

EDITORIAL ANALYSIS → 11 JANUARY 2023 → THE INDIAN EXPRESS:

INDIAN DIASPORA:

- **Current situation:**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently opened the 17th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas convention in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.
- According to the PM, Indians who reside overseas serve as "brand ambassadors" for their nation abroad.
- Since 2015, when the Ministry of External Affairs changed the conference's format to a biennial one, the meeting has grown significantly. The convention was first held in 2003, under Atal Bihari Vajpayee's presidency.

- **With regard to PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS (PBD):**

- People honour Mahatma Gandhi's 1915 trip from South Africa back to India on January 9. The practise of celebrating this day as Pravasi Bharatiya Divas started in 2003. (PBD).
- On January 9, 2003, the first PBD Convention was held to recognise the overseas Indian community's contributions to India's growth.
- The PBD Convention's format has altered since 2015, when it switched to a twice-yearly schedule.
- With the theme "Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat" amid the epidemic, the 16th PBD was held virtually in 2021.
- The 17th PBD Convention will take place in Indore, Madhya Pradesh, from January 8 to January 10, 2023. "Diaspora: Reliable Partners for India's Progress in Amrit Kaal" is the theme of the 17th PBD.

- **The Indian diaspora's history:**

- The Greek word diaspeiro, which meaning dispersion, is where the word "diaspora" originates.
- Since the first group of Indians were sent as indentured labourers under the "Girmitiya" system to nations in the east pacific and the Caribbean islands, the Indian diaspora has significantly expanded.
- Thousands of Indians were brought to those nations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to work on plantations in British colonies, which needed labour after slavery was abolished in 1833–1844.
- As a special visitor to the convention, Chandrikapersad Santokhi, the president of Suriname, acknowledged this migration in her remarks. She also claimed that in 2023, 150 years prior, there was the first such migration of Indians to Surinam.
- About 20 lakh Indians travelled to Singapore and Malaysia as part of the second wave of migration to work on farms.
- Following the oil boom, third and fourth waves of workers migrated to western nations, while professionals emigrated to Gulf and west Asian nations.

- **Different divisions:**

- Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), People of Indian Origin (PIOs), and Overseas Citizens of India are the three groups of overseas Indians (OCIs).
- Indians who live outside of India are known as NRIs. In 2015, the PIO category was eliminated and combined with the OCI category.
- However, the present PIO cards are only valid through December 31, 2023; after that, their holders must apply for OCI cards.

- **Distribution by region and volume:**

- The parliamentary committee on external affairs published a research on August 22, 2022, estimating that as of December 31, 2021, there were 4.7 crore Indians living overseas.
- The total comprises students, NRIs, PIOs, and OCIs. There are 3.22 crore people in the country, including 1.87 crore PIOs and 1.35 crore NRIs, without counting students.
- India is the top origin nation internationally, followed by Mexico, Russia, and China, according to the World Migration Report released by the International Organization for Migration under the auspices of the United Nations.

- The United States of America (44 lakh), the United Kingdom (17.6 lakh), the United Arab Emirates (34 lakh), Sri Lanka (16 lakh), South Africa (15.6 lakh), Saudi Arabia (26 lakh), Myanmar (20 lakh), Malaysia (29.8 lakh), Kuwait (10.2 lakh), and Canada are among the nations with more than 10 lakh foreign-born Indians (16.8 lakh).

- **Remittances:**

- According to the World Bank, remittances are a crucial source of income for households in low- and middle-income nations like India.
- The World Bank's most recent Migration and Development Brief, published in November 2022, indicated that "India is on track to collect more than \$100 billion in remittances year."
- The top five recipients of remittances, according to the World Migration Report, are Egypt, Mexico, China, Mexico, the Philippines, and India, "but India and China were far above the rest."
- In 2020, the two neighbours received more than \$140 billion in remittances from abroad, the highest amount in all of Asia.

- **Participation in politics:**

- It is a recent phenomena that certain members of the Indian diaspora have expressed strong political opinions, particularly in the US and UK.
- For instance, the Pravasi Bharatiya Convention and the Hindu American Foundation, a nonprofit organisation that promotes Hindu issues, were both founded in the same year.
- The former prime minister of the nation, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, had stated during the launch that Indians living abroad should "communicate the truth about India to the world in a credible and effective manner" and fight "propaganda."
- Prime Minister Modi requested that Pravasi Bharatiyas emphasise India's "growth story" in his speech on Monday, and he made similar arguments.
- While visiting other nations, PM also makes a point of speaking to important diaspora gatherings. The planning of these events involves numerous distinguished Indians who have settled abroad.

- **Conclusion:**

- In order for both countries to advance together for the benefit of their respective populations, the Indian diaspora serves as a bridge between their country and India.
- The diaspora can provide the necessary strategic impetus, thus it is crucial to realise their potential.



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