

Question on Notice**Time:** 11:35am

Senator Kimberley Kitching

Topic: India Post**Question:**

Has there been an increase in the number of staff in total in the New Delhi mission, not just locally engaged staff?

Answer:

The COVID-19 consular response in India is a very high priority for the department. Despite an escalating pandemic across India, the High Commission in New Delhi has maintained staff levels and re-organised staff responsibilities to allow for strong focus on the consular response. The Consular and Crisis Management Division in Canberra has provided significant additional support to India Posts, including establishing a dedicated team to organise facilitated flights. Additional support has been provided by an AUSMAT team member deployed to New Delhi on 22 May 2021 (arriving 23 May), to provide expert public health support to assist pre-departure arrangements.

There has been no change to A-based staff numbers on long-term postings to New Delhi. There are a small number of staff preparing to undertake short-term missions or short-term assignments to New Delhi to fill established positions. There have been no additional locally engaged staff hired above normal staffing levels.

Question on Notice

Date: 3/6/2021

Time: 13:33
Senator Dean Smith

Topic: Military coup in Myanmar

Question: What groups of the diaspora has the Government engaged with? Please take the details of individuals you've spoken to on notice.

Answer: The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade engages with a range of stakeholders, including around 20 engagements since 1 February with academia, civil society and the Myanmar diaspora, to support our policy development in response to the situation in Myanmar. These have included meetings with a range of Myanmar ethnic community groups.

Question: Have the three contacts from the National Unity Government expressed concern to you about disclosing their names?

Answer: Given safety and security considerations, DFAT has agreed with contacts from the National Unity Government that we would not discuss publicly details of meetings held.

Question on Notice

Date: 3/6/2021

Time: 14:05

Senator the Hon Eric Abetz

Topic: COVID-19 vaccinations for DFAT staff

Question:

In relation to foreign affairs staff overseas and COVID-19 vaccinations, how are we going? Are they all vaccinated?

Answer:

The health and safety of staff is the highest priority for the department, including the rollout of vaccinations to all staff and dependants overseas.

DFAT and the Department of Defence are working together on a COVID-19 vaccine rollout for all Australian Government employees and their dependants who are currently deployed/posted, or about to deploy or be posted, overseas. The rollout commenced on 12 March 2021 and aims to offer a COVID-19 vaccine to all individuals in the overseas network by October 2021.

As part of our approach, we have prioritised deployment of vaccines to countries based on multiple indicators including rates of COVID-19 community transmission, local health system capacity and the availability of medevac services. Our rollout remains flexible and responsive to changing local environments. All priority one and two countries have access to vaccines.

As at 3 June, we are aware of at least 3,150 Australian Government staff and dependants in the overseas network who have received one or more doses of a COVID-19 vaccine. This represents at least 44% of the overseas network.

Question on Notice

Date: 3/6/2021

Time: 15:03

Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Topic: Myanmar - Engagement with the National Unity Government

Question:

ASEAN states have engaged with the National Unity Government. Has the Foreign Minister Marsudi met with the Foreign Minister of the National Unity Government on more than one occasion?

Answer:

DFAT is not in a position to confirm meetings held between other countries and the National Unity Government.

Question on Notice

Date: 3/6/2021

Time: 15:14

Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Topic: Myanmar - Engagement with the National Unity Government

Question:

Can you confirm that Daw Zin Mar Aung has met with the foreign ministers of Singapore and Indonesia?

Answer:

DFAT is not in a position to confirm meetings held between other countries and the National Unity Government.

Question on Notice

Date: 3/6

Time: 15:24

Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Topic: Reallocation of development assistance in Myanmar

Question:

The 2021-22 bilateral allocation is \$42.1 [million] and total ODA \$95.5 [million] - how is this being reallocated in the aftermath of the coup?

Are we utilising multilateral channels and what are they?

Answer:

As a result of the coup, Australia redirected our development program away from working with government ministries and government-related entities. We are utilising multilateral channels among other trusted partners to deliver assistance post-coup.

The details of redirected bilateral development assistance to Myanmar for the 2021-22 financial year have not yet been finalised. Redirected funding in 2020-21 includes an estimated:

- \$4.5 million for food assistance through the World Food Programme (WFP)
- \$3 million to support the UN Population Fund's (UNFPA) work on sexual and reproductive health care, emergency obstetrics and support for survivors of gender-based violence
- \$4 million to support the Myanmar Education Consortium, implemented by Save the Children, which supports non-government education providers to deliver education services to marginalised children.

Question on Notice

Date: 3/6/2021

Time: 15:37

Senator Janet Rice

Topic: Asian Development Bank

Question:

What is Australia's current shareholding in the Asian Development Bank?

Answer:

Australia has a 5.8% shareholding in the Asian Development Bank (the fifth largest shareholder) (as at 31 December 2020).

Question on Notice

Date: 3/6/2021

Time: 15:45

Senator Janet Rice

Topic: Repatriation flights from India

Question:

How many people were precluded from flying on subsequent flights due to positive tests?

Answer:

A total of two people have tested positive and have been precluded from boarding subsequent flights from New Delhi.

One person tested positive at the initial Rapid Antigen Test (RAT) stage and was unable to check-in the hotel. One person tested positive to the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test stage and was unable to board the flight.

Question on Notice

Date: 3/6/2021

Time: 16:49
Senator Tim Ayres

Topic: Prime Minister's participation in Biden Climate Summit

Question:

When was the invitation for the Prime Minister to speak [at the Biden Climate Summit 2021] received?

Answer:

The invitation to the Biden Climate Summit was received by the Australian Embassy in Washington on 26 March 2021 (invitation itself dated 25 March 2021).

Question on Notice

Date: 3/6/2021

Time: 17:06

Senator Tim Ayres

Topic: Biden Climate Summit 2021

Question:

Can the Department confirm that over 100 countries have now committed to net zero emissions by 2050? Can the Department provide a list on notice?

Answer:

129 countries have stated their intention to reach net zero emissions by 2050. They are listed below.

Afghanistan, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, East Timor, Ecuador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kiribati, Laos, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Monaco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Niue, Norway, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Ireland, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, São Tomé and Príncipe, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Korea, South Sudan, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, The Bahamas, The Gambia, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Uganda, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Yemen, Zambia

Question on Notice

Date: 3/6/2021

Time: 18:12

Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Topic: Media reports claiming the Biden administration supports a boycott of the 2022 Beijing Olympics

Question:

What is the status of the Biden administration on it [a potential boycott of the 2022 Beijing Olympics]?

Answer:

The Biden Administration has not taken a position on whether it supports a boycott of the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics.

On 13 May 2021, United States Secretary of State Tony Blinken was asked about a possible boycott. He responded that “We’re still some many months away from the Winter Games” and the United States would be “in the months ahead, talking to allies and partners about their views on the Olympics”.