

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2305

ANSWERED ON:05.02.2014

SUDAN CRISIS

Krishnaswamy Shri M.;Shetkar Shri Suresh Kumar

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether many Indians are stranded in the strife-torn South Sudan; and
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) At this moment, there are no stranded Indian nationals in South Sudan.

(b) At the time of the outbreak of crisis in South Sudan on 15 December 2013, about 950-1000 Indian nationals were estimated to be in South Sudan, excluding Indian peacekeepers deployed with the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). However, about 700-750 Indian nationals left South Sudan availing facilities of commercial flights operating from South Sudan and also via road links to the Ugandan border which were open for road traffic. The remaining Indian nationals numbering about 250 chose to stay of their own volition, based on economic considerations.

Government of India has been closely monitoring the security situation in South Sudan. It has, through the Embassy of India in Juba, remained in close contact with the Indian community, UNMISS and South Sudanese Government. The Embassy of India in Juba extended all possible assistance to Indian nationals for relocation and evacuation in close contact with the Indian Association in Juba and representatives of Indian companies in South Sudan. A High Level Delegation from Ministry of External Affairs, consisting of Joint Secretary (WANA) and Joint Secretary (Pers) visited South Sudan and Ethiopia from 05-08 January 2014 to assess the political and security situation in South Sudan as well as the safety and security of the Indian nationals. During the visit, the Foreign Minister of South Sudan assured the Indian delegation full protection to Indian nationals as well as our Mission in Juba.

After the signing of cessation of hostilities agreement by the Government of South Sudan with the opposition (rebel forces) on 23 January 2014 in Addis Ababa, the security situation is moving towards normalcy and some Indian nationals have returned to South Sudan. The current strength of Indian nationals in South Sudan is estimated to be around 350.