

Atomic Scientists

2868. Shri S. C. Jha: Will the Prime Minister be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Atomic Scientists in India;

(b) the number of Atomic Scientists India needs for being completely self-dependent in Atomic Research matters; and

(c) whether any efforts have been made for bringing back all those Indian Atomic Scientists or other Scientists who have settled abroad?

The Prime Minister and Minister of Atomic Energy (Shrimati Indira Gandhi): (a) About 2500 scientists/engineers are on the rolls of the Department of Atomic Energy and its various constituent units. This does not include the scientists employed in the aided institutions under the administrative responsibility of this Department.

(b) It is not possible to estimate precisely the number of atomic scientists and engineers required in order to ensure self-reliance in the field of atomic research. Such self-reliance depends as much on growth and diversification of relevant branches of Indian industry as on the number of scientists and engineers.

(c) Various steps have been taken by the Government of India to enable Indian scientists settled abroad to return. The Department takes suitable action to secure the services of any particular Indian scientist settled abroad, if his services are required in connection with the atomic energy programme.

Regional Passport Office, New Delhi

2869. Shri Narendra Singh Mahida: Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether the conditions of working are not satisfactory in the Regional Passport Office at New Delhi;

(b) whether it is a fact that the facilities for a large number of people who visit the Office each day are most inadequate;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there is considerable delay in the processing of the applications for issue of passports; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to streamline the functioning of this office?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): (a) and (b). Recent measures introduced to liberalise the Passport rules, have resulted in substantial increase in Passport applications and of visitors to the Regional Passport Office. This has caused overcrowding of the present accommodation.

(c) Effort is always made to dispose of all applications promptly but, naturally, there is some delay in cases where applicants have not complied with formalities.

(d) Steps have been taken to strengthen the staff and to shift the office to a bigger accommodation.

Marmagao Harbour

2870. Shri Shinkre: Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have formulated any scheme, to reserve the present Marmagao Harbour for the sole use of Mercantile Navy and to construct a new one at Baina Coast, near Vasco-da-Gama for the sole use of the Indian Navy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, whether Government propose to formulate any such scheme in view of the increasing movement and needs of Mercantile Navy in the Marmagao Harbour?

The Minister of Defence (Shri Swaran Singh): (a) to (c). Proposals for the development of Marmagao Harbour for the joint use of the Indian Navy and the Mercantile Navy are still under consideration.