

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

**LOK SABHA STARRED
QUESTION NO. 183
ANSWERED ON 15.12.2023**

India's Relationship with Afghanistan

***183. Shri Gaurav Gogoi:
Shri Mahesh Sahoo:**

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the current status of India's diplomatic relations with Afghanistan;
- (b) whether the Government is taking any steps to assist students, traders and businesses of Afghan origin operating in India;
- (c) if so, the details thereof;
- (d) whether the Government has any proposal to reopen the Embassy of Afghanistan in New Delhi; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER

**MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(DR. SUBRAHMANYAM JAISHANKAR)**

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

Statement referred to in reply to parts (a) to (e) of the Lok Sabha Starred question No. 183 regarding “India’s Relationship with Afghanistan” for answer on 15.12.2023 asked by Shri Gaurav Gogoi and Shri Mahesh Sahoo.

(a) to (e): India's approach to Afghanistan continues to be guided by its historical relations, friendship with its people and relevant UN Resolutions, including UNSCR 2593. The India based personnel of the Embassy in Kabul returned to India in the aftermath of the takeover by the Taliban. Since June 2022, an Indian technical team is positioned in the Embassy and is active in respect of humanitarian assistance and other situations. India’s stance in regard to recognition of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan is in consonance with that of the international community.

2. Keeping in mind the deteriorating situation in that country, India decided to assist Afghan people by supplying humanitarian aid. In this endeavor, we have supplied several shipments of humanitarian assistance consisting of 50,000 MTs of wheat, 250 tons of medical aid and 28 tons of earthquake relief aid. These consignments were handed over to the United Nations World Food Programme (UNWFP), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH) and Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS).

3. India has also partnered with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in Afghanistan to provide assistance for the welfare of Afghan drug user population, especially women. Under this partnership, India has, since 2022, supplied 11,000 units of hygiene kits, baby food, blankets, clothing, medical aid and other miscellaneous items to UNODC, Kabul.

4. In the field of education, India has continued its Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) scholarship scheme for the Afghan students. Since August 2021, ICCR has granted admissions to more than 3000 students, including 600 Afghan girls. In order to provide accessible educational opportunities to students residing in Afghanistan, ICCR has also started an online scholarship scheme in the current academic year for 1000 Afghan students in Indian Universities through e-Vidya Bharti portal. Of the total admissions under this scheme, 30% admissions were granted to female students. India also continued its collaboration with the Afghan National Agricultural Science and Technical University (ANASTU) by providing online scholarships for Afghan students in agro-related fields.

5. In addition, trade and commerce between India and Afghanistan is ongoing, including through the Chabahar port.

6. The diplomatic presence of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in New Delhi and the Consulates of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan in Mumbai and Hyderabad continue to function in India. During the past two years, some Afghan diplomats have left India since they obtained residency in third countries. However, the remaining Afghan diplomats based in India have taken over the responsibility for the continued diplomatic functioning of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

7. India has historical and civilizational ties with Afghanistan and our development partnership has included more than five hundred projects spread across each of the 34 provinces of the country in critical areas of power, water supply, road connectivity, healthcare, education, agriculture and capacity building. Our technical team in Kabul is monitoring the status of our projects and their functioning, in addition to supporting humanitarian assistance.
