

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4377
ANSWERED ON:07.09.2012
SCARCITY OF DIPLOMATS
Owaisi Shri Asaduddin

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Naresh Chandra Task Force has pointed out shortage of diplomats to anticipate, analyse and act on contemporary challenges;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to ramp up bench strength of IFS from 1800 by the year 2018;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) if so, the steps taken or being taken by the Government in this regard;
- (f) whether the Government has provisions to train its diplomats in foreign languages so that they become more efficient in their job; and
- (g) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR)

(a) & (b) Yes, the report of Naresh Chandra Task Force has, inter alia, referred to the manpower shortages and the need for enhanced strength. The appropriate adjustment in the cadre strength of the Ministry of External Affairs, in keeping with the expanding global role of India, has always been an important endeavour. Efforts in this direction have resulted in a series of cadre reviews in the past.

(c) to (e) An important recent development in this regard has been the approval of a comprehensive IFS Expansion Plan by the Union Cabinet in the year 2008, which would add a total of more than 500 new positions at various levels, to be operationalized over the next ten years till 2018. The Ministry of External Affairs has also succeeded in getting approvals for a comprehensive cadre review of IFS`B`. These two measures should adequately address the Ministry of External Affairs` manpower requirements in the short to medium term.

(f) to (g) The Ministry of External Affairs has always attached high priority to appropriate training and development of linguistic skills for its officers. All IFS officers are required to qualify a prescribed examination in one of the major foreign languages and over the years, this has resulted in the creation of a fairly large and diverse pool of foreign language expertise within the Cadre. The Ministry also has a specialized Interpreters' Cadre and their skills are also effectively deployed.