

Indian Diaspora: Meaning, Significance and Various Policies of Government of India towards It

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ABSTRACT

Purpose:

The objective of this study is to present a conceptual overview of the Indian diaspora, including what it means, who falls into it, what makes it unique, why it is so big, what the government is doing about it, and what needs to be done to ensure its well-being.

Design/methodology/approach:

To evaluate the many definitions, meanings, types, factors, and effects of diaspora on the nation, this study employed a systematic review of extensive empirical and theoretical literature in his regard. A list of the best journals on diaspora and international migration has been assembled. Subsequently, each document was recognized, scrutinized, and classified to furnish comprehensive knowledge, the necessary information is gathered by browsing the official websites of several countries.

Findings:

The Indian diaspora has changed significantly throughout the years. This study outlines potential research avenues and provides a conceptual framework for the role of migration and diaspora, with a special focus on policies.

Research limitations/implications:

Considering the qualitative form of the systematic review approach, the writers leverage their domain knowledge and skills to interpret the pertinent literature.

Practical implications:

Academics and policy practitioners can understand the dynamic linkages among the primary influencing components in migration, diaspora, and its developmental activity by studying the specifics of various policies related to diaspora in India. Consequently, authorities would be able to design strategies that efficiently leverage the benefits of the diaspora's engagement in India and globally.

Originality/value:

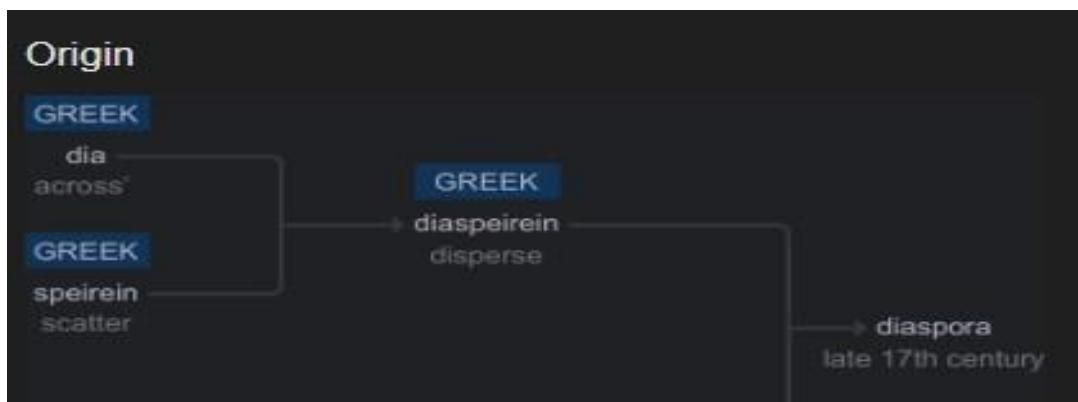
This systematic review synthesizes the findings reported in most recent publications and government reports and develops an integrated conceptual framework, anchoring on possible positive impacts of diaspora in the homeland. This framework provides content to practitioners to better understand the relevant literature and assists researchers and policymakers in developing a new strategy for future diasporic affairs.

Keywords: Diaspora, India, development, Migration, policy.

INTRODUCTION

Origin:

"Diaspora" is derived from the Greek word "diaspeirein," meaning "to scatter about." The word comes from the words "dia," which means "through" or "across," and "speirein," which means "to sow" or "to scatter." The phrase originally described the Jewish population's dispersal outside their ancestral homeland, especially following the Babylonian exile. It has evolved to refer to any group of individuals who have left their native country and scattered, especially in the context of ethnic or cultural communities. "Diaspora" is derived from the Greek word "diaspeirein," meaning "to scatter about." The word comes from the words "dia," which means "through" or "across," and "speirein," which means "to sow" or "to scatter." Greek origin that means scattering or sowing of seeds. The term's initial meaning was the Jewish people's dispersal outside of their historic homeland, especially following the Babylonian exile. It has evolved to refer to any group of individuals who have left their native country and scattered, especially in the context of ethnic or cultural communities. (Education Global Practice, 2017)



Definition:

A "diaspora" is a group of people who have left their original country and settled in other locations worldwide. It frequently refers to groups of individuals who, while residing abroad, retain ties to their native country. The term "diaspora" refers to the dispersion of a group of people from their homeland to various places worldwide. It often describes communities of people who maintain a connection to their homeland while living in different countries. The word is commonly associated with historical migrations, such as those of Jewish, Armenian, or African populations. However, it can apply to any group that has spread out while still retaining a cultural or emotional link to their origins. (Education Global Practice, 2017)

Indian Diaspora: An Indian diaspora is a group of people who are either Indian citizens living abroad or have origins in India. It describes the people who relocate to other countries for work, business, or other reasons. The Indian diaspora is estimated to be over 30 million people. Numerous migrant waves, mostly powered by trade, colonialism, and labor demands, are the ancestors of the Indian diaspora. These are some crucial stages:

- 1) During the ancient and medieval eras, Indian traders settled in Southeast Asia and the Middle East thanks to trade links that made early migrations easier. The spread of Buddhism and Hinduism was part of this.
- 2) Colonial Era: A large amount of labor movement occurred during the British colonial era. When slavery was abolished, many Indians were transported by contract labor to the Caribbean, Fiji, Mauritius, and Africa, among other places.
- 3) Post-Independence: Political unrest, educational opportunities, and economic prospects all contributed to India's ongoing migration after its independence in 1947. Countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia saw the development of sizable communities. With populations retaining cultural ties, while simultaneously blending into their host nations, the Indian diaspora stands out by its diversity today.

(Mishra, 2007)

Classification:

1) Non-Resident Indians (NRIs):

Indian nationals who live abroad are known as non-resident Indians or NRIs. An individual is classified as an NRI if they are in India for fewer than 365 days in the four years before that year and fewer than 60 days in that year, or if they stay away from India for 182 days or more during the fiscal year.

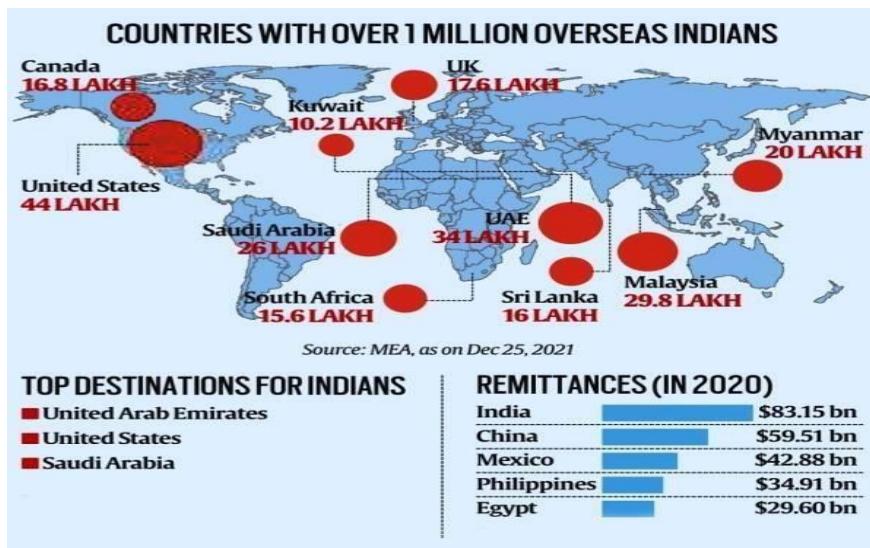
2) Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs):

Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) are foreign nationals (apart from those of Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, China, Iran, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal) who: Previously held an Indian passport; or who, according to the Government of India Act, 1935, or either their parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents were born and permanently resided in India; or who are the spouse of an Indian citizen or a PIO. In 2015, the PIO category was eliminated and combined with the OCI category.

3) Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs):

In 2005, a distinct OCI category was established. A foreign national received an OCI card: On January 26, 1950, who was qualified to become an Indian citizen? It belonged to a territory that joined India after August 15, 1947 or was an Indian citizen on or after January 26, 1950. OCI cards were also available to the minor offspring of such individuals, except those who were citizens of Bangladesh or Pakistan. (*Indian Diaspora/ National Portal of India*, n.d.)

Geographical Spread:



(The Indian Diaspora, n.d.)

The World Migration Report, 2022, states that India was the top diasporic country worldwide in 2020, with the highest emigrant population, followed by Mexico, Russia, and China. Indian diaspora is widely dispersed geographically. Saudi Arabia, Myanmar, Malaysia, Kuwait, Sri Lanka, South Africa, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, the United Arab Emirates, and Canada are among the nations with more than 10 lakh Indians living abroad.

Remittances:

The 2022 World Bank Migration and Development Brief states that India receives over USD 100 billion in remittances annually for the first time. According to the World Migration Report, the top five nations that receive

remittances are Egypt, Mexico, China, India, and the Philippines, in descending order. (*Remittance Flows Continue to Grow in 2023 Albeit at Slower Pace / Migration and Development Brief 39, 2023*)

RESULTS

Programs and policies

To interact with and assist the Indian diaspora, the Indian government have several programs and policies. The following are some important policies:

1) Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD):

The goal of the government's annual celebration of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas on January 9 is to honor the diaspora's contributions to India's progress and promote tighter ties. Since 2003, January 9th has been the yearly day of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD), which honors the overseas Indian community's contributions to India's progress. January 9 was selected as the day of the celebration since it was on this day in 1915 that the greatest Pravasi, Mahatma Gandhi, returned to India from South Africa, spearheaded the country's independence movement, and profoundly changed the lives of Indians. Every two years, it features cultural events, debate forums, and prizes from the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman. **Pravasi** This annual event celebrates the contributions of the Indian diaspora. It provides a platform for interaction between the diaspora and the Indian government, fostering engagement and collaboration. The 17th PBD Convention took place in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, as a Partner State, from January 8–10, 2023. "Diaspora: Reliable partners for India's progress in Amrit Kaal" was the theme of the 17th PBD. (MEA / *Pravasi Bharatiya Divas*, 2015)

2) The Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI):

OCI was introduced to provide a form of dual citizenship. The OCI scheme allows people of Indian origin and their descendants to live and work in India indefinitely, with several rights similar to those of Indian citizens in many ways, including financial, economic, and educational fields, inter-country adoption of Indian children, and domestic airfares. There are numerous advantages to having an Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) card, such as a permanent visa. A lifetime visa with many entries is granted to an OCI cardholder so they can visit India for any reason for a lifetime, and can own land in India. OCI cardholders are exempt from registering with the local police authority. Except for purchasing agricultural or plantation holdings, OCI cards enjoy the same economic, financial, and educational benefits as Non-resident Indians (NRIs). An OCI cardholder may apply for Indian citizenship if they have been registered for five years and have lived in India regularly for 12 months. OCI cardholders can use their OCI card in conjunction with their passport. (*High Commission of India, London, United Kingdom*, n.d.)

To be eligible for an OCI card, a foreign national must: have been a citizen of India on or after January 26, 1950, or have been eligible to become a citizen on that date. Not being a citizen of Pakistan, Bangladesh, or another country specified by the Central Government. Not applying for a tourist, missionary, or mountaineering visa (*OCI-Services*, 2019)

3) Emigration Act of 1983:

The Emigration Act of 1983 updated and combined the laws about Indian nationals' emigration. The act was created in response to queries about workers being exploited and defrauded by recruiting agents, with other problems they might encounter when traveling overseas. The Emigration Act of 1983 has several important aspects, such as:

Signing up: Without registering with the Protector General of Emigrants, no organization or agency can hire Indians for jobs overseas. **Registration:** To authorize planned emigrants to leave the country, the Central Government designates Protectors of Emigrants. The protection of Indian workers' interests overseas is the responsibility of the Protector General of Emigrants. **Certifications:** A person found guilty of a crime under the act may have their certificate revoked by a court. For two years following the cancellation, the individual is not

eligible to apply for another certificate. To safeguard the rights of Indian workers overseas.

4) Emigration Bill 2021:

More Emigration to the Gulf was the explicit reason for the Emigration Act of 1983, which is insufficient to address the broad geoeconomic, geopolitical, and geostrategic effects of emigration in the modern world. As a modification of the Emigration Act of 1983, a three-tiered institutional system is suggested by the bill to establish regulatory systems governing Indian nationals' employment abroad and create a framework for emigrant welfare promotion and protection to envision complete emigration management. The Bill offers a long-overdue chance to change the hiring procedure for citizens looking for work overseas.

It advocates provisions for serious exploitative practices, such as high recruitment fees, contract substitution, deception, passport retention, non-payment or underpayment of wages, poor living conditions, discrimination, and other forms of maltreatment, which have been highlighted by independent investigations into migrant worker conditions for years. For example, media stories in recent months have emphasised how heart attacks and respiratory failures—whose causes are unclear and poorly understood—account for the majority of migrant worker deaths in the Arab Gulf States and West Asia. (*Emigration Bill 2021*, 2021)

5) Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana:

The Indian government first implemented the "Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana, 2003," an insurance program that is required for emigrants who require Emigration Clearance from POEs (Protectors of Emigrants), in an attempt to protect the interests of emigrant workers. The Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana 2006 was announced on January 25, 2006, after the scheme's efficacy was evaluated. Its goal is to give workers greater and more comprehensive coverage. (*Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India*, n.d.)

6) Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF):

A scheme by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) for the welfare of Overseas Indians; assisting them in distress situations. A scheme by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) for the welfare of Overseas Indians; assisting them in distress situations. The ICWF aims to support Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) facing emergencies or hardships outside India. It provides financial assistance for various needs, helping to ensure the welfare and safety of Indian nationals abroad. (*Indian Community Welfare Fund*, 2024)

7) Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Suraksha Yojana (MGPSY):

Indian laborers employed abroad eligible to participate in the voluntary Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Suraksha Yojana (MGPSY) social security program. Goal: To assist Indian employees working abroad having Emigration Check Required (ECR) passports saving money for life insurance, old age benefits, and return and resettlement. The scheme was closed on April 1, 2017

8) Know India Program (KIP):

The Ministry of External Affairs of India offers a three-week program as Know India Program (KIP) to educate young people of Indian descent about their ancestral nation to build ties between India and the youth of the Indian diaspora, it assists participants in comprehending the modern culture and advancements of India, gives individuals a forum to express their opinions and experiences. The program consists of Trips to locations with religious, cultural, and historical importance educational visits to both public and private institutions and organizations interaction with specialists and experts in the field Youth from the Indian diaspora between the ages of 21 and 35 are eligible for the program, albeit those from Girmitiya nations are given preference. The initiative pays for India's hospitality expenses. And ninety percent of the airfare. (*High Commission of India, London, United Kingdom*, n.d.) *Consulate General of India, San Francisco, California: Know India Program*. (2024). Cgisf.gov.in. <https://www.cgisf.gov.in/page/know-india-program/>

9) Study India Programme (SIP)

This program is intended for 18–26-year-old foreign nationals of Indian descent. Understanding India's culture, history, economics, and progress is the program's main objective. Based on suggestions from Indian missions or posts overseas, participants are chosen. The curriculum consists of: Short-term classes, Complete hospitality in India, and a reimbursement for refundable airfare. (*Embassy of India, Khartoum, Sudan, 2024*)

10) Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC)

To support the undergraduate studies of children of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) at Indian universities, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) of India funds the Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC). By partially funding tuition, housing, and other associated costs, the program lessens the financial burden of higher education in India. In addition to encouraging youth of Indian descent to pursue higher education in India, the SPDC seeks to strengthen cultural linkages and assist diaspora families in obtaining high-quality education. (*SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME for DIASPORA CHILDREN [SPDC] for HIGHER and TECHNICAL EDUCATION in INDIA GUIDELINES for the ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-21 GOVERNMENT of INDIA MINISTRY of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AKBAR BHAWAN, CHANAKYAPURI, NEW DELHI -110 021, n.d.*)

11) Overseas Indian Youth Club (OIYC)

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs launched the Overseas Indian Youth Club (OIYC). Information on the club's goals, mechanism, and relationship to other Ministry programs like the Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC) and the Study India Programme (SIP) is provided. (*Information on Overseas Indian Youth Club/ National Portal of India, 2017*)

12) Tracing the Roots:

To assist PIOs in tracking their Indian ancestry, the Ministry is implementing a program called "Tracing the Roots." PIOs who want to trace their ancestry back to India apply using the form provided by the Indian Mission or Post in their home country. This website has an application form for this purpose. Individuals of Indian descent who wish to trace their ancestry back to India must complete the application and submit it, together with a Rs. 30,000 charge, to the relevant Indian Mission or Post in their home country. (*MEA / Tracing the Roots, 2023*)

13) Global Indian Network of Knowledge:

An innovative step towards building a boundary less knowledge society is NKN, a cutting- edge Pan-India network. It offers the scientific community and all of humanity previously unheard-of advantages. All dynamic institutions with vision and zeal will be able to use NKN to get information and knowledge beyond time and location constraints and reap the benefits for both themselves and society as a whole. It will support the growth of India's information infrastructure, encourage research, and provide services and applications of the future. (*About/ National Knowledge Network, n.d.*)

14) Scheme for Legal/Financial Assistance to Indian Women Desereted / Divorced by Their NRI Husbands:

Indian women who have been abandoned or divorced by their foreign or Indian spouses can receive financial support and legal services through a program offered by the Ministries of External Affairs (MEA) of India. In addition to meeting specific requirements, such as being abandoned within 15 years of marriage or having divorce proceedings started within 15 years, the woman must be an Indian passport holder. The program offers industrialized countries up to US~\$3,000 per case and developing countries up to US~\$2,000 per case. The aid is disbursed to the applicant's attorney or to an NGO, women's organization, or Indian Community Association representing the woman. (*Ministry of External Affairs, 2024*)

15) National Pension Scheme for NRIs:

Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) and Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) can participate in the National Pension

System (NPS), a retirement fund program. It provides: Tax advantages. Section 80 CCD (1) allows subscribers to deduct up to 10% of their gross income from their taxes.

Options for investments

Active and auto-choice options are available to subscribers. In auto choice, the system automatically manages investments based on the subscriber's age, but in active choice, members choose how to invest their money.

Adaptability

Subscribers have the flexibility to alter their annual contribution amount and make contributions at any point during the fiscal year. (*Contributions in NPS Minimum Contribution at the Time of Account Opening -Rs.500*, n.d.)

16) Online Service for Overseas Voters: Overseas Voters: Indian citizens who are abroad for work, school, or other reasons and who have not obtained citizenship in another nation are able to register to vote at the location listed on their Indian passport. To Fill Enrolment Form

Fill **Form 6A** online at <https://voterportal.eci.gov.in/> and upload the requisite proofs. Alternatively download **Form 6A** from ECI website www.eci.gov.in. Fill Form 6A in 2 copies. Forms are also available free of cost in Indian Missions. (*Consulate General of India, Sittwe, Myanmar: Voting Facilities for NRIs and OCIs*, 2024)

17) Indian Development Foundation of Overseas Indians(IDE-OI):

India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI) was set up by the Government of India in 2008 as a not-for-profit Trust to facilitate Overseas Indian philanthropy into social and development projects in India. The Trust is exempt from provisions of the Foreign Contributions Regulation Act (FCRA), 2010 of the Ministry of Home Affairs which enables IDF-OI to receive foreign contributions (*India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians*, n.d.)

18) Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojna:

Yojana of PM Pravasi Teerth Darshan 2023...The Government of India gives Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) a subsidized pilgrimage travel to India through the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana (PTDY). PIOs aged 45 to 65 who reside in Girmitya nations—Fiji, Guyana, Mauritius, South Africa, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago, and Reunion Island—are the target audience for the initiative. The program is specifically designed for PIOs with lesser incomes who might not have the funds to travel to India alone. In partnership with the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd. (IRCTC), the program was launched during the 2018–19 fiscal year. The goal of the initiative is to assist PIOs in re-establishing their Indian heritage. Additionally, it is anticipated to inspire foreigners and other PIOs to travel independently to India. (*Welcome to Consulate General of India, Saint-Denis, Reunion Island*, 2024)

19) Pratishthit Pravasi:

A program run by India's Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is called Pratishthit Pravasi. Additional initiatives within the MEA's Diaspora Engagement program consist of: National Pension Scheme for NRIs, Online Services for Voters, Know India Programme, Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana Scholarship Programs for Diaspora Children, Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF), Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conferences, India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI).

National Pension Scheme for NRIs Online Services for Voters Know India Programme, Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana Scholarship Programs for Diaspora Children Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conferences India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI). (*Global Pravasi Rishta Portal / Embassy of India, France & Principality of Monaco*, 2016)

DISCUSSION

In 2023, India remained the top recipient of global remittances, receiving around \$100 billion, similar to 2022. Strong economic recovery in the U.S. and Gulf nations, along with increased job opportunities for Indian expatriates, contributed to this trend. These remittances support household incomes and local economies in India.

Several factors make the Indian diaspora noteworthy:

Economic Contribution: Remittances support millions of Indian families, funding education, healthcare, and businesses while boosting local economies.

Cultural Exchange: The diaspora spreads Indian culture globally through traditions, cuisine, and festivals, fostering intercultural understanding.

Political Influence: Many gain political roles abroad, shaping policies that strengthen India's global ties.

Innovation & Entrepreneurship: Indian expats drive global startups, creating jobs and fostering investments and collaborations in India.

Social Impact: The diaspora supports healthcare, education, and disaster relief, aiding India's development.

Knowledge Transfer: Returning professionals bring valuable skills, enhancing India's workforce and progress.

The Indian diaspora strengthens global connections, benefiting both India and host nations.

Programs and policies

Bilateral Social Security Agreements: Negotiated to protect expatriate workers and companies, these agreements exempt short-term workers from social security contributions. **Indian Missions Abroad:** Embassies offer community resources, emergency support, and legal aid.

Skill Development: Programs like Skill India Mission engage the diaspora in knowledge transfer and job creation.

Diaspora Engagement: Initiatives like "Invest India" promote philanthropy, business, and investment.

Cultural Programs: The Ministry of External Affairs strengthens diaspora ties through cultural exchanges.

Health & Welfare: Schemes like "Ayushman Bharat" improve healthcare access, including for returning Indians.

CONCLUSION

Significance of the Indian Diaspora

1) **Increasing India's Soft Power:** In many developed nations, the Indian diaspora is among the wealthiest minorities. They have an advantage in "diaspora diplomacy," acting as "bridge-builders" between their adopted and home nations. The Indian diaspora is a completely transferable political vote bank, besides being a component of India's soft power. Furthermore, plenty of Indians occupy high political posts in numerous nations, strengthening India's political influence in multilateral organizations like the UN.

2) **Economic Contribution:** The Balance of Payments (BOP) benefits from the remittances sent by the Indian diaspora, which aid in reducing a larger trade imbalance. The reduction of disguised unemployment in India has been aided by the movement of low-skilled workers, particularly to West Asia. Additionally, the migratory labor made it easier for technologies, business and commercial ideas, and tacit knowledge to enter India.

Challenges faced by the Indian Diaspora:

The Indian diaspora is one of the country's biggest assets, but several internal and external weaknesses stop it from reaching its full potential. Indian communities abroad are not united — they are often divided by religion, caste, and regional identity, which has grown worse with rising political polarization. These divisions sometimes spill over into countries like the UK, Canada, and the US, reducing their collective influence. Many diaspora groups also tend to organize around state identities, such as Telugu or Punjabi associations, rather than a shared Indian identity, which weakens their impact on national policies in host countries. In the Gulf region, where nearly 9 million Indians work, most are low-wage laborers with limited rights, making them highly vulnerable whenever conflicts or labor policy changes occur, as seen in frequent evacuation efforts by India. The Indian economy is also heavily dependent on remittances — expected to cross \$135 billion in 2026 — meaning any downturn in host countries can hit India hard. On the political front, the absence of dual citizenship frustrates many in the diaspora who feel excluded from full participation in India's public life, while host countries sometimes view strong diaspora involvement as foreign interference, causing diplomatic tensions like those with Canada and the US in recent years. Additionally, India continues to lose top professionals to permanent migration, and although some do return, the overall "brain drain" remains a concern. Over time, younger generations of overseas Indians often grow up feeling less connected to India, leading to weaker cultural and emotional ties and less willingness to champion India's interests abroad.

To maximize the potential of the Indian diaspora, policy experts and government reports recommend moving from a reactive to a strategic engagement model.

1. Policy and Legal Reforms

Draft a Clear Diaspora Policy: The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) should formalize a comprehensive policy document to serve as a guiding principle for all diaspora engagements, replacing the current ad-hoc approach.

Enact the Emigration Management Bill: Immediate passage of this long-pending bill is recommended to establish a modern emigration framework, streamline clearances, and better protect overseas workers.

Diaspora Protection Act: Codify the rights of OCIs and NRIs into a single legal framework to resolve current legal fragmentation and clarify eligibility for various benefits.

Voting Rights Reform: Implement postal or online voting for NRIs to facilitate their participation in the Indian democratic process without requiring physical presence.

2. Economic and Structural Engagement

Unified Diaspora Database: Create a real-time, integrated database linking the MEA, immigration, and taxation systems to better target welfare schemes and improve crisis response. **Diaspora-Specific Financial Instruments:** Launch "Diaspora Bonds" or dedicated infrastructure bonds—inspired by models like Israel Bonds—to attract long-term investment into Indian infrastructure and renewable energy.

Knowledge Sovereignty and "Brain Circulation": Shift focus from just remittances to "Knowledge Sovereignty" by creating digital corridors where global experts can mentor Indian micro-entrepreneurs and startups.

Special Economic Zones (SEZs): Consider establishing SEZs exclusively for projects set up by NRIs and PIOs to leverage their global expertise and capital.

3. Welfare and Protection

Rehabilitation Schemes: Draft a comprehensive scheme to support returning workers (especially from the Gulf) with livelihood security and reintegration into the domestic job market.

Expand One-Stop Centres: Launch overseas "One-Stop Centres" without delay to provide legal and

psychological support to distressed NRI women.

Pre-Departure Training: Enhance the Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana to include country-specific language and legal training to prevent exploitation.

4. Diplomacy and Outreach

Inclusive Engagement: Ensure platforms like Pravasi Bharatiya Divas are more inclusive of low-skilled and marginalized diaspora groups, rather than focusing only on affluent professionals.

Strategic Evacuation Policy: Develop a proactive, permanent evacuation policy for conflict zones to ensure swift responses like Operation Ajay or Operation Sindhu during future global instabilities.

Youth-Centric Programs: Expand the Know India Programme (KIP) to help second and third-generation diaspora members maintain cultural and linguistic ties to India.

The Government of India has designed and implemented many policies by the Ministry of External Affairs, viz:

Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) Card Scheme, Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana (PBBY), Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD)

Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF)

Mahatma Gandhi Pravasi Suraksha Yojana (MGPSY) Know India Programme (KIP)

Study India Programme (SIP)

Scholarship Programme For Diaspora Children (SPDC) Overseas Indian Youth Club (OIYC)

Tracing the Roots

National Pension Scheme for NRI

Scheme for Legal/Financial Assistance to Indian Women Desereted / Divorced by Their NRI Husbands

Indian Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDE-OI):

Most of the policies present to date are discussed above in this paper. These policies are modified from time to time as per the requirements and benefit the nation in fruitful manner.

METHODOLOGY

The official website providing information and policies for the Indian diaspora is the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) - Overseas Indian Affairs Division at:

MEA - Overseas Indian Affairs Division

This site provides resources, updates, and policy information for the Indian diaspora, including programs, welfare schemes, and guidelines for overseas Indians. Additionally, for specific services and support, the **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas** website and the **MADAD Portal** provide assistance and information.

MADAD Portal:

Consular Services Management System; The **MADAD Portal** (Consular Services Management System) is an online platform launched by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) of India for assistance and support to Indian citizens living abroad. "MADAD" means "help" in Hindi, and the portal is specifically designed to offer a

transparent, accessible, and efficient way for Indians overseas to seek help with various consular issues, including grievances related to employment, legal issues, harassment, or emergencies. The rest of the other sources are mentioned in the Appendices.

Appendices

Indian embassies and consulates around the world often have dedicated sections on their websites for the Indian diaspora, covering resources, programs, welfare initiatives, and consular services. Here are examples of Indian embassies and their websites that commonly include information and services for the Indian diaspora:

1. Embassy of India, Washington D.C., USA

- **Website:** <https://www.indianembassyusa.gov.in>
- **Features:** The website provides information on NRI services, diaspora events, consular services, OCI card details, and welfare schemes for Indians in the USA.

2. High Commission of India, London, United Kingdom

- **Website:** <https://www.hcilondon.gov.in>
- **Features:** The High Commission's website offers resources for the Indian diaspora in the UK, including services for OCI, PIO, passports, Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, and diaspora support programs.

3. Embassy of India, Abu Dhabi, UAE

- **Website:** <https://www.indianembassyuae.gov.in>
- **Features:** This site provides extensive resources for the Indian expatriate community in the UAE, including labor welfare services, emergency contacts, the MADAD portal, and updates on bilateral agreements for worker rights.

4. Consulate General of India, New York, USA

- **Website:** <https://www.indiainnewyork.gov.in>
- **Features:** The consulate offers information specific to Indian communities in the region, including visa services, diaspora events, OCI, NRI FAQs, and community welfare resources.

5. High Commission of India, Ottawa, Canada

- **Website:** <https://www.hciottawa.gov.in>
- **Features:** The site features resources for Indians in Canada, including information on diaspora engagement, emergency services, OCI/PIO cards, and events celebrating Indian culture.

6. Embassy of India, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

- **Website:** <https://www.indianembassyriyadh.gov.in>
- **Features:** With a large Indian diaspora in Saudi Arabia, this embassy provides welfare information, labor rights resources, the MADAD portal, and grievance redressal support.

7. Embassy of India, Doha, Qatar

- **Website:** <https://www.indianembassyqatar.gov.in>

- **Features:** The website includes diaspora-specific resources, including helpline numbers, labor welfare support, repatriation details, and events for the Indian community.

8. High Commission of India, Canberra, Australia

- **Website:** <https://www.hcicanberra.gov.in>
- **Features:** Information is available on consular services, Indian community events, OCI/PIO, and local support for Indian students and professionals.

9. Embassy of India, Singapore

- **Website:** <https://www.hcisingapore.gov.in>
- **Features:** The website includes a diaspora section with OCI/PIO information, consular services, and resources for the Indian community in Singapore.

10. Consulate General of India, Dubai, UAE

- **Website:** <https://www.cgidubai.gov.in>
- **Features:** Provides comprehensive information for Indian expatriates in Dubai, including labor welfare, community events, OCI cards, and MADAD portal support.

11. Embassy of India, Berlin, Germany

- **Website:** <https://www.indianembassyberlin.gov.in>
- **Features:** Focuses on consular services, Indian community news, diaspora events, and support for Indian students and professionals in Germany.

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