

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2815

ANSWERED ON:05.12.2007

HIGH COMMISSIONERS AND AMBASSADORS POSTED IN INDIAN MISSIONS

Athawale Shri Ramdas;Deshmukh Shri Subhash Sureshchandra

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of the High Commissioners and Ambassadors including those belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes/Other Backward Castes category posted in various countries as on date, category-wise;
- (b) the number of posts of Ambassadors lying vacant and the time since when these posts are lying vacant and are likely to be filled up, country-wise;
- (c) the number of High Commissioners and Ambassadors belonging to the Indian Foreign Service, Indian Administrative Service, other Central Service or to persons from Public life;
- (d) the criteria fixed for selection of High Commissioners/Ambassadors;
- (e) the number of IFS officers belonging to SC/ST/OBC category working in the Ministry as on date; and
- (f) the steps being taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to appoint officers of the said category in the Indian missions in proportion to their number?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

- (a) 115 High Commissioners/Ambassadors have been posted by India in various countries as on date. Of them, 12 belong to Scheduled Castes (SC) and 8 belong to Scheduled Tribes (ST) category. Recruitment of officers on the basis of Other Backward Classes (OBC) category commenced from the year 1994 and consequently officers of OBC category have not yet attained the requisite seniority for being appointed as High Commissioners/Ambassadors.
- (b) The posts of High Commissioners/Ambassadors are vacant in Cote D'Ivoire (from August 2007), Czech Republic (from October 2007), Iraq (from December 2004), Madagascar (from June 2007), Jamaica (from July 2007) and Zimbabwe (from October 2007). It is expected that these posts, excluding the post of Ambassador to Iraq, would be filled in near future. No decision has been taken regarding the appointment of the next Ambassador to Iraq.
- (c) There are 107 serving Indian Foreign Service Officers posted as High Commissioners/ Ambassadors. In addition, there are 3 retired Indian Foreign Service officers, 1 Indian Administrative Service Officer, 1 retired Indian Administrative Service Officer, and 3 persons from Public life as High Commissioners/Ambassadors.
- (d) Indian High Commissioners/Ambassadors are appointed by the President of India on the recommendations of the Prime Minister. These appointments are decided on the basis of a number of criteria, which include, inter alia, their seniority, background, relevant experience and overall suitability to the tasks and the post.
- (e) As on date, the number of IFS officers in the Ministry belonging to SC, ST and OBC are 81, 42 and 59 respectively.
- (f) The percentages prescribed for reservation in SC, ST and OBC categories are strictly followed at the recruitment stage. There is no policy of reservation in postings in Missions abroad, including at the level of Ambassadors/High Commissioners. However, conscious efforts are made towards appointment of officers belonging to SC/ST/OBC categories who have the requisite background, experience and seniority, as Ambassadors/High Commissioners.