

4

**STANDING COMMITTEE
ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(2004-2005)**

FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA

MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS

*[ACTION TAKEN ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE
SECOND REPORT (14TH LOK SABHA) ON DEMANDS FOR GRANTS OF THE
ERSTWHILE MINISTRY OF NON-RESIDENT INDIANS AFFAIRS FOR THE
YEAR 2004-2005]*

FOURTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**
March, 2005/Chaitra 1927 (Saka)

FOURTH REPORT
STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(2004-2005)

(FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS

**[Action Taken on the Recommendations contained in the Second Report
(14th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants of the Erstwhile Ministry of
Non-Resident Indians Affairs for the year 2004-2005]**

Presented to Lok Sabha on 21.04.2005
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 21.04.2005



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

March, 2005/Chaitra, 1927 (Saka)

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**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (2004-2005)**

Chairman - Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri Omar Abdullah
3. Shri Yogi Aditya Nath
4. Prof. S.P. Singh Baghel
5. Shri Narayan Chandra Borkatakya
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19. Shri Madhu Goud Yashki
20. Shri Suresh Prabhu
21. Shri George Fernandes*

MEMBERS

RAJYA SABHA

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25. Shri Jana Krishnamurthy K.
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31. Dr. Mahendra Prasad

SECRETARIAT

Shri S.K. Sharma	-	Additional Secretary
Shri U.S.Saxena	-	Director
Shri Shiv Kumar	-	Under Secretary

* Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ceased to a Member of the Committee consequent upon his resignation w.e.f. 13.8.2004 Shri George Fernandes has been nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 1.10.2004

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Standing Committee on External Affairs having been authorised by the Committee to submit the report on their behalf, present this 4th Report (14th Lok Sabha) on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 2nd Report (14th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Non-Resident Indians Affairs (renamed as Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in September, 2004) for the year 2004-2005.

2. The 2nd Report was presented to both the Houses of Parliament on 25th August, 2004. The Action Taken Replies of the Government on all the recommendations/observations contained in the Report were received on 7th December, 2004.

3. The Draft Report on the basis of Action Taken Replies was considered and adopted by the Standing Committee on External Affairs (2004-2005) at their sitting held on 31st March, 2005. Minutes of the sitting of the Committee have been reproduced as Appendix-I to the Report.

4. An analysis of action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 2nd Report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs (14th Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix-II.

5. For facility of reference and convenience, the observations and recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report and have also been reproduced in consolidated form in Appendix-III.

NEW DELHI;
31st March, 2005
Chaitra 10, 1926 (Saka)

Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on External Affairs

CHAPTER – I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by Government on the observations/recommendations contained in the 2nd Report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs on the Demands for Grants of the erstwhile Ministry of Non-Resident Indians Affairs – renamed as the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs – for the year 2004-2005. The 2nd report of the Committee was presented to Lok Sabha on 25th August 2004. It contained 8 Recommendations/ Observations.

2. Action taken notes on all the observations/recommendations contained in the Report have been received from the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs. These have been categorized as follows:-

(i) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government.

Recommendations Sl. Nos. 1, 4, 6 and 8

Total – 4
Chapter - II

(ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies.

Recommendations Sl. Nos. 5

Total – 1
Chapter – III

(iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration.

Recommendations Sl. Nos. 2 and 3

Total – 2
Chapter – IV

(iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited.

Recommendations Sl. Nos. 7

Total – 1
Chapter-V

3. The Committee will now deal with the action taken by the Government on some of their observations/recommendations.

Recommendation No.1 (Para No. 10)

4. During the examination of the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs for the year 2004-2005, the Committee expressed their satisfaction over the emphasis given by the Government on forging relations with Overseas Indian by taking serious note of the recommendation of this Committee with regard to Indian Diaspora made in their earlier reports. The Committee also hoped that the creation of the new Ministry will lead to greater interaction with the NRIs/PIOs and, now, their problems and concerns will be addressed in a more effective and meaningful way.

5. The Ministry in their reply responded as under:

“The new Ministry of Non-Resident Indian Affairs has been set up in May 2004. It has been re-named as the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in September 2004. The Ministry is working towards drawing up a work programme that truly reflects the concerns of the Overseas Indian community and responds to the opportunities offered through greater engagement with the Diaspora at the forthcoming Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (7-9 Jan 2005) in Mumbai and beyond”.

6. **The Committee note that a beginning has been made by the Ministry in pursuance of the recommendations of the Committee for assuming a proactive role in the affairs of Overseas Indian. It is satisfying to note that the Ministry now understands the vital role that the Overseas Indian Community can play even if remotely placed. The Committee would like this momentum to be maintained on a continuous basis. As the Pravasi Bharitya Divas, 2005 has already concluded, the Committee would certainly like to be apprised of its achievements in terms of concerns of the Overseas Indian Community and to the opportunities offered through greater engagement of the Diaspora as envisaged by the Ministry and as also follow-up by the Ministry, emerging therefrom.**

Recommendation No. 2 (Para No. 11)

7. During the course of examination of the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs for the year 2004-2005, the Committee had observed that though the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs was created on 27th May, 2004 and three precious months had already been gone by then yet the allocation of work for the Ministry was to be decided. Other aspects such as organizational set-up and staffing of the Ministry

were still pending, awaiting the allocation of work. According to the Ministry, a Group of Ministers was in the process of making recommendations to the Prime Minister regarding the allocation of work to the Ministry of NRI Affairs but no time frame had been suggested for implementation of the recommendations. The Committee had, therefore, recommended that at least the basic infrastructure, essentially required for the working of a full-fledged Ministry should be in place at the earliest, so that the functional set-up of the Ministry could be established and the uncertainty and ambivalence with regard to the working of this Ministry ends without any further loss of time.

8. The Ministry in their reply have stated as under:

“The allocation of work of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (earlier known as Ministry of Non Resident Indian Affairs) has been finalised on the recommendations of the Group of Ministers appointed for the purpose. The renovation work at the Akbar Bhawan to house the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has been entrusted to CPWD and is in progress. It is expected to be completed by the end of January 2005.”

9. The Committee would like to know whether the work allocation of the Ministry has since been notified and the Ministry has started functioning as per this allocation.

Regarding the renovation work at the Akbar Bhavan also, the Committee may be apprised whether the renovation work has been completed as envisaged and in case of its non-completion as yet, the Ministry should spare no effort to ensure its completion within a strict time schedule so that the basic infrastructure, essentially required for the working of Ministry is in place.

Recommendation No. 3 (Para No. 16)

10. The Committee had noted that Rs.4.80 crore had been allocated against the establishment expenditure, Rs.1.20 crore for holding the multilateral International Conferences/meetings and expenditure on entertainment of NRIs related events which may be held in India and Rs.1.00 crore had been allocated under other charges. The Committee were of the view that all these allocations could be properly utilised only after the finalisation of work allocation by the Group of Ministers, which was still awaited and also sufficient fund was required only for establishment of the Ministry and allocation of funds for other than the establishment expenditure should have been made at the RE stage. The Committee in their recommendation had desired that priority should be given to the establishment expenditure in order to have the organizational set-up of the Ministry in place as early as possible. The Committee also desired that the budgetary allocation of this Ministry be augmented substantially in due course so as to enable them to carry on their activities.

11. The Ministry in their reply have merely stated as under:

“Proposals for the creation of posts of the Ministry have been circulated for the comments of the Departments concerned. They

are likely to be approved in December, 2004 paving the way for officers and staff to join the Ministry. Recommendations of the Committee have been taken into account and revised budgetary allocation at RE stage for the Ministry has been projected.”

12. From the reply of the Ministry, the Committee observe that proposals for the creation of posts were likely to be approved in December, 2004, which in turn would have facilitated joining of officers and staff in the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs. The Committee would like to know whether the posts asked for by the Ministry have already been approved, specific work allocations finalised and priority given to the establishment expenditure for the remaining period of this fiscal. The Committee would also like to be apprised of any delays/deviations that have taken place in this regard.

Recommendation No. 6 (Para No. 36)

13. The Committee appreciated the association and coordination of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs with the Ministry of Science & Technology in launching a website “stio.nic.in” for interactive exchanges with the Scientists and Technologists of Indian origin with a view to assisting them in their endeavour to play a role in the national development. The Committee also noted that information on specific S&T institutions, schemes, programmes & opportunities in India that may be of interest to STIOs will be made available on the website and this website will facilitate follow-up action on networked joint proposals. The launching of this website has created some interest among the STIOs. The Committee suggested the Ministry that vigorous efforts for intensive publicity of this website should be made among the Scientific and Technical Community of Indian Origin and steps should be taken to keep up the interest (whether Resident/NRIs/PIOs) residing abroad.

14. The Ministry have replied to this observation as under:

“Action as suggested by the esteemed Committee has been taken. We have requested our Missions to make vigorous efforts for intensive publicity of this website among the Scientific and Technical Community of Indian Origin. This will also be pursued during the course of the theme session on Science and Technology at Pravasi Bhartiya Divas 2005”.

15. The Committee note with appreciation the action taken by the Ministry for popularising the website “stio.nic.in” amongst the Scientists and Technologists of Indian Origin (STIOs). Since dissemination of the information about this website has great significance, the Committee would prefer that apart from what is being done by our Missions to popularise this website, the Ministry, on its part, should also assume a pivotal role for the purpose. The Committee would like to be apprised of the developments that took place in this matter during the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas, 2005.

Recommendation No. 8 (Para No. 51)

16. The Committee in their recommendation, welcomed the efforts of

the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs for securing the passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2003 – which has since been enacted for granting dual citizenship to the Persons of Indian Origin in 16 specified countries so far – in response to the long standing demands of the Indian Diaspora to strengthen emotional and cultural bonds with India and expressed that rules in this regard will be finalized and notified without any further delay. The Committee also appreciated the coordinated efforts of the Ministry of External Affairs with the Ministry of Labour in launching the Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana and also hoped that with the launching of this Yojana, problems of Indian Emigrant workers will be minimized and their grievances would be mitigated and expected that the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs would live up to the expectations of the NRIs/PIOs and Indian Emigrant Workers, safeguard their interests effectively in the near future.

17. The Ministry in their reply submitted as under:

“The Rules have since been finalised. MHA has written to all the Missions and requested them to give wide publicity and invite applications under the amended Act.

Meanwhile, the Overseas Indian have raised certain doubts and sought clarifications on a number of issues. The Missions and the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) have taken these up with MHA. These cover the board categories of procedural simplification, issue of overseas Indian passports and coverage of countries under the amended Act. An inter-Ministerial group of officers are meeting regularly to find quick, practical solutions to many of these issues.

On insurance, MOIA has taken up the matter of public sector insurance companies issuing policies other than the basic Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana with the Finance Ministry”.

18. The Committee note with satisfaction that the Rules regarding the grant of dual citizenship to the PIOs in 16 countries have been finalised. The Committee, however, strongly feel that mere finalisation of these Rules alone does not serve the purpose unless these are notified. The Committee, therefore, desire that these Rules should be notified without any further loss of time. The Committee further desire that alongside it should also be ensured that the procedures involved therein are not cumbersome and are easy to follow.

19. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the feedback being given by the inter-Ministerial group of officers to the Ministry

regarding the doubts of the Overseas Indian in this regard and the action taken/being taken in the light of such feedback.

20. The Committee further desire to know as to when the matter of public sector insurance companies issuing policies other than the basic Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana was taken up with the Finance Ministry and what has been their response thereto.

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation

The Committee express their satisfaction over the emphasis given by the Government on forging relations with Overseas Indian by taking serious note of the recommendation of this Committee with regard to Indian Diaspora made in their earlier reports. Time and again, the Committee had strongly recommended strict implementation of the recommendations made by the High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora. The Committee sincerely hope that the creation of the new Ministry will lead to greater interaction with the NRIs/PIOs and, now, their problems and concerns will be addressed in a more effective and meaningful way.

(Para No. 10)

M. Reply of the Government

The new Ministry of Non-Resident Indian Affairs has been set up in May 2004. It has been re-named as the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in September 2004. The Ministry is working towards drawing up a work programme that truly reflects the concerns of the Overseas Indian community and responds to the opportunities offered through greater engagement with the Diaspora at the forthcoming Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (7-9 Jan 2005) in Mumbai and beyond.

[No. N/NRI/125/23/2004 dated 7.12.2004]

Recommendation

The Committee are surprised to note that a budgetary allocation of Rs.6.00 crore in BE 2004-2005 has been made in the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of External Affairs for the celebration of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas. The Committee note in particular that after deletion of entry No.40 under Ministry of External Affairs, there is no specific entry under the Government of India (Allocation & Business) Rules 1961, which justifies the organization of events relating to the Overseas Indian by the Ministry of External Affairs. Accordingly, the budgetary allocation of "Pravasi Bharatiya Divas" should have been transferred from the Ministry of External Affairs to the Ministry of Non Resident Indian Affairs. The Non-transfer of this allocation is likely to adversely affect the preparations for "Pravasi Bharatiya Divas" which is now being to be organized by the Ministry of Non resident Indian Affairs. The Committee recommend that the aforesaid allocated fund should be transferred suitably to the Ministry of Non-Resident Indian Affairs within a given time frame say at the Revised Estimate stage to avoid any constraints/problems for the celebration of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in January 2005. The Committee hope that a clear division of work between the two Ministries, in particular relating to NRI affairs should be made at the earliest – leaving no scope for confusion and overlapping in respect of their functioning in future.

(Para No. 21)

N. Reply of the Government

As per recommendation of the esteemed Committee, the provision of Rs.6.00 crores for celebration of Bharatiya Divas has been transferred from Ministry of External Affairs

to Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs while finalizing Revised Estimates for the current financial year.

[No. N/NRI/125/23/2004 dated 7.12.2004]

O. Recommendation

The Committee appreciate the association and coordination of the Government with the Ministry of Science & Technology in launching a website “stio.nic.in” for interactive exchanges with the Scientists and Technologists of Indian origin with a view to assisting them in their endeavour to play a role in the national development. The Committee note that information on specific S&T institutions, schemes, programmes & opportunities in India that may be of interest to STIOs will be made available on the website and this website will facilitate follow-up action on networked joint proposals. The launching of this website has created some interest among the STIOs. The Committee would, therefore, suggest that vigorous efforts for intensive publicity of this website should be made among the Scientific and Technical Community of Indian Origin and steps should be taken to keep up the interest (whether Resident/NRIs/PIOs) residing abroad.

(Para No. 36)

P. Reply of the Government

Action as suggested by the esteemed Committee has been taken. We have requested our Missions to make vigorous efforts for intensive publicity of this website among the Scientific and Technical Community of Indian Origin. This will also be pursued during the course of the theme session on Science and Technology at PBD 2005.

[No. N/NRI/125/23/2004 dated 7.12.2004]

Recommendation

The Committee welcome the efforts of the Ministry of External Affairs and Ministry of Home Affairs for securing the passage of the Citizenship (Amendment) Bill, 2003 – which has since been enacted for granting dual citizenship to the Persons of Indian Origin in 16 specified countries so far – in response to the long standing demands of the Indian Diaspora to strengthen emotional and cultural bonds with India. The Committee express the hope that rules in this regard will be finalized and notified without any further delay. The Committee also appreciate the coordinated efforts of the Ministry of External Affairs with the Ministry of Labour in launching the Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana and also hope that with the launching of this Yojana, problems of Indian Emigrant workers will be minimized and their grievances would be mitigated. The Committee expect that the Ministry of Non Resident Indian Affairs would live up to the expectations of the NRIs/PIOs and Indian Emigrant Workers, safeguard their interests effectively in the near future – for which the same have come into existence and rightly fulfill the vision and mission of our forefathers, who believed in the spirit of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” (the people of the whole earth are our family).

(Para No. 51)

Reply of the Government

“The Rules have since been finalised. MHA has written to all the Missions and requested them to give wide publicity and invite applications under the amended Act.

Meanwhile, the Overseas Indian have raised certain doubts and sought clarifications on a number of issues. The Missions and the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) have taken these up with MHA. These cover the board categories of procedural simplification, issue of overseas Indian passports and coverage of countries under the amended Act. An inter-Ministerial group of officers are meeting regularly to find quick, practical solutions to many of these issues.

On insurance, MOIA has taken up the matter of public sector insurance companies issuing policies other than the basic Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana with the Finance Ministry.”

[No. N/NRI/125/23/2004 dated 7.12.2004]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES

Recommendation

The Committee note with satisfaction that the amount allocated for acquisition of land for construction of Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra is in addition to the grant of Rs. 25.00 crore which Prime Minister announced for this purpose. The Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation had already allocated Plot No. 15 A & B measuring 5858 sq. mtrs, at Chanakyapuri, New Delhi to the Ministry of External Affairs for the construction of Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra at a premium of Rs. 31,83,400/-. Further, the Ministry of External Affairs had also identified Plot No. 15 D, measuring 3068 sq. mtrs. adjoining the plot already allocated to the Ministry of External Affairs and have requested to Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation for allocating this additional piece of land for the Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra. It means that sufficient fund is already available to the Ministry and an additional plot is required for the construction of Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra. Work relating to taking possession of the plot and activities in the Kendra after its functional set-up should be undertaken by the Ministry on top priority. The Committee understand that the plots which are allocated to the Ministry of External Affairs for the construction of Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra belong to this Ministry and once the Non-Resident Indians Affairs Ministry becomes functional, these will have to be transferred to the Ministry of Non Resident Indian Affairs. Some paper work naturally may have to be undertaken in this regard. The Committee, therefore, desire that, in the meanwhile, all the necessary formalities should be completed-so that the required set-up in the Ministry of Non-Resident Indians Affairs is in place at the earliest for starting the construction work for the Kendra. Taking a lesson from the Videsh Bhawan project of the Ministry of External Affairs, all precautions should be taken in respect of the construction project of Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra, so that, it does not get

delayed. Accordingly, the Committee recommend the Ministry of Non-Resident Indian Affairs to prepare a time schedule for the construction of this building and ensure its completion within time.

(Para No. 29)

Reply of the Government

Recommendations of the Committee have been noted. The matter has been taken up with the Ministry of Urban Development. Once plot No. 15 A, B and D are allocated to Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs for the Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra, preparatory steps will begin keeping in view the procedural requirements and with a proper time schedule. Suitable Budget provision will be sought in 2005-06.

[No. N/NRI/125/23/2004 dated 7.12.2004]

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Recommendation

Now that an exclusive Ministry of Non-Resident Indian Affairs have been created, obviously they should gear themselves fully towards helping to take care of the problems and affairs of the non-resident Indians and Persons of Indian origin. However, it is observed that though the Ministry were created on 27th May, 2004, three precious months have gone by and the allocation of work for the Ministry is yet to be decided. Other aspects such as organizational set-up and staffing of the Ministry are still pending awaiting the allocation of work. The Government have informed that a Group of Ministers is in the process of making recommendations to the Prime Minister regarding the allocation of work to the Ministry of NRI Affairs but no time frame has been suggested for implementation of the recommendations. The Committee recommend that at least the basic infrastructure, essentially required for the working of a full-fledged Ministry should be in place at the earliest, so that the functional set-up of the Ministry can be established and the uncertainty and ambivalence with regard to the working of this Ministry ends without any further loss of time.

(Para No. 11)

Q. Reply of the Government

The allocation of work of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (earlier known as Ministry of Non Resident Indian Affairs) has been finalised on the recommendations of the Group of Ministers appointed for the purpose. The renovation work at the Akbar Bhawan to house the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has been entrusted to CPWD and is in progress. It is expected to be completed by the end of January 2005.

[No. N/NRI/125/23/2004 dated 7.12.2004]

II. Recommendation

The Committee note that Rs.4.80 crore has been allocated against establishment expenditure, Rs.1.20 crore for holding the multilateral International Conferences/meetings and expenditure on entertainment of NRIs related events which may be held in India and Rs.1.00 crore has been allocated under other charges. All these allocations can be properly utilized only after the finalisation of work allocation by the Group of Ministers which is still awaited. The Committee are of the view that at this point of time, sufficient fund is required only for establishment of the Ministry and allocation of funds for other than establishment expenditure should have been made at a later stage i.e. at the RE stage. Therefore, priority should now be given to the establishment expenditure in order to have the organizational set-up of the Ministry in place as early as possible. The Committee also desire that the budgetary allocation of this Ministry be augmented substantially in due course so as to enable them to carry on their activities.

(Para No. 16)

R. Reply of the Government

Proposals for the creation of posts of the Ministry have been circulated for the comments of the Departments concerned. They are likely to be approved in December paving the way for officers and staff to join the Ministry. Recommendations of the Committee have been taken into account and revised budgetary allocation at RE stage for the Ministry has been projected.

[No. N/NRI/125/23/2004 dated 7.12.2004]

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

Recommendation

The Ministry have stated that the ISIL in its Report on the seminar and subsequent studies have suggested for a suitable legislation to alleviate the problems regarding pensions of the spouses and families of non-resident Indians. The Report also suggested that Government of India need to give urgent consideration to embracing the Hague Convention 1965 on the service abroad of judicial and extra-judicial documents in civil or commercial matters. The Committee are of the view that embracing the Hague Convention 1965 in its letter and spirit should not pose much of a difficulty for the Government of India and the implementation of ISIL suggestion will certainly go in favour of our own people. Hence, the Ministry in coordination with the Ministry of Law should ensure that such a legislation is enacted and implemented at the earliest. The Committee recommend that no efforts should be spared to protect the interests of non-resident Indians. As the Reserve Bank of India has eased the regulations regarding the pensions, etc. Departments like Income Tax may also be persuaded to cooperate in issuing no objection/tax clearance certificate to minimize the problems of non-resident Indians as it was being done in the case of Defence Pensioners. Now that the Ministry of Non-Resident Indians Affairs have been created to look after the affairs of non-resident Indians, they should play a prominent role to obviate such problems being faced by the spouses and families of the non-resident Indians.

(Para No. 44)

S. Reply of the Government

As regards the recommendation on becoming parties to the Hague Conventions on Private International Law, the 1961 Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legislation for Foreign Public Documents has been sent for Cabinet approval, after obtaining approval of EAM and with the concurrence of Ministry of Law and Justice.

The following conventions are being examined with inputs from the Ministry of Law and Justice, Ministry of Home Affairs and the Department of Women and Child Development, Ministry of HRD.

- (i) 1965 Convention on the Service of Abroad of Judicial and Extra-judicial Documents in Civil and Commercial Matters;
- (ii) 1970 Convention on the Taking of Evidence Abroad in Civil or Commercial Matters; and
- (iii) 1980 Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction.
[No. N/NRI/125/23/2004 dated 7.12.2004]

NEW DELHI;
31st March, 2005
Chaitra 10, 1927 (Saka)

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY
Chairman,
Standing Committee on External Affairs.

APPENDIX II

(*Vide* Introduction of Report)

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE SECOND REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (14^{T^H} LOK SABHA)

I.	Total Number of Recommendations	8
II.	Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government. Recommendations Sl. Nos. 1, 4, 6 and 8	
	Total	4
	Percentage	50%
III.	Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies. Recommendations Sl. Nos. 5	
	Total	1
	Percentage	12.5%
IV.	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration. Recommendations Sl. Nos. 2 and 3	
	Total	2
	Percentage	25%
V.	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of the Government are still awaited. Recommendations Sl. Nos. 7	
	Total	1
	Percentage	12.5%

APPENDIX III

STATEMENT OF RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS

Sl. No.	Para No.	Ministry	Recommendations/Observations
1.	6	External Affairs	The Committee note that a beginning has been made by the Ministry in pursuance of the recommendations of the Committee for assuming a proactive role in the affairs of Overseas Indian. It is satisfying to note that the Ministry now growingly understands the vital role that the Overseas Indian Community can play even if remotely placed. The Committee would like this tempo to be maintained on a continuous basis. As the latest Pravasi Bharitya Divas, 2005 has already been concluded the Committee would certainly like to be apprised of its achievements in terms of concerns of the Overseas Indian Community and responds to the opportunities offered through greater engagement with the Diaspora as envisaged by the Ministry and as also follow-up by the Ministry as emerging therefrom.
2.	9	-do-	<p>The Committee would like to know whether the work allocation of the Ministry has since been notified and the Ministry has started functioning as per this allocation.</p> <p>Regarding the renovation work at the Akbar Bhavan also, the Committee may be apprised whether the renovation work has been completed as envisaged and in case of its non-completion as yet, the Ministry should spare no effort to ensure its completion within a strict time schedule so that the basic infrastructure, essentially required for the working of Ministry is in place.</p>
3.	12	- do -	From the reply of the Ministry, the Committee observe that proposals for the creation of posts were likely to be approved in December, 2004, which in turn would have facilitated joining of officers and staff in the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs. The Committee would like to know whether the posts asked for by the Ministry have already been approved, specific work allocations finalised and priority given to the establishment expenditure for the remaining period of this fiscal. The Committee would also like to be apprised of any delays/deviations that have taken place in this regard.
4.	15	- do -	The Committee note with appreciation the action taken by the Ministry for popularising

			<p>the website "stio.nic.in" amongst the Scientists and Technologists of Indian Origin (STIOs). Since dissemination of the information about this website has great significance, the Committee would prefer that apart from what is being done by our Missions to popularise this website, the Ministry, on its part, should also assume a pivotal role for the purpose. The Committee would like to be apprised of the developments that took place in this matter during the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas, 2005.</p>
5.	18 to 20	- do -	<p>The Committee note with satisfaction that the Rules regarding the grant of dual citizenship to the PIOs in 16 countries have been finalised. The Committee, however, strongly feel that mere finalisation of these Rules alone does not serve the purpose unless these are notified. The Committee, therefore, desire that these Rules should be notified without any further loss of time. The Committee further desire that alongside it should also be ensured that the procedures involved therein are not cumbersome and are easy to follow.</p> <p>The Committee would also like to be apprised of the feedback being given by the inter-Ministerial group of officers to the Ministry regarding the doubts of the Overseas Indian in this regard and the action taken/being taken in the light of such feedback.</p> <p>The Committee further desire to know as to when the matter of public sector insurance companies issuing policies other than the basic Pravasi Bhartiya Bima Yojana was taken up with the Finance Ministry and what has been their response thereto.</p>