

India-US Immigration Issue: Deportations and Diplomatic Challenges

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India-US Immigration Issue Latest News

- The US has intensified its immigration crackdown, with military planes deporting undocumented Indian migrants under President Donald Trump's administration.

- With an **estimated 7,25,000 undocumented Indians in the US**, the move impacts thousands of Indian nationals.
- India has agreed to take back illegal migrants after verifying their citizenship, aiming to protect legal migration pathways for students and professionals.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi's upcoming visit to the US** will see high-level discussions on immigration, bilateral trade, and diplomatic cooperation.

Mass Deportations under the Trump Administration

- The Trump administration is targeting undocumented migrants, leading to mass deportations. **Key**

Statistics:

- 20,407 undocumented Indians are under Trump's immigration radar.
- 17,940 Indians are under final removal orders by US immigration courts.
- **2,467 Indians are currently in detention centers** under **ICE** (Immigration and Customs Enforcement).

- **Latest Deportation Flights:**

- A C-17 US military aircraft carried 205 Indian nationals from San Antonio, Texas, back to India.
- Most of these individuals are from **Gujarat** and **Punjab**.
- India has insisted on verifying nationality before accepting deported individuals.

Trump's Immigration Crackdown and Policy Changes

- President Trump has declared illegal immigration a national emergency, implementing strict measures:
- **Enhanced Deportation Strategies:**
 - Military aircraft are being used for deportations, instead of commercial flights.
 - ICE is coordinating with the FBI, DEA, and Border Patrol to locate and arrest undocumented migrants.
 - Deportation arrests tripled in January, with over 1,000 people detained in a single week.
- **New Immigration Measures:**
 - ICE has removed legal protections granted under Biden's administration.
 - The CBP One mobile app, which allowed migrants to schedule border entry appointments, has been shut down.
 - Birthright citizenship for children born to undocumented immigrants has been eliminated.
- **Expansion of Detention Centers:**
 - **Guantanamo Bay detention facility is being repurposed to house 30,000 migrants.**
 - The Buckley Space Force Base in Colorado is also being used for migrant detention.

India's Diplomatic Response and Concerns

- India has engaged in diplomatic efforts to manage the immigration issue without affecting bilateral ties:
- **India's Position on Deportation:**
 - India has agreed to accept undocumented Indians if nationality verification is confirmed.
 - External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar conveyed India's stand to US Secretary of State Marco Rubio.
 - India is against illegal immigration due to its links to organized crime and human trafficking.

- **Ensuring Legal Pathways for Migration:**

- Over 1 million visas were issued to Indian nationals in 2024, including record numbers of student and business visas.
- 72% of H-1B visas issued in the last fiscal year went to Indian professionals.
- Trump has assured that the H-1B visa program will continue, though some reforms may be introduced.

- **Challenges in India-US Talks:**

- India has asked for discreet deportation measures to avoid political backlash.
- Concerns remain over potential restrictions on Indian migration programs.

Trump's Economic Leverage on Immigration Policy

- President Trump has leveraged trade policies to enforce immigration compliance:

- **Tariff Impositions on Non-Cooperative Countries:**

- Colombia refused to accept a deportation flight—Trump retaliated with 25% tariffs on Colombian goods.
- Canada and Mexico also faced tariff threats, forcing them to ramp up border enforcement.
- The US Congress is considering sanctions on countries not cooperating with deportation orders.

- **Impact on India:**

- While India has cooperated with the US, it remains cautious of future trade restrictions.
- India's focus is on protecting its skilled workforce migration and avoiding economic retaliation.

Impact on the Indian Community in the US

- **Fear and Uncertainty Among Undocumented Migrants:**

- Many Indian undocumented workers are avoiding public spaces due to increased arrests.
- Detentions at workplaces and homes have caused economic strain in low-wage job sectors.

- **Legal Migrants Also Affected:**

- The H-1B visa program remains uncertain, with possible changes to sponsorship requirements.
- Many Indian students fear tougher visa renewal policies.

- **India's Response:**

- India is monitoring the situation closely, ensuring that legal migrants' rights are protected.
- Diplomatic engagements with US policymakers are focused on preserving employment-based immigration programs.

India-US Immigration Policy FAQs

Q1. Why is the US deporting Indian immigrants?

Ans. The Trump administration has intensified its crackdown on undocumented migrants, leading to mass deportations.

Q2. How many Indians are at risk of deportation?

Ans. 20,407 undocumented Indians are being targeted for removal, with 7,25,000 Indians estimated to be illegally residing in the US.

Q3. What is India's stance on deportations?

Ans. India agrees to take back illegal immigrants, provided their nationality is verified.

Q4. How is Trump using tariffs in immigration policy?

Ans. Trump has imposed tariffs on countries refusing to accept deported migrants, forcing compliance.

Q5. How does this affect Indian professionals in the US?

Ans. H-1B visa holders remain unaffected for now, but policy changes are expected in skilled worker migration.

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