, in fact, enthused that the utility of this Programme in sensitizing the State Governments on issues pertaining to the overseas Indians cannot be overstated. However, much to the surprise and anguish of the Committee, it is observed during the examination of the subject that many States are left uncovered under the programme for years together as the Ministry has been conducting on an average one or two Videsh Sampark Programmes in a year. So far Videsh Sampark Programmes have been conducted with State Governments of Telengana in May 2017, Maharashtra in August 2017, Kerala in September 2017, Gujarat in August 2018, Madhya Pradesh in September 2018, Karnataka in February 2020, Punjab and Haryana in June 2023, Bihar in July 2024, Tripura in July 2024 and Uttarakhand in September 2024. The Committee feel that there is serious need to look into the schedule of Videsh Sampark Programme to ensure frequent and wider engagement/ consultation with the States. The Committee, urge the Ministry to look into the feasibility of conducting the programme zone-wise, so that representatives from more than one State can benefit from the engagement.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee. The Ministry has been actively pursuing the matter of organizing the Videsh Samapark Programme with the State Governments of India and to seek their consent for mutually agreed dates to host them. In recent months, Ministry has written to the State governments of Odisha, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh and West Bengal, to seek interest for organizing Videsh Sampark Program in their States. However, Ministry has not yet received any response from the Governments in these States.

The issues that are raised during such Programmes are usually state specific in nature. Different State Governments face different challenges concerning its Diaspora and possess different comparative advantages for offering varying opportunities for trade, investment and tourism to

the Indian diaspora community overseas. Therefore, it is this Ministry's considered view that organizing Zonal VSPs may not be effective.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.61**

#### **State Governments as Partners in Migration Management**

The Committee are aggrieved to note that the States feel there is lack of concern on part of MEA with regard to matters relating to Indian Diaspora. The Committee are worried about minimal or, at times, no contact with States by MEA on issues relating to the welfare of NRIs, including those of migrant workers abroad. The Committee are aware that the Protector of Emigrants (PoE) offices located in various states serve as the nodal field office of MEA for matters related to emigration and associated grievances, acting as a vital link between Indian Missions, the emigrant's family, local authorities, etc. and is well-positioned to engage with the State police and administration. The Ministry has maintained that regular and timely response to the communications from various State authorities on the issue of emigration is ensured. However, the feedback in this regard is not so positive. Given the fact that State Governments are often the primary entities interacting with migrants and managing migration-related challenges, the Committee strongly feel that unless Ministry actively ropes-in the State Governments and make them partners, the Ministry will fail to achieve the objectives with regard to Diaspora management. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to formulate a strategy, designate officers who would be interacting with the State Governments and work towards cohesive collaboration with State Governments to achieve meaningful utilization of various welfare schemes for the Diaspora.

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee.

The Ministry has a States Division to facilitate external outreach of States and Union Territories through the network of Indian Embassies and Consulates abroad and through MEA Branch Secretariats. The States Division is the main agency for the Ministry to liaise with States and Union Territories through their Resident Commissioners in New Delhi. Signing of several MoUs between State Governments and their entities with foreign counterparts is facilitated on trade/investment promotion, skill development, agriculture research, among other things.

In addition, the Protector of Emigrants (PoE) offices located in various states communicates regularly with the state government officials and liaise with them on various issues related to emigration. They work closely with the state law enforcement authorities and cyber-crime units to tackle fraudulent practices reinforces the integrity of the emigration process.

Currently there are 16 PoE offices in 15 states / UTs of India. For better coordination with state governments in the matters of emigration, Ministry has been exploring the possibility of opening of PoE offices in those states, where such offices currently do not exist. PoE Offices in Odisha, Jharkhand and Tripura have been opened recently. The Division is in the process of opening PoE office in Uttarakhand, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh in near future.

The Ministry has also requested State/UT governments to nominate a nodal officer for effective collaboration in tracking and redressal of grievances and complaints against the unregistered recruiting agents. A number of States/UTs have nominated such nodal officer so far and the office of PGE and the POEs are engaging and working with the nodal officers for resolution of grievances against the illegal RAs in effective and transparent manner.

In order to foster in-depth dialogue amongst stakeholders on Ministry's programmes, schemes and initiatives pertaining to Consular, Passport and Diaspora issues as also those for promoting safe and legal migration and mobility and for upholding Indian workers' welfare overseas, Ministry has been conducting Videsh Sampark Programme. It may be noted that the Videsh Sampark Programme was launched by the Ministry of External Affairs in 2017. Since then, it has been organised with Telangana, Kerala, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka, Haryana, Punjab, Tripura, Bihar and Uttarakhand. Ministry plans to continue with this initiative with other Indian States in the future.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.62**

#### **Setting up of One Stop Centre (OSC) in Indian Missions Abroad**

**The Committee are aware that in 2021, the Ministry of Women & Child Development and MEA collectively decided to set up One Stop Centre (OSC) in Indian Missions abroad to provide emergency shelter, police help and medico legal assistance to women in distress.**

**Further, it has been apprised that the One Stop Centre (OSC) Scheme is under Nirbhaya Fund and the proposal for setting up seven OSCs with shelter homes in Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, UAE, Saudi Arabia (Jeddah and Riyadh) and 2 OSCs without shelter homes in Toronto and Singapore have been approved by the Empowered Committee of the Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD) on 23.10.2024. The Committee are concerned that even after 4 years since announcing the Scheme, not even one OSC could be opened abroad, despite repeated recommendations by this Committee. The Scheme seems to be imbued with official apathy and chronic delay which needs to be addressed at the earliest. The Committee strongly feel that the failure of this Scheme will undermine the ability of our Missions/Posts abroad to help women in distress. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry take proactive steps to accelerate the pace of implementation of the 9 OSCs in the countries as per approval during the FY 2025-26 itself and the Committee may be apprised of the progress in this regard.**

### **Reply of the Government**

On the basis of inputs received from the 9 Indian Embassies/Consulates in which the One Stop Centres are proposed to be established, this Ministry has been approved an expenditure of Rs. 9.50 Crores for setting up and operationalization of the One Stop Centres (OSC) of the Government of India under the 'Nirbhaya Fund' for FY 2025-26. In May 2025, the Ministry of Finance approved the allocation of these funds for the setting up of these centers. The concerned Embassies and Consulates are being instructed to establish and operationalise the OSCs. Meanwhile, Indian Embassies/ Consulates abroad continue to conduct Open Houses for counselling and educating distressed Indian women abroad about their legal rights, local laws and the role that Embassies/Consulates could play to assist them to resolve their problems. All Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad also disseminate information about the measures being taken by them for the welfare of Indian nationals, particularly for Indian women in distress, through their official websites and social media for the awareness of the Indian diaspora abroad.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.63**

#### **Engagement with Indian Students by Missions Abroad**

**As per data available with the Ministry, there are 17,79,097 Indian students studying in various Schools/Universities/Tertiary Institutions abroad as on 01.01.2024. The Committee note that the Ministry collects yearly data on Indian Students studying abroad from Missions and Posts abroad, but information regarding their return / continued stay is not kept by the Ministry. The Committee are of firm view that non-availability of comprehensive data in respect of our students in a foreign country by our Missions is a**

**lacuna and it is important to have authentic list that covers the bulk of our students. Moreover, without such imprint, our Missions/Posts will not be in a position to reach out to them in times of need/crisis. Having said this, the Committee urge Indian Missions abroad to actively engage with Indian students, encouraging them to register on their portals, thus contributing to a more comprehensive data set. The Missions/posts may also partner with universities and student organizations to facilitate data collection and every event organized in the Missions should be utilized for collecting information**

### **Reply of the Government**

The recommendations of the Committee are noted. Safety and welfare of Indian students studying abroad is one of the top most priorities of the Government of India. Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad maintain regular contacts with Indian students enrolled in Universities abroad. This commences as soon as new Indian students are enrolled in foreign Universities. They are invited to participate in Welcome Ceremonies organised by Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad. Heads of Indian Missions/ Posts organise Orientation Programmes for Indian students and brief them on the challenges and threats, if any, that they may confront during their stay in the foreign lands and how to take counter active measures. Heads of Indian Missions/ Posts and other senior Embassy officials also visit foreign Universities and Educational Institutions in their respective countries of accreditation to regularly interact with Indian students and Indian Students' Associations. During these visits and events, the Embassies/Consulates invite the students to register on the relevant portals and also discuss with the University authorities about the welfare of Indian students. However, the privacy laws and data protection regulations in many countries restrict the Universities and local authorities from sharing information about Indian students. Therefore, Ministry will continue in its efforts to enhance the voluntary data collection pertaining to Indian students.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.64)**

#### **Timely Redressal of Students Grievances**

*The Committee have been informed that Indian Missions/Posts abroad encourage Indian students to remain connected on a regular basis and make all possible efforts to respond to the outstanding issues faced by them on priority basis. The Committee have been assured that the grievances of the students are responded to almost on a real time basis through telephone calls, walk-ins, emails, social media, 24x7 emergency helpline, open houses and the MADAD Portal. Any complaint received from the Indian students abroad is taken up with the*

*concerned University/Institution and the host Government, as the case may be, for requisite action.* The Committee however find that the students don't consider our Missions as easily approachable or friendly and that perception needs to change. It should be the endeavour of our Missions to win the confidence of our student community by minimising the response time to their grievances and striving for near complete resolution rates. The Committee may also be apprised of the Open Houses arranged by our Missions during the last three years, Mission-wise.

### **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry notes the Committee's concern regarding the diaspora's perception of the Indian Embassies and Consulates. Indian Embassies and Consulates endeavour to ensure that distressed students are provided all possible consular assistance, including emergency medical care and boarding/lodging, whenever required. The grievances of Indian students abroad are dealt with by Indian Embassies/Consulates on priority and are responded to almost on a real time basis through telephone calls, walk-ins, emails, social media, 24x7 emergency helplines, Open Houses and the MADAD Portal. Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad also encourage Indian students travelling abroad for higher studies to register with them on the MADAD Portal so that their grievances and outstanding issues can be addressed in a time bound manner. The Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) has been set up in Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad for assisting overseas Indian nationals, including Indian students, in distress situations on a means tested basis for deserving cases. The support extended under ICWF also includes extension of legal assistance, counselling and transportation of mortal remains of Indian nationals who die abroad. The Indian students are also encouraged to remain connected with Indian Embassies/Consulates on a regular basis so that any complaint received from them can be taken up with the concerned University/Institution and the host Government, as the case may be, for requisite action.

In order to win the confidence of the Indian students' community, the Heads of Missions and Posts and senior officials regularly visit Universities, attend student-led events, and organize Welcome ceremonies for new students, where they share information about the various services and welfare programmes provided by the Government of India, and receive feedback from the students. Indian Embassies/Consulates continue to make all efforts to proactively make themselves available and more approachable for the Indian students studying abroad.

The details of the Open Houses arranged by the Embassies during the last three years, country-wise, can be found in **Annexure II**.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

## Recommendation No.66

### Safety and Security of Indian Students Abroad

*The Committee view Indian students studying abroad as brand ambassadors of the country. However, random instances of violence put their lives in danger. The Committee note that during the last three years, 14 Indian students have died in foreign countries due to violence/attacks. From a reply in the Parliament, it is seen that 403 incidents of death of Indian students abroad have been reported from 2018 till February 2024 due to various reasons including natural causes, accidents and medical conditions. The Committee desire that the Ministry take proactive steps to create some sort of safety net for our students by evolving a policy framework regarding the protection of Indian students, especially in conflict-prone areas across the world. The Ministry may also consider the creation and maintenance of a real time data base of students studying abroad as an essential component of their safety and security framework.*

### Reply of the Government

The welfare of Indian students abroad is one of the foremost priorities of the Government of India. Indian Embassies/ Consulates abroad respond to any issue faced by Indian students abroad, on priority basis. Grievances are responded through various channels like calls, walk-ins, e-mails, social media, 24x7 Helplines, Open Houses, and MADAD portal. Any complaint received from the students abroad are taken up with the concerned universities/ educational institutions and the host government as the case may be, for requisite action. Indian Embassies and Consulates remain vigilant and closely monitor the well-being of the students. In case there is any untoward incident, it is immediately taken up with the concerned authorities of the host country to ensure that the incident is properly investigated and the perpetrators are punished. During emergency or crisis situations, Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad pro-actively help distressed /stranded Indian students by providing food, shelter, medicine and return passage to India. During the last few years Indian students were repatriated under various operations such as Vande Bharat Mission, Operation Ganga and Operation Ajay from countries around the world.

Indian students are highly mobile as they frequently travel to different countries of the world for further studies, for student exchanges, for internships, jobs, and for other reasons. Such mobility of Indian students poses serious challenges for both creation and maintenance of real time database of Indians students in any particular country. As diaspora engagement continues to expand and strengthen, the database maintained by the respective Embassies and Consulates on the Indian students living in their jurisdiction is expected to improve in quantity and quality.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.67**

#### **Assessment of Diaspora Engagement Programmes**

**The Committee have been informed that the general response from the Indian Diaspora towards Diaspora Engagement Programmes of the Ministry is positive and welcoming. It is further assured that the feedback of the participants in each of the Diaspora Engagement Programmes is examined seriously and diligently to continuously improve such schemes. This exercise also contributes to policy making at various levels. While appreciating Ministry's efforts towards improving Diaspora Engagement Programmes, the Committee further urge the Ministry to formalize annual assessment of each of these programmes by incorporating questionnaire survey of the beneficiaries with a focus on identifying areas of concern to them and also to ensure that these programmes remain aligned with the evolving needs and capabilities of the Diaspora population.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

Ministry seeks to ensure that its diaspora engagement programs remain aligned with the evolving needs, desires, interest and capabilities of the Indian Diaspora. As the diaspora increasingly becomes agents of India's soft power, innovation, and diplomacy, their feedback and consultation would not only improve the effectiveness of the diaspora engagement programmes of this Ministry, but would also play an instrumental role in shaping the larger diaspora policy of the Government. The diaspora engagement and welfare programmes of the Government have been receiving encouraging feedback through various channels, such as social media, interactions with Embassies/Consulates, diaspora events such as the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, and engagements with other stakeholders, such as with the State Governments through the Videsh Sampark Programme. Ministry has taken note of the suggestion by the Committee of instituting Questionnaire Surveys and will try to incorporate it in future editions of its diaspora engagement programmes.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.68**

#### **Dissemination of Information on Schemes for Diaspora**

**The Committee note that Indian Missions/Posts abroad are making all out efforts to disseminate and popularize the programmes for the welfare of the Indian Diaspora through their websites, social media handles including Facebook and Twitter, community**

channels, WhatsApp, virtual newsletters, etc. However, the Committee feel that there are sections of the Diaspora community who are still unaware of the welfare schemes for them. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry make concerted efforts to spread awareness amongst the Indian Diaspora about the various welfare programmes being laid out by the Ministry by leveraging digital platforms, using community centres, places of worships, Diaspora organisations etc.

### **Reply of the Government**

Ministry has been endeavouring to popularize and spread awareness amongst the Indian diaspora about the various welfare programmes run by the Government of India, through various means, such as official websites, social media platforms, interactions with the Indian Embassies/Consulates, etc. As a result, the participation of the Indian diaspora in these programmes have significantly increased in recent years. The Diaspora Engagement Division of this Ministry currently runs a daily social media campaign called “Diaspora India Connect” to engage with the Indian diaspora, particularly its youth members, which is steadily growing in popularity. However, it is true that there may be sections of the Indian Diaspora community who are not yet informed about the schemes. Ministry will further strengthen its efforts to expand the reach of the Government’s welfare schemes and engagement programmes for the Indian diaspora across the world through all possible manner.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.69**

#### **Global Pravasi Rishta Portal**

The Committee note that the Global Pravasi Rishta Portal was launched with an aim to providing a platform for connecting Pravasis with the Government of India through the Missions and Posts abroad. The portal is a two-way communication channel between the Government of India and the Indian Diaspora abroad and can be used for dissemination of information and creation of database of Diaspora based on voluntary registration. However, the Committee are disappointed to note that the Global Pravasi Rishta Portal has been temporarily suspended due to malware attack susceptibility. It has been assured that the Ministry is working on the restoration of the Portal, or creation of an alternate application with similar scope at the earliest for which the tendering process is already underway and the portal is expected to be re-launched within one year. Since the Global RISHTA portal is one of the main platforms connecting Pravasis with the Government of India through the Missions and Posts abroad, the Committee desire that the process may be accelerated to ensure that the re-launch is done during this year itself.

## **Reply of the Government**

Ministry acknowledges that the Global RISHTA portal is a necessary platform which enables the Pravasis to connect with the Government of India. The contract for re-structuring the portal has already been awarded to the selected vendor following due the process. Ministry will strive to launch it by the end of this financial year.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.71**

#### **Resolution of Grievances through MADAD Portal**

**The Committee note that all grievances registered on the portal are automatically transferred to the concerned Mission/Post who take up the matters with the concerned foreign government and its agencies for redressal. The time taken for redressal of a grievance registered on the MADAD Portal depends on a number of factors including the response time from foreign employer and foreign governments. The Ministry have informed that, as per standard procedure, grievances received on portal are actively followed up and responded to on high-priority. Further, MADAD has an inbuilt mechanism for identifying and escalating cases when the response in not received in time. Concerned Mission and Post abroad also take all necessary steps to resolve these cases as soon as possible. The Committee are, however, concerned to note that despite the best efforts of the Ministry there are still 3987 cases pending in the portal. The Committee desire that the Ministry make efforts to bring about qualitative and quantitative improvements in the grievance redressal system to reduce the response time and accelerate the settlement of cases, especially in the Gulf countries.**

## **Reply of the Government**

There are a total of 3687 pending cases on the Madad Portal as on date.

Reason for pendency of such cases: Many pending cases on Madad Portal are due to factors such as incomplete information submitted by the complainants, non-cooperative compliance of foreign sponsors/ employers/ agencies etc. There have been instances where the role of the Indian Embassy/Consulate is limited due to the *sub judice* nature of cases or ongoing local investigations in foreign countries which are beyond our control. These complexities contribute to a prolonged resolution time.

Steps taken by the Ministry to dispose off the pendency: The Ministry is committed to reducing pendency and response times on the MADAD Portal. Most of the cases are resolved through direct communication with the parties involved or their relatives, mediation with relevant agencies involved in specific cases, and so forth. In addition to this, our Embassies/Consulates frequently communicate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) of the countries they are accredited to, through Note Verbale (official communications through letters, mails etc., wherever necessary). In some cases, our Embassies/Consulates also provide legal assistance to Indians abroad in distress through list of empanelled lawyers (list of which is available on Mission's website as well as MEA website). Apart from all these measures, Ministry constantly strives to address these issues by providing counselling, guidance, conducting open house meetings and walk in sessions for aggrieved families/relatives of concerned persons so that the number of such cases are reduced in times to come. Indian Embassies/Consulates also occasionally mediates between the aggrieved parties to facilitate reconciliation between the concerned parties.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.72**

#### **E-Sanad Service**

**The Committee note that E-Sanad is an electronic service delivery platform for apostille and attestation of documents issued by Government of India aiming at contactless service to people. The Committee further note that the e-Sanad portal is a central portal and an applicant residing in any part of the country can access the portal and upload his / her pre-authenticated documents online which are processed at New Delhi and sent back to the applicants by affixing Apostille sticker or attestation (as desired by the applicant) through Speed Post. The same mechanism is also available to any applicant abroad, where he or she can upload the pre authenticated document which will be delivered at the given address in India. The Committee note that currently 15 Passport Offices as well as 4 Branch Secretariats located in various States are providing these services to the applicants. Given that the service is in such high demand with number of applications being received by the Ministry steadily increasing on year-to-year basis, the Committee desire that the Ministry may consider rolling out the E-Sanad services across India.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

Applications for apostille and attestation of documents received through the E-Sanad portal are currently being rendered in respect of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Puducherry, Punjab, Maharashtra and Gujarat in addition to the Digilocker documents (e.g. CBSE documents) which are received pan-India. MEA is coordinating with other State Governments and an official communication has

been sent to Chief Secretaries of these states for onboarding onto the E-Sanad portal for digital pre-authentication of documents by concerned Departments of the State. This will help in achieving delivery of E-Sanad services across India.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **CHAPTER-III**

#### **OBSERVATION/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT**

-NIL-

## CHAPTER- IV

### **OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE**

#### **Recommendation No.8**

##### **Comprehensive Labour Market Information Database**

**To facilitate future migration, the Committee desire that a comprehensive Labour Market Information (LMI) database for the Indian Diaspora should be developed. This database must include, but not be limited to, real-time data on employment trends, wage patterns, occupational sectors, skill mismatches and remittance flow among NRIs, PIOs and OCIs. Such data would not only improve migration management but also help migrants make informed decisions, matching their skills with available opportunities abroad. Strengthening such data collection and sharing mechanisms for the same is also essential for ensuring efficient and transparent migration governance.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry maintains data in respect of Indian workers, holding Emigration Check Required (ECR) passports, proceeding for employment overseas through e-Migrate portal to any of the 18 notified ECR countries. The database is quite comprehensive and provides, inter alia, gender-wise, destination country-wise, job category-wise and state-wise data of Indian workers migrating with Emigration Clearances (Ecs).

The Ministry intends to expand the scope of eMigrate portal and include the recruitment of workers to ECNR countries through eMigrate portal as well. In its recent interactions with some of the ECNR countries, such as Japan, Portugal, Russia, and Fiji, the Ministry has been highlighting the benefits of safe, legal and orderly recruitment of Indian workers through eMigrate portal. The recruitment of workers to ECNR countries through eMigrate portal would help in generating reliable and real-time data on workers, including employment trends, wage patterns, occupational sectors, and skilling needs. The LMI data sets can also be customised to cater to the needs of ECNR countries.

Further, a new emigration bill replacing the Emigration Act, 1983, is being worked upon. A comprehensive and over-arching framework is being proposed through the upcoming bill which

would incorporate current as well as futuristic aspects to effectively meet the modern day challenges in the emigration sphere.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.10**

#### **Policy of ‘Care, Connect, Celebrate and Contribute’**

**The Committee observe that India’s Diaspora policy framework is centered around the four ‘C’s’ namely Care, Connect, Celebrate and Contribute. The Committee note that the shift in the Diaspora policy was brought about with the merger of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and the Ministry of External Affairs in January 2016. While acknowledging that the 4Cs uphold the welfare and protection of our Diaspora, connect them to their roots, and celebrate their achievements, the Committee feel that India’s Diaspora policy is still at nascent stage. Much needs to be done to tap into the potential of Indians living abroad and policy document on its Diaspora needs to be drafted by the Government. The Committee do not agree with the Ministry’s perception that the diversity of Indian Diaspora does not permit formulation of a single, tight and unique policy. The Committee are of the considered view that lack of a dedicated Diaspora policy document hinders our ability to fully leverage the potential of the large overseas Indian community, impacting economic growth, foreign relations, knowledge transfer, and overall national development by limiting engagement with skilled professionals and investors living abroad, while also failing to adequately address the concerns and needs of the Diaspora population. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry bring out a policy document on Indian Diaspora in tune with their aspirations to serve as a guiding principle for deeper and wider engagement with the Diaspora community.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Government of India’s approach to engaging with the Indian Diaspora is focussed on the four foundational pillars: **Care, Connect, Celebrate, and Contribute**. These four ‘C’s’ form the core of a pragmatic, inclusive and dynamic Diaspora Engagement Policy, designed to protect the interests of Indians abroad while maximizing the mutual benefits of this global community’s links with India. Since the merger of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in 2016, this integrated approach has led to more coherent, responsive, and effective outreach, which can be outlined as follows.

#### **(I) Care for the Indian communities overseas: Safeguarding the Welfare of Our Diaspora**

The “Care” pillar reflects the government’s commitment to the protection and welfare of Indian citizens and persons of Indian origin abroad, especially the vulnerable and distressed.

Key schemes and mechanisms of the Government to promote the Pillar:

- i. *Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF)* – Emergency support for distressed overseas Indians, including repatriation, shelter medical aid, legal assistance, and transfer of mortal remains.
- ii. *One Stop Centers (OSC)* – Centers in select Indian Embassies and Consulates to provide emergency shelter, police help, and medical and legal assistance to women in distress.
- iii. *e-Migrate System* – Ensures safe and transparent emigration processes, especially for ECR passport holders.
- iv. *Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana (PBBY)* – A welfare scheme providing insurance coverage to Indian workers abroad to ensure their safety and support in cases of emergencies.
- v. *MADAD Portal* – Online platform for consular grievance redressal in a time bound manner.
- vi. *Pre-Departure Orientation Programme (P-DOT)* - One-day training programme on soft skills for migrant workers imparted by MEA in collaboration with National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), State Governments and other stake holders.
- vii. *Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC)* – Financial assistance for the children of Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) for pursuing undergraduate education at Indian universities and institutions.
- viii. *Migration and Mobility Agreements* – Partnership agreements with key countries to harness India’s demographic dividend and foster mobility for Indian students, academics, business people, and professionals.

- ix. *Assistance in Marital & Child Custody Matters* – Support for Indian women facing abandonment or abuse abroad.
- x. *Support in NRI Property Disputes and Student Grievances* – Coordination with law enforcement and educational institutions.

## **(II) Connect with the global network of Indian diaspora: Bridging Indians Worldwide with Their Roots**

Under “Connect”, the focus is on forging deeper links between India and its global communities through institutional networks and cultural ties.

Key schemes and mechanisms of the Government to promote this Pillar:

- i. *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)* - A flagship event that provides a platform for engagement between the Government and the Diaspora.
- ii. *Know India Programme (KIP)* – Designed for diaspora youth to explore India’s history, heritage, and governance through first hand experience
- iii. *Global Pravasi Rishta Portal* – A two-way digital portal to connect the Indian Diaspora with the Government of India for dissemination of important information and to foster a robust database of the Diaspora through voluntary registrations.
- iv. *Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD)* – Grants extended to Indian Embassies/Consulates for organizing cultural events abroad for promoting heritage and for encouraging the diaspora to stay connected to their cultural roots.
- v. *Videsh Sampark Programme* – Outreach to State governments to address the challenges faced by the Indian States to deal with diaspora related issues and to suggest efforts to promote robust dialogue between the Indian States and their respective Diaspora.

- vi. *Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojna (PTDY)* – Offers an opportunity for the Indian diaspora to visit places of religious and cultural significance in India.
- vii. *Bharat Ko Janiye (BKJ) Quiz* – Quiz contest for diaspora youth to deepen their knowledge of India and organisation of exposure trips for the winners to India.
- viii. Social Media Outreach – Daily engagement campaigns like Diaspora India Connect on social media platforms

**(III) Celebrate India’s shared heritage with the wide network of global Indian diaspora: Honoring Shared Culture and Achievements of the Diaspora**

“Celebrate” emphasizes the acknowledgement of India’s rich heritage and the remarkable contributions of overseas Indians not only to their host countries, but also to the Indian community, society and economy.

Key schemes and mechanisms of the Government directed towards promoting this Pillar:

- i. *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)* – Biennial Convention with special sessions to recognize and discuss the contributions of the Indian diaspora in diverse domains.
- ii. *Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards (PBSA)* – India’s highest honor for overseas Indians, awarded for their outstanding achievements in myriad fields.
- iii. *Girmitiya Engagement* – Research, outreach, and future establishment of Girmitiya Study and Research Center to connect with descendants of indentured Indians and celebrate their legacy.

**(IV) Encourage Contributions of the Indian diaspora that drive positive change in India: Tapping Diaspora Potential for National Development**

The “Contribute” pillar encourages the diaspora to participate in India's developmental journey by sharing their knowledge, skills, etc and through investments, and innovation.

Key schemes and mechanisms of the Government to promote this Pillar:

- i. Knowledge sharing initiatives such as VAJRA (Visiting Advanced Joint Research Faculty Scheme), PRABHASS (Pravasi Bharatiya Academic and Scientific Sampark) and Vaishvik Bharatiya Vaigyanik (VAIBHAV) fellowships, to promote collaborations between global Indian scientists and researchers with Indian institutions.
- ii. Promotion of Start-up India, Digital India, and other key programmes that welcome diaspora-led innovations and investments.
- iii. Ministry also works closely with the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Commerce, RBI, and other relevant institutions to ensure seamless remittance channels for Indian diaspora, promotes Unified Payments Interface (UPI) linkages, disseminates updated information regarding tax laws, FEMA provisions, Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements, FDI norms, etc.

While this Ministry has a reasonably well-defined Diaspora Engagement Policy based on the aforesaid enumerated 4Cs and has devised effective strategies/schemes to promote the same, still it is the considered view and experience of this Ministry that the vast diversity of the Indian diaspora demands flexibility. So, although this Ministry takes note of the Committee's recommendation to create a tighter, codified Diaspora Policy, it would prefer to maintain that a "single, tight and unique policy document" on Indian diaspora may not be conducive to serve the growing and dynamic aspirations of the Indian diaspora spread across the globe because of the inherent diversity and complexity of the diaspora itself. Their needs, expectations, legal status, socio-economic contexts vary dramatically across regions, from the Silicon Valley to the Gulf region or the Giritiya countries. A central and rigid policy could also undermine or overlook state-level priorities, which are often more attuned to specific community needs. A dedicated Diaspora policy should also align with the laws of the host country, which differ across regions, and may have specific elements such as dual citizenship restrictions, data privacy laws, labour rights, etc.

The 4C-based Diaspora Policy of the Government functions as a comprehensive and dynamic mechanism to engage with the large and diverse Indian diaspora that encompasses addressing their welfare, cultural preservation, economic collaboration, and institutional dialogue. Going forward, efforts can focus on strengthening coordination, enhancing digital access, and

expanding the scope of existing schemes, so that the 4Cs continue to be the most effective and inclusive pathway to fostering a vibrant, connected, and empowered Indian diaspora across the globe.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.28**

#### **Prioritization of State-Run Recruitment Agencies**

**The Committee find that in States like Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, etc. there are Recruitment Agencies which have received license from the MEA and act as State recruitment agencies. As of now, there are 13 such State Recruitment Agencies in various States. In order to ensure safe and ethical recruitment practices, the Committee are of the opinion that the Government should prioritize such State-run recruitment agencies, which can even adhere to a zero-cost migration model, where employers bear the recruitment costs. They, therefore, desire that the Ministry to take it up with all high-emigration States to encourage them to have their own State- run Recruitment Agencies and replicate the best practices of the best performing States in this regard. In addition to working out ways and means to strengthen them, without prejudice to the rights of legitimate private recruitment agencies, the Government should also incorporate at least one State-run Agency into bilateral labour agreements to widen their scope and impact.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee. The Ministry recognizes the role of the state-run recruiting agencies in facilitating overseas employment, often aligned with the zero-cost migration model. These agencies have played a vital role in reducing migrant vulnerability to exploitation and ensuring greater transparency in the recruitment process.

As of now there are 14 State-run Recruiting Agencies viz. (i) NORKA Roots & (ii) Overseas Development and Employment Promotion Consultants of Kerala (iii) Overseas Manpower Corporation Ltd. of Tamil Nadu (iv) Uttar Pradesh Financial Corporation of Uttar Pradesh (v) Overseas Manpower Company Andhra Pradesh Ltd. of Andhra Pradesh (vi) Telangana Overseas Manpower Company Ltd. of Telangana (vii) Rajasthan Skill & Livelihoods Development Corporation of Rajasthan (viii) Karnataka State Unorganized Workers Society Security Board of Karnataka (ix) Karnataka Vocational Training & Skill Development Corporation of Karnataka (x) M/s Pan IIT Alummi Reach for Jharkhand Foundation of Jharkhand (xi) Bihar State Overseas Placement Bureau of Bihar, (xii) World Skill Center, Odisha, (xiii) Punjab GharGhar Rozgar and Karobar Mission, Punjab and (xiv) Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam Limited, Haryana. The

Ministry is engaged with high-emigration States to encourage the establishment of State-run Recruitment Agency where such mechanism is currently absent. With the active support of the Ministry the Haryana state has recently registered its state-run recruiting agency 'Haryana Kaushal Rozgar Nigam Limited' with the Ministry.

In order to prioritize the state-run RAs and to protect female domestic workers from exploitation/harassment in the destination country, the Ministry has made the process of issuance of EC for female workers going for employment in the 18 notified ECR countries mandatory only through the above 14 State-run RAs.

The Ministry also organized a one-day Conclave with the representatives of the MEA registered State-run and private Recruiting Agents (RA) Associations on 11 March 2025, which was inaugurated by the Minister of State for External Affairs and Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh. The Conclave aimed at fostering stronger collaboration among key stakeholders involved in overseas recruitment including State-run recruiting agencies. The event served as a platform for open dialogue between recruiting agents, government officials, and other industry participants, with the objective of promoting ethical recruitment practices and enhancing transparency in the process. The conclave also highlighted best practices in overseas employment and addressed common challenges faced by recruiting agents. This initiative reflects the Ministry's continued commitment to ensuring safe, legal and seamless emigration for Indian workers seeking employment abroad.

The Ministry would assess the feasibility of including at least one State-run Recruitment Agency in future bilateral labour agreements or Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs), thereby enhancing their institutional role in managing ethical recruitment in priority destination countries.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No. 35**

#### **Need for a Mechanism to Track Labour Migration to Non ECR Counties.**

**The Committee find that the e-Migrate system captures key data related to the Emigration Check Required (ECR) category migrant workers right from when she/he applies for foreign employment in the system. Emigrant data is also shared with Embassies and Consulates to facilitate easy tracking and assistance when needed. However, the Committee**

note that the Government only tracks people moving to ECR countries with an ECR Passport and not migration to non ECR countries. Though the e-Migrate portal has also opened registration for non-ECR countries, such an online registration for Indian Emigration Check Not Required (ECNR) passport holders is voluntary and not mandatory. Hence, the data is not captured. While noting that the Government only tracks people moving to ECR countries with an ECR Passport, the Committee are convinced that it is quite important to have a mechanism to detect/track labour migration to even non ECR countries. Hence, they recommend that the Government may come up with possible options to capture the data despite the constraints faced and apprise the Committee of the same.

### **Reply of the Government**

The concern raised by the Committee is duly acknowledged. As of now, the Ministry maintains data in respect of Indian workers, holding Emigration Check Required (ECR) passports, proceeding for employment overseas through e-Migrate portal to any of the 18 notified ECR category countries. The Ministry would have to work with the Bureau of Immigration and the Ministry of Labour and Employment to capture the data of labour migration to all countries.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.37**

#### **Integration of Returnee Migrants**

The Committee note that as per the information available with the Ministry, about 5,95,101 emigrants have returned to Indian from foreign countries from 2019 to 2024. This is a significant number. This surge, largely driven by COVID crisis, economic disruptions, stricter immigration policies and a reduction in job opportunities abroad has created considerable reintegration challenges. The Committee note that a national level policy on re-integration of migrant returnees is still awaited. The Committee further note that Kerala is the only State in India that offers economic reintegration and welfare programmes for returning migrants, all of which are worth emulating by other States and even other countries. The Committee are of the view that though the responsibility for rehabilitation of Indian migrants is currently placed on State Governments, with the Central Government providing neither logistical nor financial support, it is high time that this gap is addressed. To address this gap, the Government, in coordination with States, should develop a sustainable rehabilitation and reintegration policy with shared responsibilities between the Centre and State Governments. The Committee, therefore,

**recommend that the Centre should assist State Governments through grants and soft loans to help integrate the returnee migrants into the domestic industries so that they continue to be economically productive. Such a collaborative approach only would ensure a more comprehensive and sustainable system for migrant reintegration across India.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee. It may, however, be noted that responsibility of reintegration of returned Indian migrants rests with respective State Governments from where the emigrants belong and not with the Central Government. Various State Governments have, therefore, developed ways and means to reintegrate workers returning from abroad.

During the pandemic, under the Vande Bharat Mission, Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Ministry of Civil Aviation, and Ministry of External Affairs jointly launched ‘SWADES – Skilled Worker Arrival Database for Employment Support’. The initiative aims at empowering the returning citizens with relevant employment opportunities by creating a database of qualified citizens based on their skill sets and experience to tap into and fulfill demand of Indian and foreign countries. The returning citizens are required to fill up an online SWADES Skills Card. The database thus generated has been integrated with India’s ASEEM portal. The portal provides employee connect for prospective employers.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.38**

#### **Need to Prioritize New Emigration Bill**

**Keeping in view the contemporary global migration dynamics and the requirements of Indian citizens, the Committee have underscored the pressing need for a comprehensive legislative overhaul to replace the outdated provisions of the Emigration Act 1983 and the Committee find that a legislation on Emigration [Overseas Mobility (Facilitation and Welfare) Bill, 2024] for the same is on the anvil. This presents a long overdue opportunity to reform the recruitment process for seeking overseas employment. The Ministry has informed the Committee that the proposed draft is under internal consultation and, thereafter, will be put up for public consultation which will be followed up by Inter-Ministerial consultations along with the Draft Cabinet Note. Though the efforts to revamp the migration management framework through the introduction of a new Bill is commendable, the Committee are not happy with the delay in the process despite witnessing harrowing incidents of illegal emigration from our country day in and day out.**

**The Committee, hence recommend that the Bill should be prioritized and the Committee may be intimated about the timelines for presenting the new Bill in both houses of Parliament.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The draft of the Emigration Bill 2024 has been under active consideration with the aim to introduce it in the Parliament after finishing due consultation and procedure. The Ministry has completed internal consultations and the draft Bill has been sent for inter-ministerial consultations in end May 2025. Upon completion of these consultations, the draft bill will be put up for public consultation. The final draft will thereafter be submitted for Cabinet's approval and presented to the Parliament.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.40**

#### **Need to Address Student Migration in the Emigration Bill**

**The Committee also note that under emigration, the student migration is generally not covered and currently, the Emigration Bill does not cover student migration. But the Committee see from the available data and surveys that the student community form a sizeable per cent of all emigrants from the country. When irregular and unscrupulous recruitment elements misguide students about universities and job opportunities abroad, a large number of students end up doing menial jobs, not wanting to come back empty-handed and become a socio-economic problem in the countries from where they migrate. So, the Committee desire that the Ministry should give due importance to student migration also in the new Emigration Bill and student recruitment agencies need to be put under the scanner.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The growing trend of Indian students seeking education abroad is evident. While the Emigration Bill's focus would be primarily on migration for overseas employment, the Ministry recognises the importance of student welfare. As an instrument for ensuring the welfare of Indian students, safety and security abroad, the Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreements have explicit provisions for facilitating the ease of mobility as well as furthering opportunities for students. Provisions to facilitate post-study pathways, such as employment search periods and internships are also included. The MADAD Portal allows for voluntary registration of Indian students abroad. Database of students collected through the portal enables us to contact the students in the event of an emergency.

### **Recommendation No.43**

#### **Utilisation of the Indian Community Welfare Fund**

**Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) has been set up in all Indian Missions and Posts abroad to meet the contingency expenditure incurred by them for carrying out various on-site welfare activities for Overseas Indian citizens on a means-tested basis. This is a self-sustained fund without any budgetary support and sourced from service charges on issuance of Visa/OCI/PIO cards; Passport services and attestation of documents; voluntary contribution by Indian community; and income from interests accrued through investments and deposits. The Committee note that the ICWF guidelines cover three key areas namely Assisting Overseas Indian nationals in distress situations (Boarding and Lodging, Air passage, Legal Assistance, Emergency Medical Care, Transportation of Mortal Remains), Community Welfare activities and Improvement in Consular services. However, the Committee are surprised to note that the overall utilisation of the Indian Community Welfare Fund is apparently less than fifty per cent of the collected fund despite sizeable Indian Diaspora in requirement of assistance on all aspects covered under the fund. It is felt that even after expanding the scope of the fund, not enough assistance could be extended to the distressed Indian nationals and, hence, desire to be apprised of the reasons for the same. The Committee, while underscoring the need for a more generous approach to the requirements of assistance by our Diaspora also desire that our missions should generate more awareness regarding the ICW Fund, the assistance provided therein and the way to get in touch with the Missions/Posts in case of emergencies rather than resorting to the plea that Indian emigrant workers proceeding abroad are apprised about ICWF during PDOT.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Government has established various mechanisms to enable Indian nationals abroad to reach out to the Indian Missions in case they need any assistance. Indian nationals can contact the Missions/Posts through various channels like walk-in, email, social media, multilingual 24x7 emergency numbers and also grievance redressal portals like MADAD, CPGRAMS, eMigrate etc. In addition, Indian Missions/Posts abroad have established Toll Free Helplines, whatsapp numbers and have launched mobile Apps to enable Indian nationals contact respective Indian Missions/Posts when in distress or in emergency situation.

Whenever any Indian national approaches the Mission with a grievance, all possible help is provided promptly whether through ICWF or other means, as the situation demands. All the above-mentioned means of approaching the Mission for grievance redressal are widely known in

the diaspora community through WhatsApp groups of the community, website of the Mission and social gathering places like temples, gurudwaras, etc.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.46**

#### **Fund for Transportation of Mortal Remains**

The Committee are aware that the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) is used for transportation of mortal remains of deceased Indian nationals to India, under the provisions of ICWF guidelines. In 2002, an amount of Rs. 8,45,83,770/- was used for the same whereas in 2023, the expenditure incurred out of ICWF on transportation of mortal remains was Rs. 2,32,51,964/-. The Committee find from the data provided by the Ministry that since 2012 till June 2024, airlifting of 3808 mortal remains of Indian nationals were done by Missions/Posts using ICWF. The Committee are of the feeling that as of now Indian Community Welfare Fund is being utilized in limited cases which is evident from the small number of cases. According to the Committee, the right to get the mortal remains transported to the homeland at the expense of the Government, particularly with less well-off people should be recognized. While urging the empowerment of the Missions with adequate funds, the Committee desire that the procedure for utilizing the Indian Community Welfare Fund for transportation of mortal remains may be further simplified and the authorities vested with discretionary powers in our Missions to take action without awaiting clearance from New Delhi. Missions may also be sensitized to take a humane approach rather than a bureaucratic one in offering help, especially financial assistance, in such cases.

#### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry fully understands the emotional situation during the transportation of mortal remains or cremation/burial of deceased Indian nationals. Accordingly, Indian Missions abroad and the staff of the Consular wing give utmost importance to prompt resolution of such cases and extend all possible support to the family of the deceased Indian national. Indian Missions/Posts coordinate with the host government for expeditious issuance of death certificate and other documents. Transportation of mortal remains, being a delicate situation, is handled with care and sensitivity by the Missions/Posts and all assistance under ICWF is rendered in an expeditious manner.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.47**

#### **Extension of ICWF on Deaths of Students Abroad**

The Committee have viewed that in many countries, especially in Gulf countries, philanthropic agencies as well as well meaning members of the respective communities extend assistance in transporting dead bodies. They have further observed that when children from poor families who have taken loans for study abroad die in accidents or otherwise, the family falls into an extremely sad plight of not being able to afford to bring the dead bodies back or to repay the student loan they took for him. In those cases, the Committee desire the Ministry to explore whether it can be made a policy to make special provisions under the Indian Community Welfare Fund for meeting expenditures for the same.

#### **Reply of the Government**

Indians nationals abroad who approach the Indian Missions/Posts for transportation of mortal remains of their family members to India, are assisted by the Indian Missions/Posts. Missions/Posts with the consent of the family of the deceased in India and in coordination with the concerned government agencies, take necessary action for early transportation of mortal remains of the deceased Indian nationals from abroad. Such assistance is rendered where the family is unable to meet the cost, irrespective of whether the deceased Indian national was a student, worker or business person in the host country.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.65**

#### **Standard Operating Procedures for Student Outreach**

*The Committee have been informed that the Indian Missions/Posts abroad invite students enrolled in various Universities under their jurisdiction for welcome ceremonies organized almost as soon as they reach the foreign shores for pursuing higher studies. Heads of Indian Missions/Posts also organize Orientation Programmes for Indian students and brief them on challenges / threats, if any, that they may confront during their stay in foreign lands and mechanisms to take counter measures. Senior Embassy officials visit Educational Institutions, interact with Indian students and their associations. However, these efforts do not seem to yield much. Being a country having the highest number of students studying abroad, next only to China, the Committee urge the Ministry to put in place Standard Operating Procedures regarding student outreach and engagement by our Missions abroad. In the absence of*

**such SOPs, emergency response mechanism of the Missions/posts in crisis situations would be far from effective.**

### **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry reassures the Committee that safety and welfare of the Indian student community abroad is amongst the top priorities of the Government of India. India has among the largest student communities studying abroad, and such students are not a monolithic or homogenous group. Their academic levels, fields of study, cultural and linguistic diversity vary greatly, and they are spread across the globe. The needs of students differ from region to region, especially in terms of support systems, academic stress, and job prospects. Moreover, host countries differ significantly in terms of their domestic legal frameworks, educational structure, and immigration policies. It is possible that a particular type of outreach that is considered as a support to Indian students in one country may be seen as an interference in another. Since the issues and the support required vary greatly from country to country and from university to university, they are best addressed on a case-to-case basis. Therefore, having a uniform Standard Operating Procedure for engaging with the Indian students might prove counterproductive.

The Heads of Embassies/Consulates and the staff are sensitized and well versed on the issues faced by the Indian students abroad, resulting from their frequent interactions with the student bodies, university officials and local authorities. Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad encourage Indian students travelling abroad for higher studies to register with them as also on the MADAD Portal so that their grievances and outstanding issues can be addressed in a time bound manner. They are also encouraged to remain connected on a regular basis and all possible efforts are made to respond to the outstanding issues faced by them on a priority basis. The grievances of the students are responded to almost on a real time basis through telephone calls, walk-ins, emails, social media, 24x7 emergency helplines, open houses and the MADAD Portal. Any complaint received from the Indian students abroad are taken up with the concerned University/Institution and the host Government, as the case may be for requisite action.

Cases of untoward incidents are immediately taken up by the Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad with the concerned authorities of the host country to ensure that they are properly investigated and the perpetrators are punished. During emergencies or crisis situations, Indian Embassies/Consulates abroad pro-actively help distressed/stranded Indian students overseas by providing them food, shelter, medicines and ensure their return/evacuation to India as soon as possible. During the last few years, stranded Indian students were evacuated to India under the Vande Bharat Mission, Operation Ganga (Ukraine) and Operation Ajay (Israel) from countries around the world. The return of many Indian students from Bangladesh was also facilitated by the High Commission of India in Dhaka.

This Ministry notes and welcomes the Committee's valuable observation to ensure effective emergency response mechanism for Indian students living abroad during crisis situations.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

## **CHAPTER-V**

### **OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED**

#### **Recommendation No.2**

##### **Revocation/Denial of OCI Cards**

The Committee understand that the OCI card issuance/revocation falls under the purview of MHA, while its implementation is done primarily through Indian Missions/Posts abroad. The Committee have come across concerns about revocation of OCI Cards, rejection of OCI Cards, denial of travel permission at airports, etc. from several quarters. In this regard, the Committee are of the view that the OCI Card carries with it an implicit promise of multiple entry, multi-purpose lifelong visa to visit India, etc, and actions dishonoring the same on flimsy reasons would damage the country's international image as a welcoming nation for its Diaspora and potentially impact economic decisions/discourage investment. The Committee, hence, desire that Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), in coordination with the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), may chalk out procedural safeguards to ensure clear communication channels including regular updates on requests made, sharing of relevant information on suspected violations and collaboration on the decision making. They may also ensure consistency and due process while revoking/denying OCI Cards, with the MHA primarily handling the legal aspects and the MEA managing international communication.

#### **Reply of the Government**

OCI policies including grant, denial, suspension and revocation are subject matters that fall under the purview of the MHA. The decision to cancel an OCI registration under Section 7D of Citizenship Act, 1955 is taken by MHA with due diligence after obtaining views / comments from various stakeholders including MEA and security agencies. The recommendations of the committee have been conveyed to MHA and the response of MHA is awaited.

### **Recommendation No.3**

#### **Working on an Agreed Definition for ‘Non-Resident Indians’**

**When it comes to Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), the Committee find that a common definition is lacking and multiple definitions are in vogue across the country or even between States. It is also different amongst the various Acts of the Government of India. The Committee are of the view that multiplicity of definitions has a potential for multiple interpretations which in turn impacts the decision making process and accessibility of services. The Committee feel that there is an urgent need for a common definition of the term across the nation to avoid confusions. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry of External Affairs work towards proposing a common definition for the term ‘Non-Resident Indians’ which would be binding on all Acts as well as the State Legislations in tandem with other stakeholder Ministries/Departments.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry has taken note of the Committee’s observation that a common definition for the term ‘Non-Resident Indians’ across the nation is advisable in order to avoid confusion. This Ministry follows a broader definition of the term ‘Non-Resident Indian’, viz., any Indian citizen who has travelled abroad from India with an Indian passport for any purpose, except that of tourism and short business visits. While different Ministries and State governments may be following different definitions which suits their purposes, this Ministry adheres to the most inclusive and expansive definition of NRIs to ensure that the benefits of the diaspora engagement programmes and welfare schemes can reach the Indian diaspora living abroad as widely as possible.

In view of the Committee’s recommendation, the Ministry has written to the Department of Legal Affairs for their guidance to work towards a common definition of the term ‘Non-Resident Indian’, which would be binding on all Acts as well as the State legislations in tandem with other stakeholder Ministries/ Departments.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

## **Recommendation No.4**

### **Aadhaar Facilitation for Overseas Indians**

**The Committee note that Overseas Indians are facing difficulties in getting Aadhaar Cards in the country. The Committee have been given to understand that UIDAI, which is the competent authority in the matter has not made any arrangement for setting up Aadhaar facilitation centers outside India. Today, in India, Aadhaar is an essential document providing a portable proof of identity verifiable through Aadhaar authentication on-line anytime, anywhere. An Aadhaar Card is an essential document for literally every form of registration and transaction facilitating access to various services like banking, property transactions, healthcare and government benefits, especially when the card holders reside in the country for extended periods, while also streamlining processes like tax filing and KYC verification. The Committee are of the considered view that extending facility of Aadhaar cards to Overseas Indians will promote greater integration of Indians living abroad into the Indian society. The extension of the facility of Aadhaar cards to Overseas Indians will also align with the goal of creating a unified identity system in India, enabling them to participate fully in the country's economic and social activities while maintaining their non-resident status. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to work in coordination with UIDAI in identifying the bottlenecks involved, including procedural difficulties, technical grievances etc., and resolve the same.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry agrees with the Committee's recommendation that extension of the facility of Aadhaar cards to Overseas Indians may contribute towards integrating the Indian diaspora more comprehensively into the Indian economy and society. However, the proposal entails significant complexities and challenges that are outlined here.

Aadhaar is governed by the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016, which explicitly defines eligibility based on residency in India. The Act defines a "resident" as an individual who has been in India for a cumulative period of 182 days or more within the 12 months preceding their application for Aadhaar enrolment. This residency requirement applies to all individuals, including Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), who wish to obtain an Aadhaar card. Extending Aadhaar to non-

residents would require fundamental amendments to the Act. Moreover, establishing biometric enrolment infrastructure in foreign countries would be logistically complex, costly, and could conflict with data protection laws in host countries such as the European Union's GDPR and similar frameworks elsewhere. This exposes the Indian government to litigation risks, diplomatic tensions, or data localization demands by host nations. Additionally, collecting sensitive biometric data abroad introduces the risk of identity duplication and verification difficulties, potentially compromising the reliability of the Aadhaar ecosystem.

For the diaspora members who do not reside in India, or do financial transactions in India or require access to Indian subsidies or government services, the practical benefits of Aadhaar are limited. Existing identity mechanisms such as passports, OCI/PIO cards, NRE/NRO bank accounts and PAN numbers already serve many of their financial and legal needs in India. The diaspora members who stand to benefit the most with Aadhaar are also likely to travel frequently to India, during which they can obtain their cards through the widespread and robust network of Aadhaar centers in the country.

The Ministry remains committed to facilitating and enhancing the engagement of the Indian diaspora with India. In pursuance of the Committee's recommendation, Ministry has written to UIDAI to explore the feasibility of extending Aadhaar universally. The comments from UIDAI are awaited.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### Recommendation No.5

#### **Voting Rights to NRIs**

**The Committee are aware that through an amendment to Section 20A of the 'Representation of People Act 1950' in 2010, NRIs have been conferred limited voting rights. As per existing norms, NRIs who have enrolled in the voters list have to be present physically to cast their votes. Since travelling to India is an onerous task considering the logistical and practical problems involved, only a few among the registered voters come down for voting. The Committee feel that due to limitations in exercising their franchise, the issues/concerns of NRIs are being completely side-lined from electoral politics. The Committee are given to understand that the matter regarding grant of voting rights to NRIs is currently pending with the Ministry of Law and Justice (MoLJ). The Committee are further given to understand that the issue will also need amendments in the Representation of People Act 1950' and 1951 as well as engagement with national political**

**parties before implementation. The Committee feel sad that despite being one of the largest emigrant populations in the world, direct involvement in India's electoral politics is limited for our NRIs though the right to vote is universally recognised as an important ingredient of a vibrant democracy. With ever growing technological advancements and capabilities, the Committee feel that solutions like Electronically Transmitted Postal Ballot System (ETPBS) can be looked into for extending the voting rights of NRIs. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to vigorously pursue the matter with the Ministry of Law and Justice, the Election Commission of India and other stakeholders and come up with clear timelines for the reforms while keeping the Committee apprised of the developments in the matter. The Committee will continue consideration of this question, in consultation with the authorities concerned.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has duly noted this recommendation of the Committee. The issue of grant of voting rights to NRIs is within the purview of the Election Commission of India. The Ministry has, however, been pursuing this issue with the Ministry of Law and Justice and the Election Commission of India, and has been engaging with them to inquire about its current status and to offer suggestions.

The ECI is assessing the logistical and technological feasibility of extending voting rights to NRIs, while the relevant Ministries are exploring the legal and constitutional amendments or procedural changes necessary to facilitate NRI voting. It is understood that Indian Embassies/ Consulates abroad have to play a central role for conducting the NRI voting process, will require extensive logistical arrangements and manpower to create facilitation centres for conducting the voting process. Welcoming this onerous task to ensure that the Indians living abroad are empowered to exercise the franchise, this Ministry suggested to organise a virtual workshop between ECI officials and select Indian Embassies on this subject; but it has not materialized yet. This Ministry will continue to coordinate with the relevant stakeholders as they work towards a clear timeline for implementing this ambitious project.

The Ministry has written to the Department of Legal Affairs (DLA) and the Election Commission of India once again forwarding to them the recommendations of the Committee to seek updates from the concerned authorities. The comments from the DLA and the ECI are awaited.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

## Recommendation No.6

### Need for Authentic Data on the Indian Diaspora

The Committee note that as per the official records and inputs received from Missions and Posts, Indian Diaspora comprise of 15.85 million NRIs and 19.57 million PIOs and OCIs, adding to a total of 35.42 million in January 2024. However, as per the UN Population Division's estimate there were around 17.86 million Indian migrants in 2020 implying that the number of migrants would have significantly increased by now than the figures reflected by the Ministry. The Committee are concerned to note that the Ministry does not have any authentic data on the Indian Diaspora as registration with Indian Embassies is voluntary and the official data collection is restricted to Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries. The Committee have been surprised to note that despite being aware of the magnitude of the issue, no efforts are being made by the Ministry to address the same. While acknowledging that accurately tracking the large Indian Diaspora spread across the globe is a challenging task requiring enhanced data collection methods through regular surveys, census data, and collaboration with host countries, the Committee feel that lack of reliable data acts as a major hurdle in the international migration governance. In the absence of a comprehensive and up-to-date database, effective framing of programmes for migrants as well as proper delivery of welfare schemes for them would be challenging. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry together with the Bureau of Immigration may devise mechanisms to collect and collate reliable data on migrants and returnees on real time basis and apprise the Committee of the same.

### Reply of the Government

This Ministry agrees with the recommendation that having a comprehensive and up-to-date database of Indian diaspora abroad will help in framing effective policies for migrants. However, the Ministry has been encountering difficulties in collecting accurate data and maintaining such a database even for countries with smaller and homogeneous diaspora communities. The Government of India faces several challenges in maintaining updated records about the Indian diaspora living abroad due to administrative, legal and practical limitations. Indian diaspora is not only large and diverse but it is also highly mobile, translocating themselves frequently for education, jobs and other reasons. Due to a long history of international exchanges, Indian diaspora currently comprises of several generations with varying levels of linkages with their ancestral homeland. They, therefore, belong to multiple classifications based on their nature of residency abroad, such as NRIs, OCIs and PIOs. Many Indians return temporarily or shuttle between countries for work or family reasons, creating gaps or duplication in records. Moreover,

privacy laws and data protection regulations in many countries restrict information sharing about Indian nationals. The phenomenon of irregular / illegal migration adds to these challenges.

This Ministry follows the widest and the most inclusive definitions of the Indian diaspora categories in order to ensure that no one is excluded from its diaspora engagement and welfare programmes. Information from Embassies/ Consulates is currently the most reliable source of information for building the diaspora database. As the diaspora engagement continues to expand and strengthen, the veracity of the collected data is expected to increase. Meanwhile, this Ministry has written to the Ministry of Home Affairs to explore the possibility of the Bureau of Immigration devising mechanisms to collect and collate reliable data on migrants and returnees on real time basis. Their comments are awaited.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.7**

#### **Data Collection by Bureau of Immigration**

**Currently, the only available national-level migration data pertains to Emigration Check Required (ECR) category migrants. However, ECR category migrants are becoming a minority in the migrant population and the ECR data often lead to misrepresentation of international migration from the country. The Committee are aware that the most reliable data is that collected at various ports by Bureau of Immigration on various categories of migrants including temporary labour migrants, students, long-term migrants, etc. The Committee, hence, desire that data collection efforts by Bureau of Immigration at exit and entry points must be strengthened by adopting safe, secure technological platforms, supported by an effective monitoring mechanism. The data, thus collected may be shared with other stakeholders, especially other Central Government Departments and State Governments.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry agrees with the Committee's observation that the data collected by the Bureau of Immigration at exit and entry points can be shared with other stakeholders, such as with other Central Government Departments and State Governments, in order to engage with the Indian diaspora more effectively and to ensure their safety and welfare. The data on Indian diaspora exiting India that is being collected by the Bureau of Immigration is indeed being used by most Ministries of the Government of India while dealing with the Indian diaspora. Ministry has

written to the Ministry of Home Affairs suggesting that the Bureau of Immigration needs to explore mechanisms to further strengthen the process of data collection. Their comments are awaited.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.9**

#### **Inward Remittances from NRIs**

**The Committee note that inward remittances from NRIs have witnessed a steady increase during the last three years and in 2023-24 it was 118.7 billion US Dollars. The Committee are aware that the hard power that the Non-Resident Indians wield through the money they send back to their families and relatives in India, bolster India's economy by fuelling consumption, enhancing foreign exchange reserves and ensuring macroeconomic stability. Considering the fact that NRI investments have emerged as a significant driving force in shaping the trajectory of the Indian economy by playing a pivotal role in catalyzing growth across various sectors, there should be consistent efforts to foster greater economic engagement with the Diaspora. Remittances being the second largest source of external financing after service exports and accounting for a significant chunk of India's GDP, the Committee desire that the Government should streamline online transfer platforms, reduce transaction fees, communicate government policies regarding NRI remittances, address taxation concerns, etc. to build trust and transparency. In addition to easing out business opportunities, the Government should promote other investment options available to NRIs in India, like mutual funds, stocks, and real estate. Above all, MEA should actively engage with NRI communities to understand their needs and concerns regarding sending money back to India.**

#### **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry endeavours to play a proactive and evolving role in promoting the economic and financial interests of the Indian diaspora on the one hand and that of the Indian economy as a whole, on the other. However, facilitating NRI remittances, NRI investment options and addressing taxation concerns fall within the purview of the Ministry of Finance. However, recognizing that NRIs are a key pillar of India's global engagement and a major source of inward

remittances, MEA - alongwith other relevant ministries - has undertaken several initiatives to build trust, ensure transparency, and facilitate economic participation of the Indian diaspora.

MEA works closely with the Reserve Bank of India and the Ministry of Finance to ensure seamless remittance channels for the Indian diaspora, through activities such as promoting the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) linkages with countries like the UAE, Singapore, and the UK and promotion of RuPay cards. Through social media, website and physical interaction with the diaspora, Indian Embassies regularly communicate clarifications and changes in tax laws, residential status rules, Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements, FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act) provisions, and investment norms.

In partnership with the Ministry of Commerce, agencies such as 'Invest India' and industry associations, MEA encourages the Indian diaspora to actively engage with the Indian economy and entrepreneurship through means of Single-window clearances, sector-specific investor seminars and publication of handbooks, and promotion of investment-centric events like the Vibrant Gujarat. Indian Embassies abroad also engage in market expansion activities and provide assistance in cases of financial and trade disputes.

The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, the flagship biennial event of this Ministry where diaspora members meet Indian policy makers, normally contains informative sessions on remittances, fintech, and taxation in India. During PBD 2025, the Ministry had organized a 'Diaspora Business Meet' in partnership with the Government of Odisha at Bhubaneswar to promote Business opportunities and linkages for members of diaspora with their counterparts in India.

Ministry has written to the Ministry of Finance seeking their views on how to ensure that the concerns of the Indian diaspora relating to sending remittances are satisfactorily resolved. Their comments are awaited.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

## **Recommendation No.17**

### **Bilateral and Multilateral Agreements on Transfer of Sentenced Persons**

**The Committee find that India has so far signed 31 bilateral Agreements on Transfer of Sentenced Persons with Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Egypt, Estonia, France, Hong Kong, Iran, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Kuwait, Maldives, Mauritius, Mongolia, Qatar, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkiye, United Arab Emirates (UAE), United Kingdom and Vietnam, by virtue of which Indian prisoners lodged in foreign countries can be transferred to India to serve the remainder of their sentence and vice-versa. With India signing two multilateral conventions on Transfer of Sentenced Persons, namely Inter-American Convention on Serving Criminal Sentences Abroad and Council of Europe Convention on Transfer of Sentenced Persons, the Committee note that most of the countries in Europe, North America and South America are covered for the purpose. However, countries in Asia, Africa and few countries in Eastern Europe are yet to be covered by bilateral agreements. The Committee, hence, recommend that the Government, through the Ministry of Home Affairs, which is the nodal Ministry for this subject, may pursue, process and sign such agreement with the remaining countries.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of this recommendation and would like to mention that the mandate to sign Agreement on Transfer of Sentences Persons (TSP) with foreign countries comes under the remit of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The recommendation of the Committee on expanding TSP Agreement with other remaining countries has been conveyed to MHA.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

## **Recommendation No.18**

### **Transfer of Sentenced Persons from Foreign Jails**

**The Committee find with dismay that despite having bilateral and multilateral agreements/conventions on Transfer of Sentenced Persons which covers several countries in Middle East, Europe, North America and South America, only 8 Indian prisoners were transferred from foreign countries to India in the last three years. This low success rate in**

**bringing back Indian prisoners calls for an assessment of the efforts taken in this regard. Keeping in view the large number of prisoners languishing in foreign jails, the Committee desire that the Government study the obstacles in implementing the agreements/conventions and, if need be, amend existing agreements or create new ones to facilitate smoother repatriation of prisoners. The Committee also stress the need to enhance diplomatic efforts and negotiations with other countries to streamline the process of transferring prisoners and ensuring fair treatment for Indian nationals in foreign jails.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of the recommendation of the Committee and would like to mention that the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) is the nodal authority in the matters pertaining to Transfer of Sentenced Persons (TSP) from foreign countries. MEA has conveyed the recommendations of the Committee to MHA to examine the existing agreements/conventions on TSP on the need to streamline the process of transferring prisoners and to ensure smoother repatriation of prisoners. Response from MHA is awaited.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.19**

#### **Implementation of Agreements on Transfer of Prisoners**

**The Committee note that at present 10,152 Indian prisoners including under-trials are lodged in foreign prisons. There are 12 countries where Indians are imprisoned in large numbers, viz., Bahrain (272), China (185), Italy (164), Kuwait (387), Malaysia (371), Nepal (1187), Oman (117), Qatar (740), Saudi Arabia (2647), Sri Lanka (143), United Arab Emirates (2479) and United Kingdom (288). The Committee have been informed that nine of these countries are covered under existing agreements on Transfer of Sentenced Persons and that MHA is working on negotiating such agreements with the other three countries, namely, Nepal, Malaysia and Oman. The Committee understand that the Ministry of Home Affairs is the nodal Ministry for negotiating and implementing the agreements on transfer of sentenced persons. In view of the large number of Indians lodged in prisons abroad, the Committee desire that no efforts are spared in getting the agreements implemented and the Missions/Posts remain extra vigilant to ensure that the rights of the Indian prisoners in foreign jails are protected. At the same time, the nodal Ministry may continue to make efforts in right earnest to transfer more sentenced Indians, especially from the countries where they are lodged in large numbers.**

## **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry has taken note of the recommendation and would like to submit that the Government attaches high priority to the safety, and well-being of Indians in foreign countries, including those lodged in jails abroad. Indian Embassies/Consulates remain vigilant and closely monitor the incidents of Indian nationals being lodged in jails in foreign countries for violations/ alleged violations of local laws.

As the Committee is aware, Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), being the nodal authority in the matters pertaining to Transfer of Sentenced Persons (TSP), has been requested to streamline the process of transferring prisoners under TSP Agreement and to ensure their smoother repatriation to India.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.20**

#### **Expeditious Finalisation of MMPAs and LMAs with Countries having large Indian Diaspora**

**The Committee find that India has signed Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreements/ MoUs (MMPAs) or Labour Mobility Agreements/ MoUs (LMAs) with several countries where the Indian Diaspora is present. MMPAs aim at harnessing India's demographic dividend and fostering mobility for our students, academics, business people and professionals. India has MMPAs signed with France, the UK, Germany, Australia, Austria, Italy and Denmark. The Labor and Manpower Cooperation MOUs/Agreements are in place with the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, Japan, Portugal, Mauritius, Israel, Taiwan and Malaysia. Further, to safeguard the specific interest of domestic workers in GCC Countries, agreements on Labor Cooperation for Domestic Sector have been signed with Saudi Arabia, UAE and Kuwait. However, the Committee note that we do not have any labour protection agreements with many countries where our Diaspora is in large numbers. Since it is extremely important to have legally binding agreements to protect the interest of our Diaspora while working across borders, the Committee recommend that the Government should actively engage in concluding more such agreements with destination countries, especially those with significant potential to offer**

**benefits and opportunities for Indian nationals including skilled workers, professionals and students. They also desire that the ongoing discussions with various countries, particularly with countries in Europe and the Far East on MMPAs and LMAs may be finalized at the earliest under intimation to the Committee.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry has taken note of this recommendation. It may be noted that India has signed bilateral Agreements/MoUs with several countries that host significant Indian diaspora populations, including the Gulf countries, United Kingdom, Italy, Denmark, Austria, Australia, Germany, France, Israel, Malaysia and Mauritius.

Additionally, discussions for expediting finalization of bilateral agreements/MOUs are in various stages with countries such as Armenia, Andorra, Brunei, Cyprus, Croatia, Finland, Greece, Guyana, New Zealand, Oman, Portugal, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Korea, Switzerland and Trinidad & Tobago.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.41**

#### **Creation of a Centralised, Real-Time Migration Database**

**Effective policymaking requires robust migration data governance. While acknowledging that MEA's PoE offices track Emigration Clearance Required (ECR) data, and migration estimates exist from Census 2011 and the National Sample Survey 2020-21, the Committee note that a centralised, real-time migration database remains absent. They, therefore, recommend that under the proposed new legislation, the Government must make provision for establishing a national migration database or social registry, to track outgoing and returnee migrants, their skills, employment sectors, and remittance patterns. Integrating passport, visa and emigration data portals would positively aid policy formulation and social welfare provisioning.**

### **Reply of the Government**

This Ministry agrees with the Committee's observation that strengthening migration data governance is a critical component of effective policymaking that will positively aid policy

formulation and social welfare provisioning. The Government has already laid strong foundational work through interlinked digital platforms and ongoing integration efforts. It has instituted and constantly enhances key systems such as the eMigrate portal, which manages emigration clearance, labour contracts, and welfare registration for ECR passport holders; Passport Seva system, which is a digitized and globally accessible passport issuance platform; MADAD portal, which facilitates grievance redressal and enables real-time feedback; Global Pravasi Rishta portal, which aims to create a voluntary database of Indian diaspora, etc.

However, the creation of a centralised real-time migration database at a global scale presents major challenges. Migration of Indians has a dynamic and decentralised nature. They move across countries for a wide range of purposes and through formal and informal channels. Many diaspora members are long-settled citizens or permanent residents of host countries and are not consistently captured in any existing Indian database. Tracking them in real time across jurisdictions to create a database could discourage voluntary registrations by migrants, especially those in irregular or transitional employment.

Moreover, collecting, storing, and transmitting personal data of migrants abroad raises serious concerns under host country privacy laws. Without express consent or bilateral data-sharing agreements, maintaining a live registry could lead to diplomatic sensitivities and violate local data protection norms.

Therefore, a balanced and targeted approach is preferred by enhancing the existing systems of data capture and promoting interoperability between them, in collaboration with other concerned Ministries. This Ministry has initiated discussions with the Bureau of Immigration to explore the feasibility of an integrated migration data system, in order to build a robust, data-driven, people-centric migration governance framework. Their comments/inputs are awaited.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.50**

#### **Blue Print for Expanding PDOT**

**The Committee are aware that 36 PDOT centers are operational in UP, Rajasthan, Punjab, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Bihar,**

**Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka and out of them 14 centers are managed by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) and 22 by State Government Agencies. The Ministry has informed that they are in the process of taking the total number of PDOT centres to 100 by partnering with industry bodies such as CII, FICCI, ASSOCHAM and Common Services Centre, e-Governance Service India Limited of Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology. The Committee are further informed that online PDOT has been launched in April 2021 to reach out to prospective emigrants who live far away from PDOT centres, especially women participants. While acknowledging that these initiatives will go a long way in delivering training for more migrants, the Committee are quite apprehensive about the actual implementation vis a vis tall claims on paper. The Committee, hence, recommend that there should be a clear blue print for expanding PDOT Centres and the status of opening them, may be apprised to the Committee, including in the north-eastern region. The Committee also desire to know the target for online and offline PDOT training programmes for the current year and the number of persons likely to be covered for both the trainings.**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Committee's concerns regarding PDOT programme are noted. Since inception of the PDOT programme in 2018, a total of 1,90,362 emigrant workers have been imparted training through 41 PDOT Centres as on 28 February 2025. The proposal to open another 51 new P-DOT centres within the next one year is under implementation.

The PDOT training is imparted under two models:

(i) PDOT Centres operated by National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) empanelled training partners under the Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojna (PKKY), a joint collaboration under an MoU between Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and a grant of Rs. 10 crore was extended by MEA to MSDE.

(ii) The second model is PDOT Centres managed by State Government agencies. Ministry has been granting funds to State Governments to conduct PDOT Training to emigrant workers both for in-person training and for online training.

The Ministry has been making concerted efforts to expand the PDOT outreach to promote safe, legal and orderly migration. Towards this end, Ministry has reached out to all concerned State Governments/agencies to send their proposals for allocation of funds to carry out PDOT and also operationalise the new PDOT centres approved by the Ministry. In this regard, Ministry has written letters to the Chief Secretaries/Principal Secretaries of the concerned States seeking their intervention for promotion of PDOT programme and early operationalisation of new PDOT Centres in their States. The matter is being followed up directly with the State Governments as well as through the PoEs in these States. Ministry is working in close coordination with all relevant stakeholders to expand the P-DOT outreach.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

#### **Recommendation No.54**

##### **Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conferences (RPBDs)**

**The Committee note that Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conferences (RPBDs) were being organised by the Ministry in different parts of the world to reach out to a vast majority of our Diaspora, who, for various reasons, were unable to attend the main biennial event in India and benefit from its deliberations. The Committee further note the Ministry has so far successfully organized 10 regional PBDs, with the last one being held in Singapore in 2018. Due to COVID pandemic, the Regional PBDs could not be held in 2020 and 2022. The Ministry has further informed that the policy of holding Regional PBD has not been abandoned by them and that the next Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is expected to be organized in 2026. The Committee feel that Mini/Regional PBDs are a means to embrace and involve thousands more of Overseas Indians and utilize their potential to showcase India in the countries where the events are scheduled. Delay in conducting such events result in loss of opportunities for overseas Indians to connect and engage with their homeland. The Committee, hence, desire that Regional Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2026 is organized without fail in a manner that compensates for the gap of eight years and the tentative plan for the same may be communicated to the Committee.**

##### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry would like to assure the Committee that the policy of holding Regional PBDs has not been abandoned. The Ministry shares the Committee's sentiment that Regional PBDs are crucial for embracing and involving a larger number of Overseas Indians and leveraging their potential to showcase India in their respective host countries. Ministry is committed to

organizing regular Regional PBDs and is currently in the process of formulating the plan to organize Regional PBD in 2026 in one of the diaspora intensive countries in the Gulf region.

[File No. AA/Parl/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

### **Recommendation No.70**

#### **Expansion of MADAD Portal in Regional Languages**

The Committee note that MADAD is an online comprehensive grievances redressal portal launched as part of the good governance initiative by the Government. The portal is accessible to all Indian nationals abroad in distress, including to those who have been stranded overseas due to various reasons. MADAD can be accessed through website ([www.madad.gov.in](http://www.madad.gov.in)) or through mobile app. All Indian Missions and Posts abroad and the MEA's Branch Secretariats in Chennai, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Mumbai are linked to this portal for consular grievance tracking and follow-up. The Committee have been informed that the MADAD Portal is regularly monitored at various levels and Indian Missions/Posts abroad take action on the complaints and update the status regularly. The Committee find that the grievances being handled in MADAD comprise of a range of consular issues including repatriation, transportation of mortal remains, death compensation, work related problems, imprisonment cases, marital disputes, consular services, passport issues, court cases, students' issues, etc. Multilingual Call Centres (Under PBSK), Student Registration, Prisoners Module, Integration with the portal "eMigrate", Integration with State Governments in India, Module for assistance through Indian Community Welfare Fund, etc. have also been added to the scope of the portal. The Committee, however, note that MADAD is available bilingually in Hindi and English languages only. The Committee are of the considered view that this is definitely an impediment to a large number of overseas Indians who may not be able to put forth their grievance effectively in English and Hindi. The Committee desire that the Ministry may look into the feasibility of expanding the ambit of the portal, including in regional languages that are used by a significant number of Diaspora.

## Reply of the Government

The MADAD Portal, a key good governance initiative, effectively serves Indian nationals abroad by addressing a wide range of consular grievances, including transportation of mortal remains, repatriation, work-related issues, imprisonment, and passport services. Accessible via [www.madad.gov.in](http://www.madad.gov.in) and a mobile app, it integrates Indian Missions/Posts, MEA's Branch Secretariats, and additional modules like Multilingual Call Centers, e-Migrate, and the Indian Community Welfare Fund. Regular monitoring and updates by Missions/Posts ensure efficient grievance tracking and follow-up.

While the Madad portal is presently available in English and Hindi, availability of the portal in other languages would be helpful. MEA will try to examine the technical feasibility of having the existing MADAD portal shown in regional languages, Ministry is constantly working upon enhancing the accessibility for non-Hindi/English-speaking diaspora which would lead to higher grievance registration and resolution by strengthening the engagement with the Indian diaspora, particularly in regions with significant regional language speakers. These measures are aimed at increasing accessibility of local vernacular speakers to articulate and register their grievances in their local languages. Existing Multilingual Call Centers under PBSK (Pravasi Bharatiya Sahayta Kendra) are also addressing these issues by providing support in regional languages. From time-to-time, Ministry conducts awareness campaigns through our Embassies/Consulates, diaspora networks, and social media to inform overseas Indians about the availability of regional language support. Ministry is also increasing the engagement with Indian diaspora organizations to provide support for grievants/complainants to put forth their grievances in available languages more effectively on the social media platforms as well.

*Bhashini: Bhashini is an AI-driven language translation platform developed by the Government of India under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY). Launched in August 2022 as part of the National Language Translation Mission (NLTM), Bhashini aims to bridge language barriers and promote digital inclusion across the country. The platform leverages Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Natural Language Processing (NLP) to provide real-time translation, speech-to-text, text-to-speech, and voice-to-voice translation services.*

*In order to provide multilingual support, Madad Section is exploring the possibilities of integrating Bhashini module into the Madad Portal.*

[File No. AA/Par/125/31/2025 dated 01/07/2025]

**NEW DELHI**  
**16 December, 2025**  
**25 Agrahayana, 1947 (Saka)**

**Dr. Shashi Tharoor,**  
**Chairperson,**  
**Committee on External Affairs**

**Ministry of External Affairs  
(Diaspora Engagement Division)**

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**Report on the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 2025**

**Background:**

Government of India launched its flagship Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention in the year 2003 with a view to strengthen its engagement with the overseas Indian community. It was part of its endeavor to celebrate the remarkable achievements of the esteemed Indian community living across the globe and to recognise their contributions to the development of India besides reconnecting them with their cultural roots. January 09 was chosen as a day to celebrate the occasion since it was on this day in the year 1915 that Mahatma Gandhi, the most influential Pravasi, returned to India from South Africa, to lead India's freedom struggle that changed the lives of Indians forever.

2. The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention was an annual event till the year 2015 after which it is being celebrated on a biennial basis in partnership with a State Government of India. Indian Diaspora Members are encouraged to participate in the event to explore the rich cultural heritage of India. The Convention provides a platform to leverage the expertise of the Indian Diaspora in technology, education, innovation, attract investments and entrepreneurship, and promote India's global soft power. These Conventions also provide an avenue for the overseas Indian community to engage with the Government and the people of the land of their ancestors for undertaking mutually beneficial activities. These Conventions have proved to be very useful for facilitating networking amongst the overseas Indian community residing in various parts of the world and to enable them to share their expertise in various fields. Till the year 2023, 17 editions of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention were held, the last being at Indore, Madhya Pradesh in January 2023.

**Organisation of the 18<sup>th</sup> Pravasi Bharatiya Divas:**

3. The 18<sup>th</sup> Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention was organised by the Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with the State Government of Odisha at Bhubaneswar in Odisha from January 08-10, 2025. The theme of the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD 2025 was “Diaspora’s Contribution to a Viksit Bharat”. The Convention was a three-day event with the Youth PBD being celebrated on Day 01 (January 08, 2025). The State Government of Odisha also interacted with the participating Indian Diaspora in the afternoon on Day 01. Prime Minister inaugurated the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD 2025 on January 09, 2025 while President of India chaired the Valedictory Session of the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention on Day 03 (January 10, 2025) when she also conferred the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards. The three-day PBD also comprised of 5 Thematic Plenary Sessions that involved deliberations on contemporary realities and challenges besides organisation of gala cultural programmes, exhibitions and putting up of promotional stalls showcasing India’s rich cultural heritage and exquisite artisanry. **The programme for the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD 2025 is annexed at Flag ‘A’.** The details of the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD 2025 are as follows:

#### **Day 1 (January 08, 2025):**

#### **Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas--Inaugural Session**

4. As is customary and tradition, the Youth PBD was held on Day 01 (on January 08, 2025). It was co-hosted by External Affairs Minister (EAM), Dr. S. Jaishankar and Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Dr. Manshukh Mandaviya. Besides the aforesaid two Ministers, Chief Minister of Odisha, Shri Mohan Charan Majhi, MOS for External Affairs, Shri Pabitra Margherita, MOS for Youth Affairs and Sports, Ms. Raksha Nikhil Khadse and the Guest of Honor of the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD, Dr. Dev Pragad, the CEO of Newsweek from the USA, also addressed the Session. Over 4,000 members of the Indian diaspora attended the Inaugural session of the Youth PBD.

5. The leaders at the Inaugural Session highlighted the vital role played and important contributions that the younger generation of the Indian Diaspora can make towards building of a Viksit Bharat and India’s global image. EAM emphasized that organising the Youth PBD by the Government of India assumes high significance particularly at a time when several innovations in the world are being shaped by the younger generation including those from the Indian Diaspora in diverse fields such as AI, EV, Space, Drones and as the latter are making distinct marks in sports such as Chess and Cricket. It is the endeavor of the Government of India to motivate the younger generation to accelerate their efforts and transform their attitude from ‘Chalta hai’ to ‘Badal sakta hai’ to ‘Hoga kaise nahin?’. He cited the inspiring role of the Indian Badminton Ace, PV Sindhu, who has championed the narrative of youth-led development in India. **The text of External Affairs Minister’s speech is annexed at Flag ‘B’.**

6. Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya enumerated several roles that could be played by youth members of the Indian Diaspora to contribute towards Viksit Bharat and to progress upon PM Modi's motto of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas". He emphasized upon the tremendous demographic dividend that India could reap particularly since out of every 20 Indians, 13 are below 35 years of age and the average age of Indians today being only 28 years. He informed that Government of India is making sustained efforts towards involving the youth in India's developmental story. 3000 youth members of India had been selected to participate in the upcoming National Youth Festival of India on January 11-12, 2025, a platform in which they would share their thoughts on Viksit Bharat with the Prime Minister of India.

7. The Guest of Honour for the Youth PBD, Dr. Dev Pragad, CEO Newsweek from USA informed that his story is quintessentially American-- about a striving immigrant with a dream of pulling off a business turnaround of an iconic American brand against impossible odds in the New York city. Speaking of his journey in Newsweek, he detailed his contributions towards the popularity of the journal and its emergence as the fastest growing English-language news publisher in the world last year.

### **Plenary Session I - "Beyond Borders: Diaspora Youth Leadership in a Globalized World":**

8. The Inaugural session of the Youth PBD was followed by the 1<sup>st</sup> Plenary Session of the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD on the theme "Beyond Borders: Diaspora Youth Leadership in a Globalized World". The Session was Chaired by the **Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports of India, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya**, and was **moderated by Shri Binny Bansal, Co-Founder of Flipkart**. The Panelists were as follows:

#### **Panelists -**

- a. **Mr. Y B Prabhakaran** – Malaysian Politician and Member of Parliament for Batu, Member of the People's Justice Party (PKR) – **Malaysia**
- b. **Ms. Eeshaanee Shandilya** - Business Analyst, HSBC Global Services, Hong Kong. Technology Graduate Trainee, Digital Business Services – **Hong Kong**
- c. **Mr. Don McLain Gill** - Lecturer, Department of International Studies, De La Salle University. He specializes in Philippine foreign policy, India-Southeast Asian security relations, and maritime security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, and India-Southeast Asian relations. - **Philippines**
- d. **Ms. Revathy Pillay** – IT Business Analyst and Southside Radio FM Presenter. Dynamic youth ambassador and radio personality dedicated to empowering youth voices – **South Africa**

- e. **Mr. Mohiuddin Mohamad Ali** –Vice-chairman of Galfar Engineering & contracting SAOG. He is president of the Oman chapter of the Indo-Gulf & Middle East chamber – **Muscat**
- f. **Ms. Mickela Panday** – Daughter of former Prime Minister of T&T Basdeo Panday. Political Leader of the newest political party in T&T- the Patriotic Front, launched in 2019. She is a former MP. She is an Attorney-at-Law – **Trinidad & Tobago**

9. Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya recounted the efforts that are being made by the Government of India and the initiatives taken by it to provide opportunities to the youth of this country to further enhance the impressive economic growth rate of 8% in India that is significantly higher than that of Europe, China and the United States. Efforts are being made to create new openings for the Indian youth in emerging sectors such as Artificial Intelligence, Information Technology etc., and by shaping critical linkages between industries and the academia.

10. Other participants of the Session focused upon the transformative role that the Diaspora Youth can play in shaping a globalised world through leadership, innovation and cultural diplomacy. They highlighted the importance of the Indian Diaspora youth in fostering vital links between India and the global community. They recounted their unique experiences and reflected upon their remarkable contributions in diverse fields such as politics, technology, academia, entrepreneurship and social empowerment and discussed ideas for collaboration with India in areas such as education, skill development, technology, agriculture and culture preservation. The Session concluded with a key takeaway that people-to-people connectivity is central to promoting collaboration and realizing the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047.

### **Joint Business Session**

11. Chief Minister of Odisha and External Affairs Minister chaired a Business Leaders Meeting on the sidelines of 18<sup>th</sup> PBD. The Joint Session witnessed participation of over 500 members of the Indian Diaspora community involved in business and their counterparts from the State of Odisha. The Chief Secretary of Odisha, Shri Manoj Ahuja, opened the Session when he enumerated the advantages and abundant opportunities offered by the State of Odisha and the upcoming infrastructure projects planned by it to attract business and investments by Indian Diaspora members in the State. Principal Secretary, Industries of the State Government of Odisha also highlighted the investment opportunities offered by the State that were reiterated by Shri Sampat Chandra Swain, Minister of Industries, Skill Development and Technical Education of the State Government of Odisha.

12. EAM underlined Government of India's steadfast commitment to Mission Purvodaya and the role of Odisha for its success. He highlighted Odisha's potential in the 3Ts, Trade, Tourism and Technology, which makes it an excellent investment destination.

13. Chief Minister of Odisha apprised what the State can offer to investors and business persons such as a stable Government, good law and order machinery, infrastructure, skilled manpower, a friendly industrial policy, natural resources etc. The State Government of Odisha made presentations on the investment opportunities available in the State.

#### **Plenary Session of the State Government of Odisha (January 08, 2025)**

- (a) "Unraveling India's Best Kept Secret"
- (b) "Odisha: A Land of Opportunities"

14. The above sessions presented the enormous potential that could be utilized by the Indian diaspora in Odisha through their engagements in developing and promoting trade, tourism and investments in different sectors. The State Government of Odisha is working on a Vision Document for 2047 focusing on three main themes, namely, development of infrastructure—ports, airports and industries; wellness of its people with focus on augmenting infrastructure for health; and creating social and economic equities. The sub text of these three themes also include policies to foster women empowerment, bring reforms in governance, engage with the community including the Odia diaspora and framing policies to combat climate change. Government of Odisha also highlighted its efforts to bring about holistic development of its people including through creation of infrastructure for sports. The State has built the largest hockey stadium and has hosted two World Cup Hockey Tournaments. It is also sponsoring the National Kho Kho team and the National Women's Hockey Team in line with its vision to use sports to create commercial, social and individual growth opportunities. Some suggestions from the discussions for further development of Odisha included leveraging diaspora for talent, ideas and as role models. It was also highlighted that Odisha is a success story in India's overall growth trajectory where labor force participation of women is much higher than other states and where there is a vibrant diaspora community which can further augment economic growth of the State.

#### **Cultural Programme Organised by the State Government of Odisha**

15. In the evening of Day 01 of the PBD, the State Government of Odisha organised a Gala Cultural Programme showcasing Odisha's history and cultural legacy through a dance presentation by the Odisha Dance Academy choreographed by Dr. Aruna Mohanty.

## **Day 2 (January 09, 2025)**

### **Inaugural Session:**

16. The 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was formally inaugurated by Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi on January 9, 2025. H.E. Christine Carla Kangaloo, the President of the Republic of Trinidad and

Tobago, was the Chief Guest of the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. She addressed the convention virtually. Prime Minister remotely flagged off the inaugural journey of the special tourist train for the Indian diaspora, Pravasi Bharatiya Express, which left Delhi on that day for travel to multiple destinations of touristic and religious importance in India for a period of three weeks.

17. Addressing the Convention, Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, observed that the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas has become an institution to strengthen the bond between India and its diaspora. Prime Minister emphasized that he always considered the Indian diaspora as Ambassadors of India. Expressing his joy in meeting and conversing with fellow Indians around the world, he said that the love and blessings he received from them were unforgettable and always stayed with him. He mentioned that the 21st century India was progressing at an incredible speed and scale. He conveyed that today's India not only firmly asserted its own point but also strongly amplified the voice of the Global South.

18. Prime Minister mentioned that India has the potential to fulfill the world's demand for skilled talent. He assured that Government of India considered it a responsibility to help Indian diaspora during crisis situations, no matter where they were. He highlighted the significant history of the Indian diaspora worldwide, emphasizing their achievements in various countries, as an important part of India's heritage. He urged that these interesting and inspiring stories should be shared, showcased and preserved as part of our shared legacy and heritage as has been done in the case of Oman. He also emphasized the need to undertake similar efforts with the diaspora in various other countries, particularly the need for creation of a database to identify the villages and cities in India from where Girmitiya community originated and the places they have settled, establish a Girmitiya Study and Research Center (GSRC) to serve as a dedicated research and documentation hub to preserve the history, culture, struggles, and contributions of the Girmitiya diaspora, partner with a University to initiate research on Girmitiya legacy and establish a University Chair for it, document lives of Girmitiya community through films and documentaries, organise regular World Girmitiya Conferences, partner with countries connected to the Girmitiya

Community, such as Mauritius, to identify 'Indentured Labour Routes' and to set up mechanism to preserve key heritage sites along the 'Indentured Labour Routes'.

19. Prime Minister also reiterated his "Chalo India" tourism campaign for the diaspora, encouraging each of them to visit India with five foreign friends. He emphasized the goal of making India a developed nation by 2047, a Viksit Bharat, and highlighted the importance of the GIFT City ecosystem in meeting the financial services and investment needs of the diaspora and encouraged them to leverage its benefits to strengthen India's journey towards development. **(Transcript of PM's Address is attached at Flag C)**

### **Thematic Exhibitions:**

20. Following his address, Prime Minister inaugurated the following four exhibitions at the venue of the PBD:

- (i) "Vishwaroop Ram, the universal legacy of Ramayana" curated by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations,
- (ii) "Diaspora's contribution to Technology and Viksit Bharat" curated by MEA
- (iii) "Spread and Evolution of Indian diaspora in the world with special focus on Mandvi to Muscat" curated by the National Archives of India
- (iv) "The Heritage and Culture of Odisha" curated by the State Government of Odisha.

Several Promotional stalls were also set up by Ministries and Departments of the Government of India, the State Government of Odisha and other State Governments to present their developmental efforts in India's march towards a Viksit Bharat. Punjab Tourism, Andaman Nicobar Tourism, Maharashtra Tourism, West Bengal Tourism, Commerce & Industries of Mizoram, NRI Division of Gujarat State Government etc. had put up stalls at the PBD.

## **Plenary Session II - “Building Bridges, Breaking Barriers: Stories of Migrant Skills”:**

21. In the afternoon of January 9, 2025, the Second plenary session of the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD entitled “Building Bridges: Breaking Barriers, Stories of Migrant Skills” was organised to focus upon migration of Indians over centuries. The Session was chaired by Minister of State for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Labour and Employment, Smt. Shobha Karandlaje and was moderated by the Special Secretary for Economic Relations of the Ministry of External Affairs, Shri P. Kumaran. The Panelists were as follows:

- i. **Shri V. Muraleedharan**, Former Minister of State for External Affairs
- ii. **Shri Ashok Mago** – Chairman & CEO, Mago & Associates Inc, USA
- iii. **Shri Rohit Ratnakar Rao**- Founder-CEO of ‘Medrock Corporation’, a multinational pharmaceutical company and ‘Eske Corporation’ – **Peru & Bolivia**
- iv. **Shri Vilwanathan Krishnamurthy** - Dedicated and experienced social worker and cultural leader with an extensive background in welding technology and social services - **Germany**
- v. **Shri Sopnendu Mohanty** – Chief Fintech Officer of the Monetary Authority of Singapore – **Singapore**
- vi. **Shri Ashok Kalra** – Managing Director and Partner of the Mughal Mahal Group - **Kuwait**
- vii. **Shri Kandarp Mehta** - Senior Lecturer in the Negotiation unit and the Entrepreneurship Department of IESE Business School – **Spain**

22. The Session focused on the stories of migrant workers and professionals from India across the world who have been building bridges through fostering key partnerships, shaping political conversations, building positive connections and serving as cultural ambassadors of India globally. The discussion highlighted the importance of India's diaspora, particularly the migrant workers, in shaping global economy and the need to upskill labour force of India to cater to the demographic shift in the world that has led to increased demand for human resources from India. This was also emphasised by speakers from the Western countries who highlighted that intake of Indian students by Western universities is going to witness an uptick.

## **Plenary Session III - “Green Connections – Diaspora’s Contributions to Sustainable Development”:**

23. The third plenary session entitled “Green Connections: Diaspora’s Contributions to Sustainable Development” focused on green energy. The Session was chaired by the Minister of Electronics and Information Technology, Information and Broadcasting and Railways, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw and was moderated by the Chairman and Managing Director of the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency, Shri Pradeep Kumar Das. The Panelists were as follows:

i. **Hon. Mr. Hambyrajen Narsinghen** – Junior Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Government of the Republic of **Mauritius**

ii. **Mr. Rahul Fotedar** – He is the Founder & CTO of Morrow Batteries in Norway. He has been playing a leading role in product strategy, technology development and strategic partnerships – **Norway**

iii. **Shri Jagdish Nainwal** – Jagdish Nainwal is currently working as CEO of UPL for LATAM region which is one of the leading agriculture companies in Latin America by having near to 1 billion revenue – **Mexico**

iv. **Mr. Indronil Sengupta** – Has been working in various business areas for 30 years and has expertise in the field of energy. He is also the Chairman of Indian Business Chambers in Hanoi and has served in Tata Group for long years. His present Consultancy venture “Invesify” also engages in energy – **Vietnam**

v. **Mr. Aditya Yellepeddi** – Working with the Swiss Biotech Association (from 2022 onwards). Heading the Indo-Swiss industry initiative to foster collaborations and investments between India and Switzerland. Politics (Main Party: Le Centre - a Federal Government Party – **Switzerland**

vi. **Mr. Jitender Kr. Sachdeva** – Group President, SkipperSeil Ltd. Over the past 38 years, Skipper has grown into a leading player in the regional power – **Nigeria**

vii. **Shri Kishore Reddy** – Former President, India-Sri Lanka Society and India CEO Forum) – **Sri Lanka**

viii. **Ms Anju Virmani** - Ontario Power Board, former CIO Cargojet – **Canada**

24. Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw spoke about India’s remarkable progress in increasing the share of renewable energy (RE) power production capacity to 45%, the need for self-reliance in RE technology and the importance of creating the ability for indigenous manufacture of core components of the RE value chain. Moderator Shri Pradip Kumar Das highlighted the impressive growth of India’s RE capacity in the last 10 years and brought forth the need for battery storage systems in order to have round-the-clock supply of RE. The Panellists from Mauritius, Norway, Mexico, Vietnam, Switzerland, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and Canada spoke about various topics related to sustainable development, including the vulnerability of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and coastal states; the need for setting up large manufacturing facilities for batteries in parallel with R&D of battery technologies; necessity of reducing carbon emissions from agricultural practices; promotion of RE through industrial zones/parks; potential partnerships between India and other countries in the field of bioethanol; and adoption of digital solutions such as Smart Grids, Net Metering, Blockchain, etc. in energy transmission and distribution networks. The session concluded with the key takeaway that having a long term vision for green energy, with particular focus on green technology, innovation and skilling, is essential to achieve the goal of sustainable development.

**Cultural Event Presented by Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR)**

25. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations organised a Gala Cultural Event – “Celebration of Bharat” through stirring Audio-Visual spectacle of classical and folk dances from across India complemented by a voice narrative choreographed by Maitreyee Pahari, in the evening of January 9, 2025.

**Day 3 (January 10, 2025)**

**Plenary Session IV - “Diaspora Divas: Celebrating Women's Leadership and Influence – Nari Shakti”:**

26. The fourth plenary was chaired on January 10, 2025, by External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar, on the topic “Diaspora Divas: Celebrating Women's Leadership and Influence – Nari Shakti”. It was moderated by Dr. Ritu Karidhal, Scientist and Aerospace Engineer at the ISRO. The Session focused on celebrating the indomitable spirit of women diaspora and their contributions across diverse fields. The Panelists were as follows:

- i. **Ms. Shullete Cox** - President, Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO), an agency of the Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce – **Jamaica**
- (ii) **Ms. Poonam Sagar** - Director & Co-Owner PT Infotech Solutions — Jakarta, Founder of IndoIndians.com, chairperson of Indonesia India Business Forum (IIBF), Global Ambassador of International Women’s Entrepreneur Challenge (IWEC) – **Indonesia**
- (iii) **Ms. Sudha Majithia** - Social Worker and Philanthropist. Dynamic entrepreneur, renowned social worker and philanthropist, having established and founded a diverse group of companies operating in Tanzania – **Tanzania**
- (iv) **Dr Indrani Rampersad** - First female Pandita, Academic, Cultural & Women’s Activist. Visiting Professor (2024-25) at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) – **Trinidad & Tobago**
- (v) **Ms. Maitri Joshi** - Experienced in social welfare projects, flash flood mitigation, and tourism restoration with a proven track record in collaborating with diverse teams - **Addis Ababa**
- (vi) **Ms. Sakala Appachu Debrass** – Innovative marketing professional with an in-depth knowledge of the Doha market, with more than 20 years' experience in direct and indirect sales and Events. Built new products into independent businesses. Strong public relations skills – **Qatar**
- (vii) **Ms. Koki Veber** – Ms. Koki Veber has a chain of handicraft stores, Sariko, which sells traditional items primarily imported from India. To bridge the cultural gap, she supports charitable bazaars by SILA (Slovenian International Ladies Association) – **Slovenia**
- (viii) **Ms. Loveleen Brenna** -- Ms. Loveleen Brenna is founder and CEO of "'Seema', a center for diversity leadership. 'Seema' was the initiator of the first standard in the world that systematize and standardize diversity and gender equality.

27. EAM recounted how the challenges faced by women are rooted in age-old traditions and are, therefore, hard to overcome. He provided a snapshot of the changes brought about by the Government of India in the last decade, which has propelled women empowerment in various sectors, including financial independence. He apprised Government of India’s initiative to promote gender equality and women led development. He explained that under PM Narendra Modi’s leadership, initiatives for gender parity have been integrated into India’s foreign policy and development programmes in over 78 Global South countries. He emphasized India’s efforts to incorporate women-led development into the G20 framework as well as during the Summit of the Future. He shared statistics to illustrate India’s progress in Gender Equality, including an improved sex ratio, 26 weeks of paid maternity leave, and an increase in women’s participation in STEM education (43% of total enrollments). He also noted that 32 million Sukanya Samriddhi Accounts have been opened to support girls’ education, 30 crore Mudra loans have been issued to women entrepreneurs, and 72% of the 40 million homes built under the Awas Yojana have women ownership. Additionally, programs like Ujjwala Yojana have provided 100 million smoke-free kitchens in

India. He emphasized the importance of role models in driving societal change and highlighted the need for structural shifts in traditional attitudes towards gender.

28. Other Panelists shared their experiences regarding various aspects of women empowerment in their respective countries, including through increased political representation; promotion of women's mental and physical health; continuous learning; and developing a framework for Gender Equality and Inclusion. They recounted their enormous contributions across diverse fields towards promoting the indomitable spirit of women Indian Diaspora in the globe.

29. In his concluding remarks, EAM shared his personal experience of having worked and interacted with women role models in countries from which the Panelists come. Remarking that 'Nari Shakti' must be internalized as an attitude and belief, he also made a mention of increasing women representation in the Indian Foreign Service, Indian military and Indian political leadership.

#### **Plenary Session V - "Diaspora Dialogues: Stories of Culture, Connection, and Belongingness":**

30. The fifth Plenary Session was held on January 10, 2025 on "Diaspora Dialogues: Stories of Culture, Connections and Belongingness". It was chaired by Minister of Culture and Tourism, Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat and was moderated by Director General of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Smt. K. Nandini Singla. The Panelists were as follows:

- i. **H.E. Mr. Mahendra Gondeea** - Minister of Arts and Culture, Government of **Mauritius**
- ii. **Mr. Ranveer Brar**, Indian Chef
- iii. **Ms. Charmi Chheda**- Writer, Designer, Theatre Director, Filmmaker, Artist, Actor, Dancer, Facilitator, **Bhutan**
- iv. **Mr. Arnab Roychuramony** – Director/Owner Menkar LLC. Proactively participating in all Yoga, Ayurveda, Indian dance and all cultural activities in **Ukraine**
- v. **Ms. Vanisa Dhiru** – Commissioner, NZ National Commission for UNESCO Commissioner, Library & Information Advisory Commission. Advocate for community, ethnic and gender rights issues (media) Co-Founder, Women in Leadership Aotearoa network Justice of the Peace of New Zealand), **New Zealand**

- vi. **Smt. Aishwarya Hegde** – Director of Deepam Odissi Academy, a thriving arts institution in Oman dedicated to nurturing Odissi dance, **Oman**
- vii. **Mr. Paresh Kumar Ratilal Mehta** – Currently serves as ‘Trustee of Shree Sanatan Dharma Mandal Kampala’, National Convener of of BJP Uganda and Community Coordinator of Indian Association Uganda) , **Uganda**
- viii. **Mr. Shankar Kandasamy** – Head of the Dept of Bharatanatyam at the Temple of Fine Arts, **Malaysia**
- ix. **Ms Urmila Chakraborty** - Writer and translator (from and to English, Italian, Bengali and Hindi), **Italy**

31. The Session dwelled upon the importance of inculcating Indian culture and tradition including its cuisine in the younger generation and remaining connected with one’s roots while living a Pravasi life. Discussions focused upon the uniqueness of Indian culture that has found its relevance in many countries from where the panelists hailed. The panelists brought forth their unique experiences of keeping their language and tradition alive to maintain the pride of Indian heritage. It was also highlighted how experiences of local communities enrich Indian culture and make people appreciate Indian culture. The Session concluded with the sense that the practice of Indian culture by the present generation should encourage and motivate the younger generation to inculcate and appreciate it.

### **Valedictory Session**

32. The Valedictory session of the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Convention on January 10, 2025, was chaired by the President of India. The Presidential Band played the National Anthem following which the President of India conferred the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards on 27 distinguished members of the Indian Diaspora from 24 countries in recognition of their outstanding contributions and achievements in various fields such as business, education, community service, medicine, public affairs, science and technology, both in their own countries of residence as well as in India. **The list of Awardees is at F/D.**

33. President delivered her Valedictory address (**attached at Flag E**) in which she observed that the Indian Diaspora has made a mark that the world acknowledges and respects. She congratulated all the winners of the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards for their exemplary achievements and extraordinary contributions. She described the PBD Convention as a platform where ideas converge, collaborations are forged and bonds between India and the Diaspora are strengthened. She observed that the Indian Diaspora was an integral part of the vision of building a Viksit Bharat by 2047 and urged them to actively engage in this journey. She made a special mention about the contribution of women, students and the youth amongst our Diaspora.

## **Cultural Programme presented by the Ministry of External Affairs**

34. Pandit Abhay Rustom Sopori presented a scintillating Santoor Performance in the evening of January 10, 2025. Minister of Finance of Uttar Pradesh made a presentation on the preparations of the Mahakumbh and invited Indian diaspora delegates to visit Prayagraj.

## **Other Sideline Events**

35. Besides the main programme of the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD, there were many events on the sidelines of this Convention. External Affairs Minister and other Cabinet Ministers, including Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister for Education, Shri Jual Oram, Minister of Tribal Affairs, Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister of I&B, Electronics and Information Technology and Railways, and Ministers of State for External Affairs, Shri P. Margherita and Shri Kirtivardhan Singh, who were present during the three-day session, had bilateral meetings with the Ministerial delegations from Mauritius, Malaysia and South Africa. They also had separate meetings with the Diaspora groups from countries which had large delegations. In the series of such interactions, External Affairs Minister met with the Indian Diaspora from Malaysia, Mauritius, USA, UK, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Sri Lanka. In a special gesture, visiting Ministers from Mauritius also joined EAM during his interaction with Indian Diaspora from their country. Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Minister of Education spoke with the groups from Oman, Qatar and USA. While Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh interacted with the groups from Qatar, Kuwait and UAE, Minister of Tribal Affairs Shri Jual Oram jointly addressed the group from Myanmar with Minister of State for External Affairs Shri Pabitra Margherita. In these meetings, the Indian Diaspora got an opportunity to directly discuss their issues with the concerned Ministers.

36. There were also high level representations, including Ministerial delegations from the several State Governments of India at the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD. Minister of Finance from the State Government of Uttar Pradesh, Shri Suresh Kumar Khanna, addressed the delegates of the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD on its last day in a special session when he detailed preparations for the upcoming Mahakumbh at Prayagraj and invited the Indian diaspora to participate in it in large numbers. Minister of State for MSME & NRIs from Andhra Pradesh, Shri Kondapalli Srinivas, and high officials heading the NRI Divisions from the State Governments of Gujarat and Rajasthan, also participated in the PBD. Besides, Member of the Standing Committee of External Affairs of the Parliament, Shri Miteshbhai Patel, and Members of the Consultative Committee on External Affairs, Shri Anil Firojiya, Shri P. Sandosh Kumar and Shri Keshava Sudhakar, also attended the event.

## **Conclusion**

37. Over 7000 delegates from 65 countries participated in the 18<sup>th</sup> PBD. From the feedback received, it appeared that the participants were satisfied with the hospitality extended by the people of Bhubaneswar and Odisha as well as the State Government of Odisha. There was great appreciation for the tourism programme organized and the different kinds of local cuisine served during the Convention.

38. Hosting the 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention in Odisha was in line with Government of India's Purvodaya Plan under which all-round development of five States of Eastern India, including Odisha, would be undertaken. The discussions during the PBD showed that Odisha is a leader in India when it comes to mining, iron and steel manufacturing, marine economy, sports, skilling and even knowledge economy. Odisha is a rich tourism destination with culture, history, religious sites, national parks and pristine beaches. The PBD Convention highlighted Odisha's tourism potential. Several Indian IT companies have already established their base in Odisha. The PBD event was an opportunity to showcase what Odisha has to offer to the world. It was felt that Odisha can be a gateway to promoting cultural ties between India and the ASEAN region as it has age-old maritime connections with South East Asia. The Bali Yatra and Odisha's connections with Sri Lanka speak of these vibrant cultural ties. These exchanges were renewed during this 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention. It also illuminated those historical journeys and efforts underway to revive them.

39. The 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas also showcased the continued vibrancy of the Indian diaspora and their achievements abroad. It spotlighted the contributions of the Indian diaspora and how they have acted as a vehicle for promotion of Indian culture, values and ethos abroad, as well as how they would continue to be a partner for India's march towards a Viksit Bharat.

**Ministry of External Affairs**

**(DE Division)**

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**18<sup>TH</sup> PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS**

**PROGRAMME**

**Wednesday, January 8, 2025**

**Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas – 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2025**

09:00 hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All delegates to be seated</li></ul>
09:30 hrs 09:32-09:37 hrs 09:37-09:47 hrs 09:47-10:00 hrs 10:00 – 10:15 hrs 10:15-10:25 hrs 10:25-10:30hrs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lighting of the Traditional Lamp</li><li>• Welcome Remarks by <b>Shri Pabitra Margherita</b>, Minister of State for External Affairs</li><li>• Opening Remarks by <b>Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya</b>, Hon'ble Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports</li><li>• Address by Guest of Honour, <b>Dr. Dev Pragad</b>, CEO, Newsweek from the USA</li><li>• Address by <b>Dr. S. Jaishankar</b>, Hon'ble External Affairs Minister</li><li>• Address by <b>Shri Mohan Charan Majhi</b>, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha</li><li>• Vote of Thanks by <b>Ms. Raksha Nikhil Khadse</b>, Minister of State for Youth Affairs &amp; Sports.</li></ul>
10:30-10:45 hrs	Tea Break
10:45 - 12:30 hrs	<b>Plenary Session I - “Beyond Borders: Diaspora Youth Leadership in a Globalized World”</b>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Chair - Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, Hon'ble Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Moderator – Shri Binny Bansal, Co-Founder Flipkart</b></p> <p><b>Panelists -</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Mr.Y B Prabhakaran – Malaysian Politician and Member of Parliament for Batu, Member of the People’s Justice Party (PKR) – <b>Malaysia</b></li> <li>ii. Ms. Eeshaanee Shandilya - Business Analyst, HSBC GLOBAL SERVICES, HONG KONG. Technology Graduate Trainee, Digital Business Services – <b>Hong Kong</b></li> <li>iii. Mr. Don McLain Gill - Lecturer, Department of International Studies, De La Salle University. He specializes in Philippine foreign policy, India-Southeast Asian security relations, and maritime security cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, and India-Southeast Asian relations. - <b>Philippines</b></li> <li>iv. Ms. Revathy Pillay – IT Business Analyst and Southside Radio FM Presenter. Dynamic youth ambassador and radio personality dedicated to empowering youth voices – <b>South Africa</b></li> <li>v. Mr. Mohiuddin Mohamad Ali – ALI, vice-chairman of Galfar Engineering &amp; contracting SAOG. He is president of the Oman chapter of the Indo-Gulf &amp; Middle East chamber – <b>Muscat</b></li> <li>vi. Ms. Mickela Panday – Daughter of former Prime Minister of T&amp;T Basdeo Panday. Political Leader of the newest political party in T&amp;T- the Patriotic Front, launched in 2019. She is a former MP. She is an Attorney-at-Law – <b>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b></li> </ol>
10:45 - 11:30 hrs	<p><b>Parallel Session – Joint Business Session between MEA and Odisha--</b> Interaction of <b>Dr. S. Jaishankar</b>, Hon’ble External Affairs Minister of India and <b>Shri Mohan Charan Majhi</b>, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Odisha with the Members of the Indian diaspora involved in business, particularly from Odisha</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) Welcome Remarks by Chief Secretary of Odisha</li> <li>(ii) Remarks by <b>Dr. S. Jaishankar</b>, Hon’ble External Affairs Minister of India</li> <li>(iii) Promotional video of Odisha Government would be played</li> <li>(iv) Remarks by <b>Shri Mohan Charan Majhi</b>, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Odisha</li> <li>(v) Vote of Thanks by Special Secretary (Industries &amp; Investment), State Government of Odisha</li> <li>(vi) EAM and CM of Odisha leaves the venue</li> </ul>
11:30 - 12:30 hrs	Presentations by the State Government of Odisha on Investment Opportunities in Odisha <b>Business Networking between stakeholders</b>
12:30 - 14:00 hrs	<i>Lunch hosted by Hon’ble Minister of Youth Affairs &amp; Sports</i>
14:00 - 15:30 hrs	SESSION HOSTED BY GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA-- <b>“Unraveling India’s Best Kept Secret”</b>
15:30 - 15:45 hrs	<i>Tea Break</i>
15:45 - 17:15 hrs	SESSION HOSTED BY GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA— <b>“Odisha: A Land of Opportunities”</b>
17:45 hrs onwards	Cultural programme (Showcasing dance and music of Odisha) by Odisha Dance Academy choreographed by Dr. Aruna Mohanty
<b><i>Dinner hosted by Hon’ble Chief Minister of Odisha</i></b>	

**Thursday, January 9, 2025**

***Inauguration of 18<sup>th</sup> Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2025***

0800 hrs	Gates closed for Guests and Delegates
09:30 hrs	All Guests and Delegates to be seated

10:00 hrs	Hon'ble Prime Minister enters the Stage in the Main Hall  [Governor of Odisha, EAM, CM of Odisha, Minister of Railways (Proposed), MoS (KVS), MoS (PM) and MoS (MSME)-(Proposed) on stage,]-- they are already seated when Hon'ble PM arrives. Each one will felicitate PM.
<b><i>Inaugural Session of the PBD</i></b>	
10:01 -10:03 hrs	PBD Cultural Welcome Song is played Live  [20 Musicians/Artists present the Theme Song Live from a Stage below—coordinated by ICCR]
10:04 -10:07 hrs	<b>Welcome Remarks by Dr. S. Jaishankar, Hon'ble External Affairs Minister</b>
10:08 -10:13 hrs	<b>Remarks by Shri Mohan Charan Majhi, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha</b>
10:14 -10:34 hrs	<b>Virtual Address by Chief Guest of PBD, H.E. Ms. Christine Carla Kangaloo, President of the Republic of Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b>
10:35 – 10:37 hrs	<b><i>Remote Flagging off Pravasi Bharatiya Express by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India</i></b>
10:38 -11:18 hrs	<b><i>Inaugural Address by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India</i></b>
11:18 - 11:45 hrs	<b><i>Hon'ble Prime Minister leaves the Main Hall and inaugurates the following <u>4 exhibitions</u>. Then takes a tour of the Exhibitions and Promotional Stalls of Union and State Ministries/Depts:</i></b>  <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><i>1. Vishwaroop Ram: The Universal Legacy of Ramayana – by ICCR</i></b></li> <li><b><i>2. Diaspora's Contribution to Technology-- by MEA (being curated by Dr. Masooma Rizvi)</i></b></li> <li><b><i>3. “Bharat Bharatiya: Swadesh Pardes—Abhilekhiye Virasat par adharit Pradarshani—Launch of Oman Collection”—by National Archives of India</i></b></li> <li><b><i>4. Exhibition on Heritage and Culture of Odisha by State Government of Odisha</i></b></li> </ol>

	<b><i>Visit to Promotional Stalls of Union Ministries (MSME, DST, MNRE, Ministry of Culture, AYUSH, MeiT, Ministry of Tourism, National Health Mission, IRCTC, FIPI) and State Governments of Odisha, Maharashtra, Andaman &amp; Nicobar Islands, Gujarat etc)</i></b>
11:45 -11:55 hrs	<p><b><i>Group Photographs of Hon’ble Prime Minister of India:</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. With Guest of Honour of Youth PBD, and Foreign Ministerial delegations</li> <li>2. With PBSA Awardees of 2025 (24)</li> <li>3. With Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz Winners for 2024 (30)</li> <li>4. With Plenary Session Panelists and Moderators</li> </ol> <p>Union Ministers and Odisha State Chief Minister and Odisha Governor will be present in the aforesaid Group Photographs</p>
12:00 hrs	Hon’ble Prime Minister departs from the PBD Venue
12:00 – 14:00 hrs	<b><i>Lunch hosted by Hon’ble External Affairs Minister - Santoor by Abhay Rustum Sopori</i></b>
14:30 - 16:00 hrs	<p><b>Plenary Session II - “Building Bridges, Breaking Barriers: Stories of Migrant Skills”</b></p> <p><b>Chair - Sushri Shobha Karandlaje, Hon’ble Minister of State for Micro, Small &amp; Medium Enterprises and Labour &amp; Employment</b></p> <p><b>Moderator – Shri P. Kumaran, Special Secretary (ER &amp; DPA), MEA</b></p> <p><b>Panelists -</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Shri V. Muraleedharan, Former MOS for External Affairs – New Delhi (former Minister of State for External Affairs)</li> </ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. Mr. Ashok Mago – Chairman &amp; CEO, Mago &amp; Associates Inc, USA</li> <li>iii. Mr. Rohit Ratnakar Rao--Founder-CEO of ‘Medrock Corporation’, a multinational pharmaceutical company and ‘Eske Corporation’ – <b>Peru &amp; Bolivia</b></li> <li>iv. Mr. Vilwanathan Krishnamurthy -- Dedicated and experienced social worker and cultural leader with an extensive background in welding technology and social services – <b>Berlin</b></li> <li>v. Mr Sopnendu Mohanty – Chief Fintech Officer of the Monetary Authority of Singapore – <b>Singapore</b></li> <li>vi. Shri Ashok Kalra – Managing Director and Partner of the Mughal Mahal Group, is the founder of the Mughal Mahal chain of restaurants across Kuwait with 12 dine in outlets &amp; 500 staff members from India) – <b>Kuwait</b> (accepted invitation but flight itinerary yet to be received)</li> <li>vii. Mr. Kandarp Mehta - Actor/Professor. Senior Lecturer in the Negotiation unit and the Entrepreneurship Department of IESE Business School. I teach in the MBA as well as in the Executive Education) - <b>Spain</b></li> </ul>
16:00 – 16:15 hrs	Tea Break
16:15 - 17:45 hrs	<p><b>Plenary Session III - “Green Connections: Diaspora’s Contributions to Sustainable Development”</b></p> <p><b>Chair – Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Hon’ble Minister of Electronics &amp; Information Technology; Information &amp; Broadcasting and Railways</b></p> <p><b>Moderator – Shri Pradip Kumar Das, Chairman &amp; MD – Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency)</b></p> <p><b>Panelists -</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>Hon. Mr. Hambyrajen Narsinghen – Junior</b></li> </ul>

	<p>Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Government of the Republic of Mauritius</p> <p>ii. <b>Mr. Rahul Fotedar</b> – He is the Founder &amp; CTO of Morrow Batteries in Norway. He has been playing a leading role in product strategy, technology development and strategic partnerships – <b>Norway</b></p> <p>iii. <b>Shri Jagdish Nainwal</b> – Jagdish Nainwal is currently working as CEO of UPL for LATAM region which is one of the leading agriculture companies in Latin America by having near to 1 billion revenue – <b>Mexico</b></p> <p>iv. <b>Mr. Indronil Sengupta</b> – Has been working in various business areas for 30 years and has expertise in the field of energy. He is also the Chairman of Indian Business Chambers in Hanoi and has served in Tata Group for long years. His present Consultancy venture “Invesify” also engages in energy – <b>Vietnam</b></p> <p>v. <b>Mr. Aditya Yellepeddi</b> – Working with the Swiss Biotech Association (from 2022 onwards). Heading the Indo-Swiss industry initiative to foster collaborations and investments between India and Switzerland. Politics (Main Party: Le Centre - a Federal Government Party – <b>Switzerland</b></p> <p>vi. <b>Mr. Jitender Kr. Sachdeva</b> – Group President, SkipperSeil Ltd. Over the past 38 years, Skipper has grown into a leading player in the regional power – <b>Nigeria</b></p> <p>vii. <b>Shri Kishore Reddy</b> – Former President, India-Sri Lanka Society and India CEO Forum) – <b>Sri Lanka</b></p> <p>viii. <b>Ms Anju Virmani</b> - Ontario Power Board, former CIO Cargojet - <b>Canada</b></p>
19:15 – 20:00 hrs	<b>Gala Cultural Show</b> - Celebration of Bharat through stirring Audio-Visual spectacle of classical and folk dances from across India, complemented by a voice narrative – by Maitreyee Pahari – organised by ICCR
20:00 hrs Onwards	<i>Dinner hosted by Hon’ble External Affairs Minister, Dr. S. Jaishankar</i>

**Friday, January 10, 2025**

**Valedictory of 18<sup>th</sup> Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2025**

<p>09:30 - 11:00 hrs</p>	<p><b>Plenary Session IV - “Diaspora Divas: Celebrating Women's Leadership and Influence – Nari Shakti”</b></p> <p><b>Chair – Dr. S. Jaishankar, Hon’ble External Affairs Minister</b></p> <p><b>Moderator – Dr. Ritu Karidhal, Indian Scientist &amp; Aerospace Engineer, ISRO</b></p> <p><b>Panelists -</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. <b>Ms. Shullete Cox</b> - President, Jamaica Promotions Corporation (JAMPRO), an agency of the Ministry of Industry, Investment and Commerce – <b>Jamaica</b></li><li>ii. <b>Ms. Poonam Sagar-</b> Director &amp; Co-Owner PT Infotech Solutions — Jakarta, Founder of IndoIndians.com, chairperson of Indonesia India Business Forum (IIBF), Global Ambassador of International Women’s Entrepreneur Challenge (IWEC) – <b>Indonesia</b></li><li>iii. <b>Ms. Sudha Majithia--</b>Social Worker and Philanthropist. Dynamic entrepreneur, renowned social worker and philanthropist, having established and founded a diverse group of companies operating in Tanzania – <b>Tanzania</b></li><li>iv. <b>Dr Indrani Rampersad --</b>First female Pandita, Academic, Cultural &amp; Women’s Activist. Visiting Professor (2024-25) at Banaras Hindu University (BHU) – <b>Trinidad &amp; Tobago</b></li><li>v. <b>Ms. Maitri Joshi -</b>Experienced in social welfare projects, flash flood mitigation, and tourism restoration with a proven track record in collaborating with diverse teams - <b>Addis Ababa</b></li><li>vi. <b>Ms. Sakala Appachu Debrass --</b> Innovative marketing professional with an in-depth knowledge</li></ul>
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	<p>of the Doha market, with more than 20 years' experience in direct and indirect sales and Events. Built new products into independent businesses. Strong public relations skills – <b>Qatar</b></p> <p>vii. <b>Ms. Koki Veber</b> -- Ms. Koki Veber has a chain of handicraft stores, Sariko, which sells traditional items primarily imported from India. To bridge the cultural gap, she supports charitable bazaars by SILA (Slovenian International Ladies Association) – <b>Slovenia</b></p> <p>viii. <b>Ms. Loveleen Brenna</b> -- Ms. Loveleen Brenna is founder and CEO of "'Seema', a center for diversity leadership. 'Seema' was the initiator of the first standard in the world that systematize and standardize diversity and gender equality management as a tool for value creation – <b>Norway</b></p>
11:00 - 11:15 hrs	<i>Tea Break</i>
11:15 - 12:45 hrs	<p><b>Plenary Session V - “Diaspora Dialogues: Stories of Culture, Connection, and Belongingness”</b></p> <p><b>Chair - Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat, Hon’ble Minister of Culture &amp; Tourism</b></p> <p><b>Moderator – Smt. K. Nandini Singla, DG (ICCR)</b></p> <p><b>Panelists -</b></p> <p>i. <b>H.E. Mr. Mahendra Gondeea</b> - Minister of Arts and Culture, Government of <b>Mauritius</b> – Mission has verbally conveyed his confirmation.</p> <p>ii. <b>Mr. Ranveer Brar</b>, Indian Chef, New Delhi</p> <p>iii. <b>Ms. Charmi Chheda</b>- Writer, Designer, Theatre Director, Filmmaker, Artist, Actor, Dancer, Facilitator. She's worked with the Royal Government of Bhutan, under the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Information and Communication and Ministry of Home and cultural affairs.) - <b>Bhutan</b></p> <p>iv. <b>Mr. Arnab Roychuramony</b> – Director/Owner Menkar LLC. Proactively participating in all Yoga,</p>

	<p>Ayurveda, Indian dance and all cultural activities in Ukraine) – <b>Ukraine</b></p> <p>v. <b>Ms. Vanisa Dhiru</b> – Commissioner, NZ National Commission for UNESCO Commissioner, Library &amp; Information Advisory Commission. Advocate for community, ethnic and gender rights issues (media) Co-Founder, Women in Leadership Aotearoa network Justice of the Peace of New Zealand) – <b>New Zealand</b></p> <p>vi. <b>Smt. Aishwarya Hegde</b> – rtistic Director of Deepam Odissi Academy, a thriving arts institution in Oman dedicated to nurturing Odissi dance and serving as a collaborative space for artists from various disciplines) – <b>Oman</b></p> <p>vii. <b>Mr. Paresh Kumar Ratilal Mehta</b> – Currently serves as ‘Trustee of Shree Sanatan Dharma Mandal Kampala’, National Convener of of BJP Uganda and Community Coordinator of Indian Association Uganda) – <b>Uganda</b></p> <p>viii. <b>Mr. Shankar Kandasamy</b> – Head of the Dept of Bharatanatyam at the Temple of Fine Arts, Malaysia, Trained in the multi-disciplinary Indian classical dances) – <b>Malaysia</b></p> <p>ix. <b>Ms Urmila Chakraborty</b> - Writer and translator (from and to English, Italian, Bengali and Hindi). She has long standing collaborations with various Italian cultural institutions in the field of intercultural education. She has several publications ranging across diverse subjects related to the Indian socio-cultural scenario - <b>Italy</b></p>
13:30 - 14:45 hrs	<i>Lunch hosted by Shri Mohan Charan Majhi, Hon’ble Chief Minister of Odisha</i>
<b>Valedictory Session and Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards Ceremony (15:00 - 16:30 hrs)</b>	
15:00-15:02 hrs	National Anthem

15:02 – 15:04 hrs	Welcome Address by <b>Dr. S. Jaishankar</b> , Hon'ble External Affairs Minister
15:05-15:07 hrs	Remarks by <b>Shri Jual Oram</b> , Hon'ble Minister of Tribal Affairs
15:08-15:11 hrs	Remarks by <b>Shri Dharmendra Pradhan</b> , Hon'ble Minister of Education
15:12-15:14 hrs	Remarks by <b>Shri Mohan Charan Majhi</b> , Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha
15:15- 15:50 hrs	<b><i>Conferment of Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2025 by Hon'ble President of India</i></b>
15:50-15:55 hrs	Acceptance Speech by one of the Samman Awardees
15:55 -16:05 hrs	Group Photo with recipients of Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awardees 2025
16:05-16:25 hrs	<b><i>Valedictory Address by Hon'ble President of India</i></b>
16:25- 16:27 hrs	<b>Vote of Thanks by Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh, Minister of State for External Affairs</b>
16:27 – 16:29 hrs	National Anthem
19:00 – 19:30 hrs	Santoor Concert by Shri Abhay Rustum Sopori
19:30 – 21:00 hrs	<b>Dinner hosted by Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh</b>

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**Remarks by External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar at Youth PBD 2025  
in Odisha January 08, 2025**

**Odisha k Mananiya Mukhya Mantri Shri Mohan Charan Majhi ji,  
Mere Cabinet k sathi Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya ji,  
Hamare Guest of honor Dr. Dev Pragad ji,  
Hamare Rajya Mantri Shri Kirti Vardhan Singh ji,  
Shrimanti Raksha Nikhil Khadse ji,  
Shri Pabitra Margherita ji**

**Namaskar**

**Jai Jagannath**

I am very pleased to welcome you all to the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2025 in Bhubaneswar today. You all know that it is customary to hold a conclave of our younger generation as part of the PBD celebrations. The thinking behind that is one of recognizing the special contribution that young minds make, at home and abroad. And indeed, in connecting them more effectively for mutual good. At a time when so many key developments in the world are being shaped by this younger generation – whether we talk of AI and EV, innovation or startups, space or drones, sports - chess, cricket – there is all the more reason to do so.

**Friends,**

At home, we have just started our journey towards Viksit Bharat in the Amrit Kaal. This is an endeavour that is very much about the future generation. After all, it is in this period that they will come to the front ranks of our society and lead our nation. A large part of our efforts is to give the right motivation to the younger generation to accelerate their efforts. While development itself is a very complex task, it becomes much easier when we are confident that nothing is beyond us. I still recall some time ago an observation by the famous badminton star, PV Sindhu, on why Prime Minister Modi is a youth icon. She summed it up as his attitude which moved our nation from 'chalta hai' to 'badal sakta hai' to 'hoga kaise nahin?'. Indeed, it is this very spirit which has driven our achievements in very recent years. When confronted by the Covid pandemic, India demonstrated a remarkable resilience and strong recovery thereafter and I remember working with Mansukhbhai, the Health Minister during that period. The very country that was predicted to go under ended up supplying vaccines and medicines to the entire world. A different but equally telling example is what we see in the realm of space, where there is a growing competition internationally. Our Chandrayaan-3 landing, the Aditya L1 observatory and the proposed Gaganyaan mission are powerful inspirations. In a digital era, the scale of UPI transactions speaks volumes both of our infrastructure and of our mindsets. The new India, with 90,000 startups and 100 plus unicorns, has calling cards like Drone Didi, Atal tinkering labs, hackathons, green hydrogen mission or nano-fertilizers.

## **Friends,**

Ambitious visions need strong foundations to be realized. Our collective prospects are no exception to that rule. Here again, it is critical to invest in our youth in order to achieve their full potential. Many of you would be familiar with various campaigns and programmes to develop India, undertaken since 2014 under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Whether it is Swachh Bharat or Beti Padhao, Awas or Anna Yojana, Mudra or Swanidhi, Ayushman Bharat or Jal Jeevan, each one of them has been a transformational effort. However, if you were to see them in their entirety, connecting those dots will give you an appreciation of how we are securing the future of our youth. They will help bring their skills and creativity to the fore, ensuring that India's talents are fully available to the global workplace.

**Friends,**

Given the rapidity of changes underway, it is also essential that we step up efforts to keep the diaspora continuously connected. It is a matter of satisfaction to know that Know India Programme and Bharat Ko Janiye Quiz are now getting much more traction than previous years. We also regularly welcome the visits of PIO journalists to India. Let me take the opportunity to urge you on behalf of Prime Minister Modi to promote India as a tourism destination. If young Indian PIOs bring their equally young friends from abroad to explore our uniquely rich and diverse heritage and culture, this will surely become a lifelong habit. Let me say a few words for our guest of honor, normally we pick somebody from the political world for that position. On this occasion we made a departure, I think, a very understandable and a very justifiable departure of picking someone from the world of media, from the world of business because young Indians today are succeeding in so many domains and it is important that we recognize that.

**Friends,** allow me also to say a few words about the great state of Odisha,

This State offers a tremendous opportunity to experience personally much of what we would be discussing in the course of the PBD. Its cultural festivals and religious and archaeological sites are a reminder why we in India consider ourselves to be a civilizational society. It is equally a living testament to the developmental progress in all its dimensions. And when it comes to the youth, their optimism and energy is very much on display in Odisha, whether it is in institutions of learning or those we encounter in daily life.

So let me conclude by saying this,

We are today well on the way to address longstanding challenges to build modern, inclusive and progressive society. Our quest is unique because the

largest nation in the world is developing in that manner in a democratic framework. The mantra of that journey is to advance, as Prime Minister Modi says, advance on the two legs of technology and tradition. And the youth can surely be the defining factor in the pace of that endeavour and the realization of our goals.

So once again I welcome you to Bhubaneswar, I welcome you to PBD 2025. I am sure all of you will have a remarkable next few days ahead.

**I thank you for your attention.**

Jai Jagannath, Jai Bharat, Jai Hind

**PM's address at the inauguration of 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention in  
Bhubaneswar, Odisha  
09 January,2025**

The Governor of Odisha, Dr. Hari Babu Ji, our popular Chief Minister Mohan Charan Manjhi Ji, my fellow member of the Central Cabinet S. Jaishankar Ji, Jual Oram Ji, Dharmendra Pradhan Ji, Ashwini Vaishnav Ji, Shobha Karandlaje Ji, Kirti Vardhan Singh Ji, Pabitra Margareta Ji, Deputy Chief Minister of Odisha Kanak Vardhan Singhdeo Ji, Pravati Parida Ji, other ministers, MPs, and MLAs, all sons and daughters of Mother Bharati who have come from across the world!

Ladies and gentlemen! On this holy land of Lord Jagannath and Lord Lingaraj, I welcome my Indian diaspora family from all over the world. The welcome song that was sung at the beginning, I am completely confident that this welcome song will be played again and again in the future, wherever Indian community events are held across the world. Congratulations to you. Your team has expressed the spirit of a Non-Resident Indian beautifully, congratulations to you.

**Friends,**

We just heard from the Chief Guest of this Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas. The video message of the President of Trinidad and Tobago, Her Excellency Christine Kangaloo left an impact on all of us. She too was speaking about India's progress. I thank her for the warm and affectionate words.

**Friends,**

This is a time of vibrant festivals and gatherings in India. In just a few days, the Mahakumbh will start in Prayagraj. The festivals of Makar Sankranti, Lohri, Pongal and Magh Bihu are also coming up. There is a joyful atmosphere everywhere. Further, it was on this day, in 1915, that Mahatma Gandhi Ji came back to India after a long stay abroad. Your presence in India at such a wonderful time is adding to the festive spirit. This edition of Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas is special for an additional reason. We have gathered here just a few days after the birth centenary of Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji. His vision was instrumental to this programme. It has become an institution to strengthen the bond between India and its diaspora. Together, we celebrate India, Indianness, our culture, our progress and connect to our roots.

**Friends,**

The land of Odisha, where you have gathered today, is also a reflection of India's rich heritage. In Odisha, at every step, we come across our heritage. Whether it is the historical caves of Udayagiri-Khandagiri, the Sun Temple of Konark, the ancient ports of Tamralipti, Manikpatna, and Palur, seeing these fills everyone with pride. Centuries ago, our traders and businessmen from Odisha used to embark on long sea voyages to places like Bali, Sumatra, and Java. In memory of that, even today, the Bali Jatra is celebrated in Odisha. It is here in Odisha that the place called Dhauli stands, which is a great symbol of peace. When the world was in an era of expanding empires through the sword, our Emperor Ashoka chose the path of peace here. This strength of our heritage is what inspires India today to tell the world that the future lies not in war, but in Buddha (भविष्य युद्ध में नहीं है, बुद्ध में है). Therefore, it becomes very special for me to welcome you all to this land of Odisha.

**Friends,**

I have always considered the Indian diaspora as ambassadors of India. I feel immense joy when I meet all of you from around the world, when I converse with you. The love I receive from you is something I can never forget. Your affection, your blessings always stay with me.

**Friends,**

Today, I want to personally express my gratitude to all of you, and I also want to say Thank you. Thank you because of you, I get the opportunity to hold my head high with pride in the world. Over the past 10 years, I have met many leaders from around the world. Every world leader praises the Indian diaspora, all of you. A big reason for this is the social values that all of you add to the societies there. We are not just the "Mother of Democracy," but democracy is a part of our life, it is our way of living. We don't have to be taught diversity; our life itself runs on diversity. That's why wherever Indians go, they integrate with the society there. Wherever we go, we respect the rules and traditions of that place. We serve that country, that society with utmost sincerity. We contribute to their growth and prosperity. And alongside all of this, India continues to beat in our hearts. We rejoice in every happiness of India, and we celebrate every achievement of India.

**Friends,**

The India of the 21st century, the pace at which it is progressing today, and the scale at which development is happening in India is unprecedented. In just 10 years, India has lifted 250 million people out of poverty. In just 10 years, India has moved from being the 10th largest economy in the world to the 5th largest economy. The day is not far when India will become the 3rd largest economy in the world. The world is witnessing India's success today. When India's Chandrayaan reaches the Shiv-Shakti point, we all feel proud. Today, when the world is astonished by the power of Digital India, we all feel proud. Today, every sector in India is moving forward to touch the sky. Whether it is renewable energy, aviation ecosystems, electric mobility, the vast metro network, or the bullet train project, the pace of India's progress is breaking all records. Today, India is making "Made in India" fighter jets, transport aircraft, and the day is not far when you will come to India for the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in a "Made in India" plane.

**Friends,**

These achievements of India, the prospects that are emerging in India today, are contributing to India's growing global role. Today, the world listens attentively to India. Today's India not only strongly puts forth its point but also raises the voice of the Global South with full strength. When India proposed to make the African Union a permanent member of the G-20, all members supported this proposal. With the spirit of "Humanity First," India is expanding its global role.

**Friends,**

India's talent is being celebrated worldwide today. Our professionals are contributing to global growth through the major companies of the world. Tomorrow, many of our colleagues will be honored with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman by the esteemed President of India, Draupadi Murmu Ji. I extend my best wishes to all the distinguished individuals who will be receiving this honor.

**Friends,**

You know, for many decades to come, India will remain the country with the youngest and most skilled population in the world. It is India that will fulfill a significant portion of the global demand for skills. You must have noticed that many countries around the world are now welcoming India's skilled youth with open arms. In such a scenario, the Government of India is also striving to ensure that whenever any Indian goes abroad, they do so with excellent skills. That's why we are continuously focusing on skilling, re-

skilling, and up-skilling our youth. We give great importance to your convenience and comfort. Your safety and welfare are a top priority. We consider it our responsibility to help our diaspora during crisis situations, no matter where they are. This is one of the guiding principles of India's foreign policy today. Over the last decade, our embassies and offices worldwide have been sensitive and pro-active.

**Friends,**

Earlier, in many countries, people had to travel long distances to access consular facilities. They had to wait for days for help. Now, these problems are being solved. In just the last two years, fourteen embassies and consulates have been opened. The scope of OCI cards is also being expanded. It has been extended to PIOs of the 7th generation of Mauritius and 6th generation of Suriname martinique and guadeloupe.

**Friends,**

The history of the Indian diaspora spread across the world, their journey to various countries and their stories of raising the flag of India in those lands, is an important part of India's heritage. You have many such interesting and inspiring stories, which need to be shared, showcased, and preserved. These are our shared legacy, our shared heritage. Just a few days ago, I spoke in detail about an initiative related to this in my "Mann Ki Baat" address. Several centuries ago, many families from Gujarat settled in Oman. Their 250-year journey is truly inspiring. An exhibition related to this has also been set up, showcasing thousands of documents related to this community that have been digitized. Additionally, an 'Oral History Project' was undertaken with the senior members of the community, many of whom are quite elderly now, sharing their experiences. I am happy that many of these families are present here with us today.

**Friends,**

Such efforts should also be made with the diaspora in different countries. For example, we have our "Girmitya" brothers and sisters. Why not create a database of our Girmitya community? We should identify which villages and cities in India they came from, where they went and settled, and also recognize those places. What kind of life they led, how they turned challenges into opportunities—this can be portrayed through films or documentaries. A study on the Girmitya legacy could be conducted, and research could be carried out. Universities could establish chairs for this, and we could organize the World Girmitya Conference at regular intervals. I will ask my team to explore the possibilities of this and work towards taking it forward.

## **Friends,**

Today's India is moving forward with both development and heritage under this mantra. During the G-20, we held meetings across the country so that the world could have a first-hand experience of India's diversity. We proudly organize events like Kashi-Tamil Sangamam, Kashi-Telugu Sangamam, Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam, and others. Just a few days from now, we will celebrate Saint Thiruvalluvar Day. Our government has decided to establish Thiruvalluvar Culture Centers to spread the teachings of Saint Thiruvalluvar. The work for the first center in Singapore has already begun. A Thiruvalluvar Chair is also being established at the University of Houston in the USA. All these efforts are taking Tamil language, Tamil heritage, and India's heritage to every corner of the world.

## **Friends,**

We have also taken numerous steps to connect our heritage sites in India. For example, there is a special Ramayana Express train for visiting places associated with Lord Ram and Mata Sita. The Bharat Gaurav trains also connect important heritage locations across the country. With our semi-high-speed Vande Bharat trains, we have connected major heritage centers of the country. A little while ago, I had the opportunity to inaugurate a special Pravasi Bharatiya Express train. Around 150 people will travel on this train to visit seventeen tourism and faith-related destinations. There are also many places in Odisha that you should definitely visit. The Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj is starting soon, and such an opportunity doesn't come often in life. You should also visit there.

## **Friends,**

In 1947, India gained independence, and our diaspora played a significant role in this. They contributed to India's freedom while living abroad. Now, our target is 2047. We have to make India a developed country. You are still making an outstanding contribution to India's growth. Thanks to your hard work, India has become the number one country in the world for remittances. Now, we must think beyond this. You invest not only in India but also in other countries. Our GIFT City ecosystem can help fulfill your financial services and investment needs. All of you can benefit from it and further strengthen India's journey towards development. Every effort you make will strengthen India and help in its growth.

One such sector is heritage tourism. Currently, India is known around the world primarily through its large metro cities. But India is not limited to these big cities. A large part of

India is in tier-2, tier-3 cities, and villages, where you can witness India's heritage. We need to connect the world to this heritage. I urge you to take your children to these smaller cities and villages in India. Then, share your experiences with your friends once you return. I would also like to suggest that the next time you come to India, bring at least five friends who are of non-Indian origin with you. Inspire your friends where you live to visit India, to experience India.

### **Friends,**

I have one appeal, especially to all the young friends of the diaspora. Participate in the quiz to learn more about India. This will help you understand India better. You should also make sure to benefit from the 'Study in India' program. The ICCR scholarship scheme is another great opportunity that the youth of the diaspora should take advantage of.

### **Friends,**

In the countries where you live, you must also take the lead in spreading India's true history. The current generation in many countries doesn't know about our prosperity, the long period of slavery, and our struggles. You can help share India's true history with the world.

### **Friends,**

Today, India is known as the 'Vishwa Bandhu'. To further strengthen this global connection, you need to increase your efforts. For example, in the country where you live, you can organize award functions. These awards can be for the local residents of the country you live in. You can honor prominent individuals from various fields, whether it be literature, arts and crafts, film, theater, or any other sector. Invite these achievers and present them with awards and certificates on behalf of India's diaspora. The Indian embassy and consulate in that country will be more than happy to assist you. This will strengthen your personal connection with the people of that country and deepen your emotional bond with them.

### **Friends,**

You also play a significant role in making local products global. Make sure to buy something like "Made in India" food packets, clothes, or any other product. If some items are not available in your country, order them online. Include Made in India products in your kitchen, your drawing room, and as gifts. This will be a great contribution from all of you in building a developed India.

**Friends,**

I have one more appeal related to Mother and Mother Earth. A few days ago, I visited Guyana, where I participated in an initiative with the President to plant a tree in the name of our mother. Millions of people in India are already doing this. Wherever you are, I urge you to plant a tree or a sapling in the name of your mother. I believe that when you return from India, the resolution of building a developed India will accompany you. Together, we will build a developed India.

May 2025 bring prosperity to all of you, whether in health or wealth. I wish you all a prosperous and fulfilling year ahead. Once again, I warmly welcome you all to India and offer my heartfelt greetings.

**Best wishes, and thank you very much.**

## Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award 2025

### List of Awardees

<b>Sr. No.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Field</b>
1.	Prof. Ajay Rane	Australia	Community Service
2.	Dr. Marialena Joan Fernandes	Austria	Education
3.	Dr. The Honourable Philomena Ann Mohini Harris	Barbados	Medical Science
4.	Swami Sanyuktanand	Fiji	Community Service
5.	Saraswati Vidya Niketan	Guyana	Community Service
6.	Dr. Lekh Raj Juneja	Japan	Science & Technology
7.	Dr. Prem Kumar	KYRGYZ Republic	Medical Science
8.	Mr. Soukthavy Chowdhury	Laos	Business
9.	Mr. Krishna Savjani	Malawi	Business
10.	Tan Sri Subramaniam K.V. Sathasivam	Malaysia	Politics
11.	Dr. Mrs Sarita Boodhoo	Mauritius	Community Service
12.	Mr. Abhaya Kumar	Moldova	Business
13.	Dr. Ram Niwas @ Hla Tun	Myanmar	Education
14.	Mr. Jaggannath Shekhar Asthana	Romania	Business
15.	Hindustani Samaj	Russia	Community Service

16.	Ms. Sudha Rani Gupta	Russia	Education
17.	Dr. Syed Anwar Khursheed	Saudi Arabia	Medical Science
18.	Mr. Atul Arvind Temurnikar	Singapore	Education
19.	Mr. Robert Masih Nahar	Spain	Community Service
20.	Dr. Kaushik Laxmidas Ramaiya	Tanzania	Medicine
21.	H.E. Christine Carla Kangaloo ORTT	Trinidad & Tobago	Public Affairs
22.	Mr. Ramakrishnan Sivaswamy Iyer	UAE	Business
23.	Mr. Bonthala Subbaiah Setty Ramesh Babu	Uganda	Community Service
24.	Baroness. Usha Kumari Prashar	UK	Politics
25.	Mr. Ravi Kumar S.	USA	Business (IT & Consulting)
26.	Dr. Sharad Lakhanpal	USA	Medicine
27.	Dr. Sharmila Ford	USA	Community Service

**(ix) VALEDICTORY REMARKS OF THE HON'BLE PRESIDENT OF INDIA SMT. DROUPADI MURMU AT THE 18 TH PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS  
Bhubaneswar : 10.01.2025**

Namaskar, and a warm welcome to your own Bharat-bhumi!

It is with immense pleasure and a heart full of pride that I stand before you today in the vibrant city of Bhubaneswar, a city rich in culture and heritage. After the success of the last Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in Indore in 2023, I am delighted to be here with you all, to celebrate the indomitable spirit of our Pravasi Bharatiyas. As we gather in the first month of this New Year 2025, I also extend my greetings and best wishes for a prosperous and fulfilling year ahead.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I take this opportunity to extend congratulate Her Excellency Christine Kanganoo, President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, on being conferred with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman 2025. Excellency, your outstanding contributions in leading your nation, with a special focus on women and the Indian diaspora, has set a high benchmark on the world stage. This is a reflection of the deep ties of friendship and cooperation between our two countries, as much as it is a testament of the shared values that bind us across borders.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Indian Diaspora represents the best of our country. You, the sons and daughters of Bharat, have carried with you not just the knowledge and skills acquired in this sacred land, but also the values and ethos that have been the foundation of our civilization for millennia. Whether in the fields of technology, medicine, arts, or entrepreneurship, the Indian Diaspora has made a mark that the world acknowledges and respects.

Today, we honour those amongst you who have distinguished themselves through exemplary achievements. It is my privilege to confer on them the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman, as India's token of recognition of their extraordinary contributions. My heartfelt congratulations to all the awardees. Your success stories are not just a matter of pride for India, but they also inspire millions across the world to strive for excellence.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas has, over the years, become more than just an event; it is a platform where ideas converge, collaborations are forged, and the bonds

between India and its Diaspora are strengthened. I am sure that over the last three days, you have used this occasion to engage in meaningful dialogue, and share your experiences. This event underscores the fact that while you may be physically distant from your homeland, your connections with Bharat remain as strong as ever.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Our nation today is marching towards Viksit Bharat – a developed India – by the year 2047, when we will celebrate 100 years of our independence. This vision is not just a government initiative; it is a National Mission that requires proactive and enthusiastic participation of every Indian, including those living abroad.

The Indian Diaspora is an integral part of this vision. Your global presence gives you a unique perspective, and your achievements place you in a position to significantly contribute to the realization of a developed India. I have seen this first-hand during my interactions with our Diaspora as part of my travels abroad. I urge you all to actively engage in this journey, for in your success, lies the success of India.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Recognising the crucial role of the Diaspora in nation-building, Government of India has undertaken several initiatives to support you. Consular services for Non Resident Indians (NRIs) have been simplified. For Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs), processes have been digitized and streamlined. Initiatives like “Know India Programme” provide avenues for the younger members of our Diaspora to re-discover their Indian roots.

I am happy to know that Odisha Government is appointing a Nodal Minister for engaging with Pravasi Bharatiya for projects, investments, etc. I appreciate the step taken by the Odisha Government.

We have also been proactive in safeguarding interests of Indians living abroad. In recent years, we have launched several missions, including Operation Kaveri, Operation Ganga and Operation Vande Bharat, to assist distressed Indians. Today, Indians around the world can count on their homeland for support and protection in times of need.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Over the last three days, experts from diverse fields have come together here to discuss issues of importance, for both India as well its Diaspora. You all must have seen the special exhibits at the Convention, which highlight various important facets of our Diaspora’s connection and contributions to India. I am sure these insightful discussions will help to shape policies that benefit both India and the global community.

A special mention must also be made of the contributions of women, students, and the youth amongst our Diaspora. The achievements of Indian women globally are a matter of immense pride for us, as they break barriers and scale new heights in various fields. Our students and youth, with their dynamism and creativity, are the torchbearers of our future. They are the ones who will carry forward the legacy of a vibrant and progressive India.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Our vision for Viksit Bharat aligns with our growing stature on the world stage, particularly as a leading voice for the Global South. It is guided by our timeless philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, or 'The World is One Family'.

This vision is about creating an ecosystem that not only meets our needs, but also contributes to global well-being. We seek to be a nation that balances economic progress with social justice and environmental stewardship, ensuring a bright future for generations to come. Each one of you, whether through entrepreneurship, philanthropy, or knowledge-sharing, will play an essential role in achieving this vision.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The connection between the Indian Diaspora and the Motherland is eternal. No matter where you are in the world, Bharat is and will always be your home. This bond is rooted in shared heritage, culture, and values. It is this connection that we celebrate today, and it is this connection that will continue to inspire us as we move forward together.

As we celebrate the achievements of our Pravasi Bharatiya family, let us also look forward to the future with hope and determination. Together, we can build a Viksit Bharat, a nation that stands tall on the global stage and continues to be a beacon of light for the world.

**Thank you,  
Jai Hind!  
Jai Bharat!**

**Annexure – II****Number of Open Houses Conducted in the Last Three Years**

Sl. No.	Name of Country	Name of Mission/ Post	Years			Remarks
			2022	2023	2024	
1	Algeria	EoI, Algiers	1	1	12	
2	Albania	EoI, Tirana	Nil	Nil	Nil	
3	Argentina	EoI, Buenos Aires	Nil	Nil	Nil	
4	Armenia	EoI, Yerevan	11	22	18	
5	Australia	HCI, Canberra	52	52	52	
		CGI, Sydney	Nil	Nil	4	
		CGI, Brisbane	Nil	Nil	2	
6	Azerbaijan	EoI, Baku	45	48	48	
7	Bangladesh	HCI, Dhaka	1	4	4	
		AHCI, Chittagong	3	4	4	
		AHCI, Rajshahi	Nil	Nil	Nil	
		AHCI, Sylhet	Nil	Nil	1	
8	Belgium	EoI, Brussels	2	2	2	
9	Bhutan	EoI, Thimphu	2	3	3	
		CGI, Phuentsholing	3	2	3	

10	Bolivia	EoI, La Paz	Nil	Nil	Nil	
11	Botswana	HCI, Gaborone	Nil	Nil	18	
12	Brazil	EoI, Brasilia	1	1	2	
		CGI, Sao Paulo	2	3	2	
13	Brunei Darussalam	HCI, Brunei Darussalam	Nil	2	2	
14	Bulgaria	EoI, Sofia	3	5	8	
15	Burkina Faso	EoI, Ouagadougou	Nil	Nil	1	
16	Cambodia	EoI, Phnom Penh	12	12	52	
17	Cameroon	HCI, Yaounde	Nil	Nil	Nil	
18	Canada	HCI, Ottawa	2	1	1	
		CGI, Toronto	40	50	50	
		CGI, Vancouver	Nil	Nil	Nil	
19	Cape Verde	EoI, Praia	Nil	Nil	1	
20	Chad	EoI, N'DJAMENA	Nil	3	7	
21	China	EoI, Beijing				Regular interactions facilitated by the Mission
		CGI, Shanghai	3	4	2	
22	Colombia	EoI, Bogota	12	12	12	
23	Congo (Democratic Republic)	EoI, Kinshasa	Nil	Nil	Nil	
24	Republic of	EoI, Brazzaville	Nil	2	5	

	Congo					
25	Cote D Ivory	EoI, Abidjan	Nil	12	12	
26	Croatia	EoI, Zagreb	Nil	Nil	Nil	
27	Cuba	EoI, Havana	Nil	1	1	
28	Cyprus	HCI, Nicosia	Nil	Nil	7	
29	Czech Republic	EoI, Prague	Nil	3	5	
30	Denmark	EoI, Copenhagen	1	1	4	
31	Djibouti	EoI, Djibouti	12	12	12	
32	Dominica Republic	EoI, Santo Domingo	52	52	52	
33	Egypt	EoI, Cairo	Nil	1	1	
34	Equatorial Guinea	EoI, Malabo	Nil	Nil	5	
35	Eritrea	EoI, Asmara	Nil	12	12	
36	Estonia	EoI, Tallinn	Nil	Nil	1	
37	Eswatini	HCI, Mbabane	3	2	2	
38	Ethiopia	EoI, Addis Ababa	2	2	5	
39	Fiji	HCI, Suva	49	50	49	
40	Finland	EoI, Helsinki	8	7	7	
		EoI, Paris	Nil	12	12	
41	France	CGI, St. Denis-Reunion Island	1	1	1	
42	Gabon	EoI, Libreville	Nil	Nil	Nil	

43	Germany	EoI, Berlin	52	52	52	
		CGI, Munich	45	43	48	
44	Georgia	EoI, Tbilis	Nil	Nil	3	
45	Ghana	HCI, Accra	Nil	Nil	10	
46	Greece	EoI, Athens	Nil	Nil	6	
47	Guatemala	EoI, Guatemala City	Nil	Nil	Nil	
48	Guinea	EoI, Conakry	Nil	10	12	
49	Guyana	HCI, Georgetown	12	24	24	
50	Hungary	EoI, Budapest	12	12	12	
51	Iceland	EoI, Reykjavik	Nil	Nil	9	
52	Indonesia	EoI, Jakarta	Nil	Nil	2	
		CGI, Medan	Nil	1	8	
53	Iran	EoI, Tehran	Nil	Nil	1	
54	Iraq	EoI, Baghdad	52	52	52	
		CGI, Erbil	1	3	2	
55	Ireland	EoI, Dublin	Nil	4	12	
56	Israel	EoI, Tel Aviv	3	3	1	
57	Italy	CGI, Milan	Nil	18	24	
		EoI, Rome	Nil	Nil	11	
58	Jamaica	HCI, Kingston	52	52	52	
59	Japan	CGI, Osaka-Kobe	Nil	Nil	4	

		EoI, Tokyo	12	12	12	
60	Jordan	EoI, Amman	0	1	1	
61	Kazakhstan	EoI, Astana	Nil	Nil	Nil	
62	Kenya	HCI, Nairobi	5	2	3	
63	Korea (ROK)	EoI, Seoul	Nil	3	12	
64	Kuwait	EoI, Kuwait	38	27	17	
65	Kyrgyzstan	EoI, Bishkek	52	52	52	
66	Laos	EoI, Vientiane	Nil	2	2	
67	Latvia	EoI, Riga	Nil	Nil	Nil	
68	Lebanon	EoI, Beirut	5	7	7	
69	Liberia	EoI, Monrovia	6	12	12	
70	Libya	EoI, Tripoli	Nil	Nil	Nil	
71	Lithuaniaia	EoI, Vilnius	Nil	Nil	16	
72	Madagascar	EoI, Antananarivo	Nil	Nil	4	
73	Malawi	HCI, Lilongwe	4	2	4	
74	Malaysia	HCI, Kuala Lumpur	6	24	22	
75	Maldives	HCI, Male	1	3	3	
76	Mali	EoI, Bamako	Nil	Nil	Nil	
77	Malta	HCI, Valletta	39	50	50	
78	Mauritania	EOI, Nouakchott	Nil	Nil	1	
79	Mauritius	HCI, Port Louis	Nil	1	2	

80	Mexico	EoI, Mexico City	52	52	52	
81	Mongolia	EoI, Ulaanbaatar	Nil	Nil	4	
82	Morocco	EoI, Rabat	38	45	42	
83	Myanmar	EoI, Yangon	Nil	4	4	
		CGI, Sittwe	Nil	10	Nil	
84	Namibia	HCI, Windhoek	Nil	1	1	
85	Nepal	EoI, Kathmandu	Nil	11	12	
86	Netherlands	EoI, The Hague	Nil	7	24	
87	New Zealand	HCI, Wellington	Nil	7	8	
88	Niger	EoI, Niamey	12	12	12	
89	Nigeria	HCI, Abuja	Nil	Nil	3	
90	Norway	EoI, Oslo	Nil	1	12	
91	Oman	EoI, Muscat	10	9	17	
92	Pakistan	HCI, Islamabad	Nil	Nil	Nil	
93	Palestine	RoI, Ramallah	12	12	12	
94	Panama	EoI, Panama	2	4	9	
95	Papua New Guinea	HCI, Port Moresby	Nil	1	12	
96	Paraguay	EoI, Asuncion	12	12	12	
97	Peru	EoI, Lima	12	12	12	
98	Philippines	EoI, Manila	Nil	Nil	17	
99	Poland	EoI, Warsaw	Nil	1	1	

100	Portugal	EoI, Lisbon	12	12	10	
101	Qatar	EoI, Doha	8	12	12	
102	Romania	EoI, Bucharest	52	52	52	
103	Russia	EoI, Moscow	Nil	Nil	52	
		CGI, St. Petersburg	Nil	2	2	
104	Rwanda	HCI, Kigali	Nil	Nil	Nil	
105	Sao Tome	EoI, Sao Tome	Nil	Nil	3	
106	Saudi Arabia	EoI, Riyadh	140	134	103	
		CGI, Jeddah	2	2	1	
107	Senegal	EoI, Dakar	1	2	1	
108	Serbia	EoI, Belgrade	52	52	52	
109	Seychelles	HCI, Victoria (Mahe)	Nil	5	6	
110	Sierra Leone	HCI, Freetown	Nil	3	5	
111	Singapore	HCI, Singapore	Nil	1	9	
112	Slovenia	EoI, Ljubljana	1	1	6	
113	South Africa	CGI, Johannesburg	Nil	2	2	
		HCI, Pretoria	52	52	52	
114	South Sudan	EoI, Juba	52	52	52	
115	Spain	EoI, Madrid	30	25	27	
116	Sri Lanka	HCI, Colombo	Nil	Nil	Nil	
		CGI, Hambantota	Nil	3	12	

		AHCI, Kandy	Nil	Nil	1	
117	Sudan	EoI, Khartoum	Nil	Nil	Nil	
118	Suriname	EoI, Paramaribo	Nil	1	1	
119	Sweden	EoI, Stockholm	24	24	24	
						Regular interactions facilitated by the Mission
120	Switzerland	EoI, Berne				
		CGI, Geneva	1	2	5	
121	Syria	EoI, Damascus	Nil	Nil	Nil	
122	Tajikistan	EoI, Dushanbe	Nil	2	2	
123	Tanzania	HCI, Dar-es-Salaam	Nil	Nil	14	
		CGI, Zanzibar	Nil	Nil	1	
124	Thailand	EoI, Bangkok	Nil	4	4	
		CGI, Chiangmai	2	2	2	
125	Timor Leste	EoI, Dili	Nil	Nil	Nil	
126	Togo	EoI, Lome	2	1	2	
127	Trinidad & Tobago	HCI, Port of Spain	Nil	1	2	
128	Tunisia	EoI, Tunis	24	24	24	
129	Turkiyie	EoI, Ankara	2	Nil	3	
		CGI, Istanbul	1	1	1	
130	Turkmenistan	EoI, Ashgabat	50	50	50	
131	Uganda	HCI, Kampala				Regular interactions

						facilitated by the Mission
132	Ukraine	EoI, Kyiv	Nil	Nil	Nil	
133	UAE	EoI, Abu Dhabi	Nil	2	5	
		CGI, Dubai	5	3	3	
134	U.K.	Edinburgh	Nil	Nil	8	
		Birmingham	26	51	49	
		HCI, London	11	4	5	
135	USA	CGI, Chicago	4	4	11	
		CGI, Houston	Nil	10	24	
		CGI, New York	Nil	Nil	65	
		CGI, San Francisco	48	48	48	
		EoI, Washington	7	12	14	
		CGI, Seattle	Nil	Nil	2	
136	Venezuela	EoI, Caracas	Nil	Nil	Nil	
137	Vietnam	EoI, Hanoi	6	8	12	
138	Zambia	HCI, Lusaka	Nil	52	52	
139	Zimbabwe	EoI, Harare	Nil	Nil	Nil	
<b>Total</b>			<b>1485</b>	<b>1792</b>	<b>2228</b>	

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**MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (2025-26)**

**HELD ON 16 DECEMBER, 2025**

The Committee sat on Tuesday, 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2025 from 1700 hrs. to 1800 hrs. in Committee Room No. 2, Extension Building, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

**Present**

**Dr. Shashi Tharoor, Chairperson**

**Lok Sabha**

- 2 Smt. D. K. Aruna
- 3 Shri Vijay Baghel
- 4 Shri Mitesh Patel Bakabhai
- 5 Shri Deepender Singh Hooda
- 6 Shri Navaskani K.
- 7 Shri Brijendra Singh Ola
- 8 Shri Arun Govil
- 9 Ms. Praniti Sushilkumar Shinde
- 10 Ms. Bansuri Swaraj

**Rajya Sabha**

- 11 Shri Ayodhya Rami Reddy Alla
- 12 Dr. John Brittas
- 13 Smt. Sagarika Ghose
- 14 Dr. K. Laxman
- 15 Shri Satnam Singh Sandhu
- 16 Shri Ratanjeet Pratap Narain Singh
- 17 Dr. Sudhanshu Trivedi

**Secretariat**

1. Shri Anjani Kumar - Joint Secretary

2. Shri Shangreiso Zimik - Director
3. Ms. Shanta Banerjee Datta - Deputy Secretary

2. At the outset, Chairperson welcomed the Members to the Sitting of the Committee and apprised them of the agenda for the day.

- (i) XXX XXX XXX XXX
- (ii) Draft Report on the Action Taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the Sixth Report of the Committee on External Affairs (18<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) on the subject "Indian Diaspora Overseas including NRIs, PIOs, OCIs and Migrant Workers: All Aspects of their Conditions and Welfare, including the status of the Emigration Bill"

4. The Chairperson, invited the Members to offer their suggestions, if any, for incorporation in the draft Reports. After deliberations, the Committee adopted the Draft Reports with minor modifications suggested by the Members.

5. The Committee authorized the Chairperson to finalize the Action Taken Reports incorporating the suggestions made by the Members and present the same to Parliament.

*The Committee then adjourned*

***(Vide Para 4 of Introduction of Report)***

**ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE SIXTH REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

- (i) Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by the Government: -**

Recommendation Nos. 1, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 39, 42, 44, 45, 48, 49, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 66, 67, 68, 69, 71 and 72

**Total- 46**

**Percentage : 63.89%**

- (ii) Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies: -**

Nil

**Total- 0**

**Percentage : 0.00 %**

- (iii) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and require reiteration: -**

Recommendation Nos. 8, 10, 28, 35, 37, 38, 40, 43, 46, 47, and 65

**Total- 11**

**Percentage : 15.28 %**

- (iv) Observations/Recommendations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited: -**

Recommendation Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 17, 18, 19, 20, 41, 50, 54 and 70

**Total- 15**

**Percentage : 20.83 %**