

**8**

**STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
(2005-2006)**

**FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA**

**MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

*(Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the seventh Report (14<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of External Affairs for the year 2005-2006)*

**EIGHTH REPORT**



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI**

*December, 2005/Agrahayana, 1927 (Saka)*

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*Presented to Lok Sabha on 15.12.2005*  
*Laid in Rajya Sabha on 15.12.2005*



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT**  
**NEW DELHI**

***December, 2005/Agrahayana, 1927 (Saka)***

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## **STANDING COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (2005-2006)**

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\* Ceased to be Member of the Committee consequent upon his resignation from his seat from Lok Sabha w.e.f. 10.10.2005.

\*\* Ceased to be Member of the Committee consequent upon his retirement from the membership of Rajya Sabha w.e.f. 21.11.2005.

## INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Standing Committee on External Affairs having been authorised by the Committee to submit the report on their behalf, present this 8<sup>th</sup> Report (14<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) on action taken by Government on the Recommendations contained in the 7<sup>th</sup> Report (14<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of External Affairs for the year 2005-2006.

2. The 7<sup>th</sup> Report was presented to both the Houses of Parliament on 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2005. The Action Taken Replies of the Government on all the recommendations/observations contained in the Report were received on 29<sup>th</sup> July, 2005.

3. The Draft Report on the basis of Action Taken Replies was considered and adopted by the Standing Committee on External Affairs (2005-2006) at their sitting held on 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2005. Minutes of the sitting of the Committee have been reproduced as Appendix-I to the Report.

4. An analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 7<sup>th</sup> Report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs (14<sup>th</sup> 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:**

December, 2005/Agrahayana, 1927 (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 7<sup>th</sup> Report of Standing Committee on External Affairs on Demands for Grants for the year 2005-2006 in respect of the Ministry of External Affairs. The 7<sup>th</sup> Report of the Committee was presented to Lok Sabha on 26<sup>th</sup> April, 2005.

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

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

Para Nos. 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,11,12,17,18,19,20,21,22,25,28,29,30, 32,36,37,39,40,41,42,47,48,49 and 50.

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

Para Nos. 10,43,44 and 46.

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

Para Nos. 13,14,15,16,23,24,26,27, 35,38 and 45.

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

Para Nos. 31,33 and 34

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

### **A. RENT, RATE, TAXES**

#### **Recommendation (Para No. 13)**

4. The Committee had noted that despite constructing/acquiring buildings for chanceries at 77 stations, residences for Head of Missions at 83 stations and acquiring 610 residential apartments for other officials at 44 stations, the Ministry had not been able to reduce the rental liabilities. Taking into account the fact that a large number of buildings had been hired by the Ministry in India and abroad, the Committee had wondered as to how the Ministry would be able to reduce the rental liability in a substantial way – with limited plans of construction/ acquisition.

While deploring lackadaisical approach of the Ministry towards acquisition of properties/construction of buildings, the Committee had strongly recommended the Ministry to draw a comprehensive and time-bound long term plan with adequate budgetary support and regular monitoring mechanism in place to gradually accommodate all their offices, Missions, residences in their own buildings to be acquired / constructed. The Committee were of the firm view that it would not only save huge rental outgo in the short run but also create assets for the country in the long run with the advantage of capital gains.

5. The Ministry in their Action taken reply have stated as under:

“Mindful of the high rental outgo on buildings hired for official as well as residential accommodation abroad, the Ministry had identified 18 stations with high rental liability. Missions in these stations have been requested to forward specific proposals for Ministry’s consideration. Specific proposals from many of the stations are yet to be received because of non-availability of suitable properties/long lease of the existing rented premises.

6. As a result of the Ministry’s concerted efforts, there has been progress in acquiring properties in two stations. Ministry has approved purchase of a plot of land for Chancery in Bahrain and built-up property for Chancery in Buenos Aires. Purchase proposal in respect of Tehran is under active consideration and Ministry proposes to seek supplementary grant to meet the cost of this proposal, as existing budgetary allocation is insufficient. Ministry, in the current financial year, has already approved purchase of a built-up property for Embassy Residence in Georgetown and Embassy Residence-cum-Chancery in Ulan Bator.

7. With regard to construction projects, construction activity is likely to begin in Singapore, Abuja, Muscat and Warsaw in the current financial year. Some of the other projects are in an advanced stage of planning and pre-construction activity.

8. As for drawing up a comprehensive and time bound long term plan with adequate budgetary support, it may be mentioned that given the diverse social, political and commercial conditions prevailing in different countries, a universal approach to acquisition of properties is not possible. Within the constraints noted above, it is the endeavour of the Ministry to ensure that the construction projects



and acquisition of properties are both fast tracked so as to reduce rental liabilities of the Ministry”.

9. The Committee are not at all convinced with the justification given by the Ministry for not drawing up a comprehensive and time-bound programme with adequate budgetary support for acquiring properties abroad with an objective to reduce the rental liabilities on account of buildings hired for official as well as residential accommodations abroad. They have identified 18 stations with high rental liability but, they have not shown the desired determination to purchase/acquire properties on these stations. The Committee welcome the recent initiatives taken in the direction of acquiring properties at some stations and desire that the Government should take initiatives for an early acquisition of properties for Chancery in Bahrain and Chancery in Buenos Aires and Tehran and also the approved proposals for Embassy Residence in Georgetown and Embassy Residence-Cum-Chancery in Ulan Bator. The Committee also desire that construction activities in Singapore, Abuja, Muscat and Warsaw should start at the earliest for a timely completion of these projects. The Committee once again desire that the Ministry should prepare a comprehensive and time-bound short term plan for 18 identified stations with high rental liability followed by a long term plan for all other stations considering all the factors like diverse social, political and commercial conditions prevailing in those countries. The Committee are of the view that without any long-term plan and proper monitoring, they may not be able to accommodate all their offices, missions, and residences in their own buildings.

## **B. ADVERTISING AND PUBLICITY**

### **Recommendation (Para No. 14)**

10. The Committee had found that the reasons advanced by the Ministry for under-utilization of funds under the Head ‘Advertising and Publicity’ was too general, not properly analysed and repetitive in nature.

11. The Committee had observed that the continuous variations in Actual Expenditure vis-a-vis BE/RE over the past years established the faulty budget

estimation and more so, its execution by the Ministry. The Committee further found that though the Ministry had stated that they had been working in a coordinated manner with various Missions in drawing up their publicity plans and regular review was also undertaken to ensure better utilization of publicity budget, yet these efforts had failed to yield the desired results; as a result thereof, Ministry's publicity plans and budget were going haywire. The Committee had recommended the Ministry to totally re-orientate its XP Division in prudently projecting and ensuring utilization of the funds allocated to it, so that the External Publicity, which was the most important area of Ministry's functioning and could be largely instrumental in projecting the opportunities available in the country in diverse fields to the outside world and in pursuing economic diplomacy, was handled professionally. The Committee had expressed their hope that the Lobbying Firm in United States was functioning satisfactorily and wanted to be assured on the same issue.

12. The Ministry in their action taken reply has stated as under:

“Over the past few years the External Publicity Division has indeed re-oriented its publicity objectives and priorities. There is a lot of focus now on projecting the rapid strides made by India in areas like economy, S&T, IT, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, developmental issues etc besides the important role being played by India in world affairs. The opportunities available in various sectors in India are also consistently highlighted in promotional activities organized by the Indian Embassies and Missions. India is projected as a major destination for FDI.

13. At the Headquarters this emphasis is apparent from the documentaries and brochures brought out by the Division. For example, in 2004-05 out of the 15 documentaries produced 6 were on issues like IT, biotechnology, child labor, democracy etc. Similarly, the focus of publications was projecting India's achievements and its appeal as a land of opportunity. The Division also invites senior foreign journalists on familiarization visits to India. These journalists visit various scientific, industrial and academic institutions and meet with business leaders and senior officials in key areas. Many of them have written extremely positive stories on India in foreign newspapers and magazines.

14. Our Missions are also consciously making efforts to project the opportunities available in India through business seminars, exhibitions, buyer-

seller meets etc. Most of these activities are done in close cooperation with business chambers like CII, FICCI etc and have proved to be very successful. For example, Indian Embassy in Beijing organized an India Day in Chengdu, Sichuan in May 2005 projecting Indian industry, tourism and India's cultural diversity as a package. An Indian Business Seminar was held as part of the India Day with participation of leading Indian companies like TCS, Ranbaxy, NIIT etc and over 70 Chinese companies.

15. In light of the Standing Committee's recommendation the Division has renewed its focus on these publicity objectives. In the current financial year, two publications "India: Partner for Development in the South" and "India-Africa: Partners in Peace and Development" have already been brought out. More such publications on India's aid to Afghanistan, India-China Joint Study Group Report on Comprehensive Trade and Economic Cooperation, emerging India etc are planned. Documentaries on India's bilateral and multilateral economic relations, technology applications in rural areas, women entrepreneurs etc are also planned.

16. The details of specific economic publicity activities planned by the Missions have also been obtained and the Ministry is ensuring full support for these activities.

17. We had engaged a firm M/s Akin Gump Strauss Hauer Feld LLP for the purposes of lobbying in the USA. The contract as initially signed by the Embassy of India, Washington DC for a period from February to December 2003 was later extended thrice on quarterly basis up to September 2004. The lobbying firm had been rendering its services satisfactorily and the extension of contact was based on periodic reviews and recommendations of the Embassy.

18. However, in September 2004, the contract with the firm was allowed to expire in view of the fact that the US Congress had gone into a recess till January 2005 and US Administration was involved in Presidential elections scheduled for November 2004. This meant that there was very limited scope for lobbying activity till well after the new Administration and the new Congress returned to work in January 2005.

19. The Embassy utilized the time so obtained to undertake a comprehensive review of our requirements and changing priorities and to undertake a new exercise of selecting the lobbying firm based on this review. After making due assessments, our Ambassador has sent a proposal on 20 May 2005

recommending appointment of M/s Barbour, Griffith & Rogers, LLC as our lobbyist for a period of one year starting from June 1, 2005. The proposal is presently under consideration of the Ministry of External Affairs”.

**20. The Committee are happy to note that the Ministry has reoriented its publicity objectives and priorities in the light of recommendation of the Committee and they have taken some praiseworthy initiatives in this direction. The Committee hope that these new initiatives in the form of publications and documentaries will help in projecting India as preferred destination for FDI in future. The Committee however note that while preparing such publicity materials, the Ministry has been adopting macro-level approaches incorporating only general types of issues. The committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should adopt a micro-level approach and try to incorporate and highlight the specific issues relating to the concern countries which could be resolved with the help of Indian Government. The Committee once again desire that the Ministry should continue similar efforts by utilizing the funds allocated for this purpose professionally. The Committee have noted that due to presidential elections, there was very limited scope for lobbying activity in USA till new Congress returned to work in January, 2005. So, the contract with the new firm was allowed to expire. The Committee also note that the new proposal sent by our Ambassador for appointment of lobbying firm is under consideration of the Ministry. The Committee, therefore, recommend that all formalities regarding appointment of the lobbying firm should be completed without any further delay and the Committee may be apprised of the latest position in this regard.**

Recommendation (Para No. 15 and 16)

21. The Committee had desired to know as to whether the Indian Missions abroad had drawn up any action plan for intensive publicity campaign during the year 2005-2006. In response, the Ministry had given information in respect of merely eight Missions. While going through the specific publicity initiatives mentioned in respect of these eight Missions, the Committee had felt that none of these Missions had proposed anything specific and different in their initiatives. The usual publicity measures had only been projected before the Committee as specific publicity initiatives- which, in the opinion of the Committee, might not

have any significant impact in their publicity drives or showcase India's interests or achievements to the outside world. The Committee were also concerned to note that only a small number of Missions were taking some initiatives in the matter.

22. The Committee had desired that the Ministry might obtain information regarding specific publicity initiatives from all our Missions for the current fiscal. The Committee had liked to be informed about details of specific publicity action Plans, if any, drawn up by our Missions in the economically and strategically important countries for India and also funds earmarked for such publicity drives.

23. The Ministry has responded as under:

“As per the recommendation of the Committee the Action Plans with specific publicity initiatives from a significant number of our Missions have been obtained. The list of these Missions is as given below:

ACTION PLANS 2005 – 2006 WITH SPECIFIC PUBLICITY  
INITIATIVES FROM INDIAN MISSIONS/POSTS ABROAD

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name of the Mission</b>	
1.	High Commission of India	Accra
2.	Embassy of India	Addis Ababa
3.	Embassy of India	Almaty
4.	Embassy of India	Ankara
5.	Embassy of India	Austria (Vienna)
6.	Embassy of India	Baku
7.	Embassy of India	Bangkok
8.	Embassy of India	Belgrade
9.	Embassy of India	Bogota
10.	Embassy of India	Cairo
11.	Embassy of India	Caracas
12.	Embassy of India	Copenhagen
13.	Embassy of India	Doha
14.	Consulate General of India	Durban
15.	Embassy of India	Dushanbe
16.	High Commission of India	Dhaka
17.	Embassy of India	Harare
18.	Embassy of India	Kuwait
19.	Embassy of India	Lima
20.	Consulate General of India	Munich
21.	Consulate General of India	Medan
22.	Embassy of India	Minsk
23.	Embassy of India	Moscow
24.	High Commission of India	Nairobi
25.	High Commission of India	Lagos
26.	Consulate General of India	Osaka Kobe

27.	High Commission of India	Ottawa
28.	Embassy of India	Panama
29.	Embassy of India	Phnom Penh
30.	High Commission of India	Port Moresby
31.	Embassy of India	Riyadh
32.	Consulate General of India	Shanghai
33.	Consulate General of India	St. Petersburg
34.	Embassy of India	Thimpu
35.	Embassy of India	Tokyo
36.	Consulate General of India	Vladivostok
37.	High Commission of India	Windhoek
38.	Embassy of India	Yangon
39.	Embassy of India	Phnom Penh
40.	Embassy of India	Paramaribo
41.	Embassy of India	Yerevan

24. The Ministry have further responded as under:

“As mentioned above the Action Plans with specific publicity initiatives of some of our Missions are as given above. These also include specific plans drawn up by our Missions in some of the economically and strategically important countries along with the funds earmarked for these activities’.

**25. The Committee had categorically desired to be informed about the details of specific publicity plan drawn up by our missions in the economically and strategically important countries for India and also funds earmarked for such publicity drives. But surprisingly the Ministry has not been able to furnish the relevant information. The Committee are anguished to note such a casual approach of the Ministry and desire that the details of the action plan with specific publicity initiatives may be obtained from our missions including funds earmarked for each such publicity drive and the action taken thereon may be furnished to the Committee without hiding any facts.**

### C. PASSPORT AND EMIGRATION

#### Recommendation (Para No. 23 and 24)

26. The Committee had expressed their concern over the fact that 16 Passport Offices namely Bhubaneswar, Bangalore, Bhopal, Guwahati, Jalandhar, Jammu, Jaipur, Lucknow, Mumbai, Pune, Ranchi, Trichy, Surat, Thiruvananthapuram, Thane and Vishakapatnam, were functioning in the rented buildings involving annual rental outgo of Rs. 3.60 crore. The Committee had,

therefore, recommended the Ministry to chalk out a comprehensive plan to either acquire suitable properties or to take up the matter with the respective State Governments for early allotment of suitable land for the construction of remaining passport offices as well as the residential complexes on priority basis.

27. The Committee had expressed their unhappiness over the fact that although the Chief Minister, Assam had offered a plot of land free of cost to construct the building for the Passport Office, Guwahati but nothing had been done and the Passport Office, Guwahati was functioning in a rented building. The Committee felt that the Ministry should have pursued the matter at the highest level in right earnest which in their considered opinion had not been done. The Committee stressed upon the fact that since the Passport Office, Guwahati, which was catering to the need of all seven North-Eastern States, was facing extreme space shortage, urgent action was required to construct a new building for it. The Committee, urged upon the Ministry to expedite the examination of the proposal in hand for an early action in the matter.

28. The Ministry in their Action Taken Replies has responded as under:

“Construction of new Passport premises is underway in Lucknow and Bangalore. Recently, Ministry has procured a plot of land for construction of owned premises in Mumbai. In Bhubaneshwar, the drawings and financial estimates have been approved. CPWD has given a time frame of two years for construction of the building. In Jaipur, the Jaipur Development Authority has been requested to expedite the approval of the drawings. In Guwahati, the mutation of the land in Ministry’s name is expected to be completed shortly. Jalandhar has submitted a proposal for procurement of land on auction basis. The State Government has been requested to give us the land at the reserve price and not through the process of auction.

29. Once the ongoing construction projects are completed, the rental liability on account of Passport Offices will come down substantially from the figure of Rs 3.6 crore annually.

30. Effectively, eight Passport Offices have not sent us any concrete proposals. These eight offices are: Bhopal, Pune, Ranchi, Surat, Trichy, Trivandrum, Thane and Vizag. These offices have been separately instructed to

get in touch with the concerned State authorities and send us concrete proposals to this effect.”

About the latest position in regard to Guwahati Passport Office, the Ministry has informed the Committee that the Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup has been requested to personally intervene in this matter. The matter is expected to be resolved shortly.”

**31. The Committee are really surprised to note that no significant progress has been made during the last several years regarding construction of the Passport Office premises at various Passport Offices and the Ministry has been furnishing more or less same stereo type replies for the last 2-3 years. Rent liability on these offices has been increasing continuously. The Committee have repeatedly been asking the Ministry to chalk out a comprehensive plan to either acquire suitable properties and to take up the matter with the respective State Governments for an early allotment of suitable land for construction of Passport Offices as well as the residential complexes on priority basis. But, the Ministry has so far not taken any concrete initiative in this direction and has left the matter to the respective passport offices. The Committee, therefore, strongly criticize the approach of the Ministry and reiterate that the Ministry should now come up with a comprehensive plan of action to complete the projects in hand in the shortest possible time and persuade the remaining eight Passport Offices/State Governments who have not submitted any concrete proposal for constructing their own premises in a time-bound manner.**

**32. The Committee are anguished to note the lackadaisical approach of the Ministry in resolving the matter relating to construction of building for Guwahati Passport Office. The Committee, therefore, strongly reiterate that the Ministry should take all initiatives for an early construction of the building for Passport Office, Guwahati in consultation with the State Government and apprise the Committee about the latest position in this regard.**

Recommendation (Para No. 26)

33. As regards inadequacy of staff, the Committee had urged upon the Central Passport Organisation to fill up the vacant posts immediately particularly those at the operational and first supervisory levels. The Committee had also



suggested that pending formal selection of staff and also to meet sudden increase in the workload, the RPOs/POs may be vested with necessary administrative and financial powers to recruit qualified temporary staff in clerical and messengerial grades on daily wages through the local employment exchanges. The Committee had recommended the Ministry to have a fresh look at the Cadre of the CPO in view of the increase in the workload in various RPOs across the country. However, as a temporary measure, the Committee had suggested that the Ministry should firm up a transfer policy for utilizing the existing staff whereby the surplus staff in certain RPOs could be transferred to those RPOs where there was shortage.

34. The Ministry has replied that:

“A work-study by the Staff Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Finance is underway in Passport Offices to decide upon the quantum of augmentation of staff at various levels in Passport Offices. Once this exercise is completed, additional staff will be made available to Passport Offices. The exercise of Cadre Review can be carried out once the study is completed. Ministry is also exploring the possibility of outsourcing the services of data entry operators to tide over the shortage of staff. Due to the existing Gol rules and regulations, additional Casual Workers cannot be engaged in Passport Offices.

35. To meet the immediate staff shortage, Ministry has prepared a proposal for outsourcing of manpower to carry out specific tasks in Passport Offices. The proposal has been examined by the Internal Finance Division of the Ministry which has suggested certain changes. The same have been noted and the proposal is being resubmitted.”

**36. The Committee apprehend that the proposed work study by the staff Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Finance may take their own time. In view of the reply given by the Ministry, it seems that this process may take more time, therefore, the Ministry has taken initiatives for outsourcing the manpower for Passport Offices. The Committee are of the view that passport making process is a very sensitive matter and outsourcing of it may not be in national interest. The Committee feel that in this process, there is the possibility of sensitive information furnished by applicants being misused by anti social elements or even touts can exploit the condition easily. The Committee, therefore, recommend that in view of**

**sensitivity of the matter, the Ministry of External Affairs should undertake the matter at the highest level for an early completion of the work study by the Staff Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Finance.**

Recommendation (Para No. 27)

37. The Committee had observed that a number of posts were lying vacant in various Passport Offices. Also, Passport Offices at least in Capital Cities of Uttranchal, Chattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh could not be opened due to shortage of staff. Keeping in view the increasing work load in various Passport Offices, the Committee had desired that necessary steps be taken to fill up the vacant posts and also to create new posts at supervisory levels at the earliest so that the new Passport Offices could become operational soon and the increased work load could be reduced. The Committee had desired that the Ministry might consider the feasibility of opening of Passport Office at Agra also for the convenience of applicants from various districts of U.P. such as Firozabad, Etah, Mathura, Aligarh, Hathras, Jhansi, Lalitpur, Mahoba, Hamirpur and Banda.

38. Reply of the Ministry was as under:

“Opening of Passport Offices in the state capitals of Uttranchal, Chattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh will be carried out only after an augmentation of the staff strength in the Central Passport Organisation. As regards opening of a Passport Office at Agra, a study of the existing workload will need to be carried out.”

**39. The Committee observe that the Ministry of External Affairs have not informed about the stage of the process of augmentation of staff strength in Central Passport Organisation and the time frame fixed for completion of work in this regard. Establishing of Passport Offices in the State Capitals of Uttranchal, Chattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh related to large number of people residing in tough hilly and poorly connected areas of these States. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should persuade the augmentation of staff strength process for its early completion and simultaneously if there is any possibility of taking more time in this regard, they must start these Passport Offices by arranging small number of staff from other offices without any further delay. The Committee also reiterate**

**that the Government should undertake study of existing workload for opening office at Agra on priority basis.**

Recommendation (Para No. 31)

40. The Committee, during their study visits to various Passport Offices, had noted with concern the plight of a large number of casual labourers employed there. The casual labourers working there for the last several years had been entrusted with various kinds of jobs but their requests for the regularisation of their services have not been considered favourably so far. The Committee had, however, found that the Ministry had regularized the services of 34 casual labourers and 139 casual labourers were given temporary status but about 200 casual labourers were still remained to be regularized. The Committee had, therefore, urged the Government that priority should be given to regularize the services of remaining 200 casual labourers as and when the permanent vacancies under Group 'C' and Group 'D' fall vacant.

41. The Ministry has replied as under:

“The existing Government rules do not allow for regularization of Casual Workers against vacant Group C posts. Regularisation against vacant Group D posts is permitted. However, there are very few such vacant posts available due to which this process will take some time.”

**42. The Committee observe that there are limitations of the Ministry to regularize the services of casual labourers. However, they find that the Ministry are showing their reluctance in regularizing the casual workers even if there is an availability of vacancy. The Committee note that there are some vacant posts, but, the Ministry has not taken any initiative to absorb casual workers against these posts. The Committee, therefore, desire that a system should be developed so that as soon as any vacancy arises in Group 'D', the casual labourers are immediately regularized against it.**

## D. INDIAN COUNCIL FOR CULTURAL RELATION

### Recommendation (Para No. 33)

43. The Committee had noted that "Advisory Committees" for Regional offices in Jaipur and Mumbai had been constituted and first meeting of these Advisory Committees was to be held. The Committee were not satisfied with the constitution of only two Advisory Committees and had expressed their hope that similar Committees for the remaining Regional offices would be constituted shortly. The Committee had recommended that the creation of posts, which was necessary for opening of new Regional offices should be processed without losing any further time and Regional centers at Bhopal, Bhubaneswar and North-eastern Region, which had already been proposed to be opened, should be opened on top priority basis in order to remove the regional imbalances.

44. The Ministry has replied as under:

"The meeting of the Advisory Committees for Regional Offices in Jaipur and Mumbai have not been held. Action for the constitution of Advisory Committees for other Regional Offices has been initiated.

45. The Council has already moved a proposal for creation of new posts which are necessary for opening of new Regional Offices. In response, Ministry of Finance have sought clarifications regarding cadre structure of the Council. Necessary information will shortly be furnished to the Ministry of Finance."

**46. The Committee are surprised to note that after the constitution of Advisory Committees for Regional Offices of ICCR in Jaipur and Mumbai, not a single meeting has been held so far. The Committee desire that these Committees should meet at regular intervals for better fulfillment of objectives for establishing these Committees. The Committee do not favour the slow progress in constituting Advisory Committees for other Regional Offices and desire that this should be expedited and completed at the earliest.**

### Recommendation (Para No. 34)

47. So far as the question of setting up of a Cultural Centre in Washington was concerned, the Committee had expressed their unhappiness over the fact that at least on five occasions in the past, opportunities had been allowed to slip

out of hands due to lack of will on the part of Ministry. The Committee had desired that a new proposal had since emerged, the Ministry should seize this opportunity firmly so that the project regarding the opening of Cultural Centre could be realized.

48. The Ministry in their reply has stated as under:

“The latest proposal of the Mission for purchase of a property to serve as the Cultural Centre is under active consideration of the Ministry. Views of the user agency, namely, ICCR had been sought. The proposal had also been examined by the Ministry’s Technical Cell. Issues raised by ICCR and Technical Cell had been conveyed to the Mission for seeking clarifications and also for confirmation of the suitability of location of the building from point of view of holding large-scale public functions and non-availability of dedicated parking area. Mission has also been requested to confirm the likely cost of repair and renovation of the building presently being used as a Church, to get an idea of the total financial implication involved. Based on the Mission’s feedback, visit of a Property Team would be planned to examine the proposal from various angles.”

**49. The Committee are happy to note that the long pending proposal for setting up of a Cultural Centre in Washington is now moving in a positive direction. The Committee desire that the Ministry of External Affairs should utilize this opportunity and they should not create any administrative and financial hurdle at any stage of setting up of this dream project.**

#### Recommendation (Para No. 35)

50. The Committee had noted that with joining of Kathak and Tabla Teacher, the Cultural Center in Suva had started functioning from the Embassy Premises in February, 2005. The Committee had also noted that, classes were being conducted at the Fiji India Cultural Centre, Indian College and the MGM High School and the Yoga Teacher designate for the sub-center at Lautoka was expected to join in May, 2005. The Committee had felt that the progress made so far was not sufficient. Even after taking such a long time the Ministry was not in a position to say till date that task had been accomplished. Therefore, the Committee recommend that remaining formalities regarding Cultural Centres Suva and Lautoka should be completed in a fixed time schedule. The Committee had also recommended that the Ministry should process the already pending

proposals with it to open up Cultural Centers in Beijing, Tokyo, Tehran and Kathmandu at the earliest.

51. The Ministry has replied as under:

“The Cultural Centre in Suva has started operating from the Embassy premises in February 2005. Kathak and Tabla teachers have already joined the Cultural Centre and started regular classes. The Yoga Teacher for the Sub-Center at Lautoka has also joined in May 2005. While the residences for all the teachers have been secured, the Mission’s proposal for hiring premises for the Cultural Centre in Suva along with the Council’s recommendations are under consideration of the Ministry.

52. The Mission in Tokyo has been advised to start the Cultural Centre from the Embassy premises and the Council proposes to open the Centre by deputing a Yoga Teacher. Further expansion will be taken up when Mission locates a suitable premises.

53. The new Cultural Centres at Beijing, Tehran and Kathmandu will be opened subject to the allocation of requisite additional posts and budgetary resources.”

**54. The Committee find that some fresh initiatives have been taken by the Ministry to establish Cultural Centre in Suva. But, the proposal for hiring premises for Cultural Centre is still pending with the Ministry. The Committee desire that the proposal should be approved without any further delay so that a well established Centre may start working there. The Committee desire that Tokyo Centre should also start working from the embassy and search of site for their own premises should also be completed at the earliest. The Committee expect a positive approach from the Ministry in the direction of setting up of new Cultural Centres in Beijing, Tehran and Kathmandu and desire that they must come with concrete proposals to obtain sufficient funds during supplementary Demands for Grants stage and start the work after obtaining the desired fund.**

## **E. INDIAN COUNCIL OF WORLD AFFAIRS**

### Recommendation (Para No. 38)

55. The Committee had noted that the Ministry had earlier stated that the works related to Sapru House would be completed in financial year 2004-2005, but the same had not been completed. On the question of formation of "Governing Body" of the Council, the Ministry had informed the Committee that the activities of the ICWA had not been affected adversely but the formation of the Governing Body could facilitate the demands for enhanced funding of ICWA activities and research. The Committee was of the view that without the Governing Body, no institution could function effectively for want of proper direction. The Committee had, therefore, recommended that the Governing Body of the Council should be constituted without further delay, so that the responsibilities entrusted upon the Council could be fulfilled without any constraints. The Committee had also recommended that necessary renovation work in Sapru House should be completed by the end of May 2005.

56. The Ministry replied that:

"Ministry has initiated action to constitute the Governing Body of the Council. The Ministry is confident this will be completed in due course of time and the Governing Body will be in place before the end of the current financial year 2005-2006.

57. The renovation of the Sapru House is an ongoing process. Major repairs and related civil works in the main building has been completed by end May 2005. In the current financial year, the main building will be re-painted and given a face-lift. In addition, the annex to Sapru House will undergo repairs and related civil works. Subject to availability of funds, the work will be completed by end March 2006."

**58. The Committee do not find any justification for such an inordinate delay in formation of Governing Body of ICWA which is now proposed to be completed before the end of this financial year. The Committee do not understand as to how can the Ministry expect the Council to fulfill their responsibility entrusted to them by the Government under such circumstances. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should not wait for the financial year to end, rather they should take all initiatives**

**to constitute the Governing Body of ICWA without any further delay. The Committee also desire that the Ministry should also ensure the completion of renovation work of Sapru House without any financial constraints by the end of current financial year.**

## F. CAPITAL SECTION

### Recommendation (Para No. 45)

59. The Committee while going by the percentage variation figure over the last three years, had noted that there was a steep negative variation i.e. to the tune of Rs. 26.56% and 40% respectively under the Major Heads 4059 and 4216. The Ministry had informed the Committee that based on the progress of various ongoing construction projects and likely acquisition of properties abroad, Ministry had sought an allocation of Rs. 80 crore under MH 4059 and Rs. 30 crore under MH 4216 in its proposal to Ministry of Finance for BE 2005-2006. In view of the budgetary allocation agreed to by the Ministry of Finance being less than what was projected by MEA and taking note of other pressing requirements, capital outlay for public works (Major Head 4059) was kept at Rs. 51.41 crore and Capital Outlay for Housing (Major Head 4216) at Rs. 15 crore. In fact, the projected BE 2005-2006 figures of the Ministry represented a positive variation of 14.29% under MH 4059 and of 20% under Major Head 4216 vis-à-vis BE 2004-2005 allocation. The Committee were not convinced with the reply furnished by the Ministry that projected BE 2005-2006 figures of Ministry represented variation of 14.29% under Major Head 4059 and of 20% under Major Head 4216 vis-à-vis BE 2004-2005 allocation. In the opinion of the Committee, if projected amount could not be obtained, it serves no purpose just to say that there was a positive variation under these Heads. The Committee had felt that the Ministry perhaps could not project their requirements properly, as a result of which, the required amount could not be obtained. The Committee had, therefore, desired that while securing funds under particular Heads, proper justification should be given before the fund allocating authority so that the desired funds can be obtained at a right time.

60. The Ministry in their reply stated as under:

“Proper justification was provided for seeking an enhanced budgetary allocation under major heads 4059 and 4216 for the financial year 2005-06. However, since the overall approved budgetary allocation for the Ministry was



lower than the projected figures, allocation under Capital Outlay was accordingly reduced. In fact, insufficiency of funds under Capital Outlay is proving to be a hindrance in pursuing some of the acquisition projects, which are under active consideration of the Ministry. Ministry proposes to seek additional funds under Major Head 4059 and Major Head 4216 through supplementary grant.”

**61. The Committee observe that the approved budgetary allocation for the Ministry of External Affairs was lower than the projected figures. This lower allocation is proving to be hindrance in pursuing some important acquisition projects of the Ministry. The Committee feel that these projects are very important and these should not be delayed due to non-availability of funds. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should try to get sufficient funds for these projects and other important projects through supplementary Demands for Grants. For this purpose, the matter should be undertaken at the highest level with proper justification.**

Recommendation (Para No. 49)

62. The Committee had noted that the Videsh Bhavan (now known as the Jawaharlal Nehru Bhavan) was proposed to be constructed on a plot of land measuring 7.785 Acres at the junction of Janpath and Maulana Azad Road as headquarters of Ministry of External Affairs. In November 2003, it was decided to entrust the project to CPWD for design and execution. The concept design prepared by CPWD had been approved by the Delhi Urban Arts Commission and the Central Vista Committee at the conceptual stage with some observation. Simultaneously, the project had been approved from financial angle by the Committee for Non-Plan Expenditure at a cost of Rs. 175.57 crore. Financial approval of the Cabinet was being sought. CPWD had indicated that the construction of the building will take forty months after receipt of the approvals. The Committee were of the view that the construction of Videsh Bhavan seems to be inordinately delayed. The Committee would like that this should be expedited and the Committee may be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

63. The reply of the Ministry is as under:

‘While awaiting financial approval of the Cabinet for the Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan project, physical possession of the work site has been handed over to the CPWD on May 12, 2005. Funds have been released to CPWD for setting up their site office and commencing preliminary pre-construction activities like soil

testing, etc. A Core Group of officers within the Ministry has been set up to work out the detailed space requirements of the Ministry. Ministry has been holding regular meetings with officers of the Architectural Wing of CPWD for preparation of detailed design development plan for seeking approval of local bodies. Note for Cabinet, in final form, had been sent to Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Urban Development and PMO for their information/comments before submission to Cabinet. The Cabinet has since accorded its financial approval on 25.07.2005'.

**64. The Committee are happy to note that the Cabinet has given approval for the Jawahar Lal Nehru Bhawan Project. Now, there is no hurdle in actual implementation of the project. The Committee now hope that the Ministry of External Affairs should make all possible efforts to complete the project in proposed forty months' period.**

## **CHAPTER- II**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSRVATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT**

#### **General Observations**

India's foreign policy faced many challenges in the past, but there is a certain resilience in it which steered India clear through such challenges. The Committee are of the view that our foreign policy should retain this resilience and we should calibrate our responses to events of significance taking place far and near keeping in view India's geo-political interests.

**(Para No.1)**

The foreign policy of India is based on a broad national consensus and, therefore, the basic orientation of this policy do not change. The unipolar world which emerged after the end of the cold war era and the globalisation of the economy created radically new situations requiring new responses. The Committee feel that the successive governments which took office during this period have conducted the foreign policy with a proper understanding of the post cold war world and the political realities which it brought about.

**(Para No.2)**

The Committee consider that the decisive and bold moves made by the Government of India over the past five years to improve its relation with its neighbours are praiseworthy. The confidence building measures taken by India at different times to improve its relation with Pakistan culminating in the Srinagar-Muzaffarabad bus service, are borne out of a genuine conviction that the relationship between India and Pakistan can be improved. The Committee also appreciate the steps taken by the Government to relax visa regulations to enable the people of Pakistan from different walks of life to visit India and interact with the Indian people. The people-to-people contacts at different levels with greater frequency, the Committee believe, will bring about better understanding of the sensitivities of each other as well as of the commonality of perceptions of both the people.

**(Para No.3)**

However, the Committee feel that the Government should prepare the roadmap for improving its relations with Pakistan with the greatest care. The compulsions generated by the concerns of the international community over the perpetual tension prevailing between two nuclear powers should not force the Government into hastening the pace in an unrealistic manner. Every care should be taken to protect the vital interests of the nation. The fact that the terrorist training camps inside Pakistan's territory are still operating, though infiltration into Jammu & Kashmir has come down considerably, points to the grave danger inherent in the situation. The Government of India should not allow itself to be taken by surprise at any stage.

**(Para No.4)**

The Committee appreciate the steps taken by the Government to improve our relations with China. The serious attempts being made by both countries to address the boundary disputes should succeed. High level political visits, the Committee believe, will generate the required momentum in the ongoing efforts to settle the disputes. The Committee are of the view that permanent settlement of the major disputes between India and China in a spirit of mutual accommodation will bring about a qualitative change in the geo-political situation in the South Asian region which will help to accelerate India's economic growth. The Committee would like to be apprised of the steps being taken in this regard. Keeping in view our age old traditional relations, the Committee would urge the Government to take steps to further improve our relations with neighbouring countries particularly Bangladesh and Nepal.

**(Para No.5)**

The post cold war power equations seem to be slowly changing with China and India emerging as significant players on the world scene. The military and economic might India has acquired places it in a position of strength from where it can influence the world events in a significant way. The Indian nation has a civilizational dimension and it is poised to play a big role in the shaping of the future world. The Committee are of the firm view that India needs to grow into an economic superpower and considerably strengthen its military prowess in order to be able to play that role effectively. The Government should grasp the dynamics of power equations in the present day world and re-orient our approaches and attitudes in such a way that India always remains an indispensable participant in the shaping of the world's future. Peace and harmony in the world and peaceful co-existence among nations are the cornerstones of India's foreign policy. But India can talk of peace and harmony effectively and convincingly only from a position of strength. The Committee hope that this cardinal principle of international politics will be internalised by the Government and its foreign policy will truly reflect this principle.

**(Para No.6)**

### **Reply of the Government**

**Ministry of External Affairs values greatly the insightful and perceptive advice offered by the Hon'ble Standing Committee on India's Foreign Policy.**

**Today, India is at the threshold of assuming larger global responsibilities, as befitting our Nation's strength and character. As an open, free, plural and inclusive Society, given the vitality and resilience of its democratic polity, the growth and dynamism of its economy, its enormous human resources, the caliber of its scientists and technological manpower, and its invaluable contribution to international peace, security and cooperation, India's stock is on the rise.**

India's legitimate claim to a permanent seat on the United Nation's Security Council, derives not only from our impeccable credentials based on

objective criteria, but also our capacity to effectively shoulder global responsibilities, especially, to truly represent the concerns and interests of fellow developing nations.

To confront decisively the challenges and threats facing the world community, the reform of the UN system especially of the Security Council has become absolutely essential. Our joining forces with important friendly nations, such as Brazil, Germany and Japan should enable us to garner wider international support in this important endeavour.

Our foreign policy vision seeks to improve our relations with all nations, large and small, in all areas, even while addressing the differences that there may be, in a spirit of goodwill and understanding.

Our especially close and friendly relations with Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka have demonstrated the validity of according primacy to the relations with our neighbours. Moved by our abiding friendship for Nepal, we have sought to reinforce our engagement with Nepal, to strengthen the constitutional forces, for the re-establishment of political stability, social cohesion and economic prosperity on the basis of a broad national consensus. We believe that our relations with Bangladesh need to be addressed more substantially, in a spirit of mutual understanding, goodwill and cooperation.

Our constructive and sustained engagement with Pakistan has brought tangible benefits to peoples of both countries. The Srinagar – Muzzafarabad bus service in operation since April this year, and similar services proposed between Amritsar, Lahore and Nankana Sahib, and the rail link from Munnabao to Khokhrapar, are among the measures, aimed at strengthening the socio-cultural links between our peoples. The reopening of the Consulates in Karachi and Mumbai early next year would be yet another people centric move. It is our expectation that Pakistan should share our deep conviction that a serious and sustained dialogue hinges on mutual trust that brooks no room for violence and terrorism. We shall feel reassured, when we will see the infrastructure of terrorism dismantled, on the ground, lock, stock, and barrel.

Our relations with China have entered a distinct phase of comprehensive all-round development. With the signing of the Agreement on the Political Parameters and Guiding Principles in April, this year, we have reached a more substantive stage in our bilateral dialogue on the boundary question.

We are investing substantially in economic cooperation with Afghanistan, to strengthen democratic forces, which should lead the country to progress and prosperity.

We value immensely our strategic partnership with Russia and our engagement with the Central Asian nations.

With the United States, we have nurtured a partnership of growing cooperation and trust, focusing on high technologies, energy security, and joining forces to combat terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and in enhancing global security.

With Japan we are engaged in building a partnership that has great potential both bilaterally and globally.

In Africa and Latin America, India needs to invest substantially both by way of sharing of developmental experience and forging stronger economic links. The trilateral cooperation being developed among India, Brazil and South Africa holds great promises for realization.

In today's rapidly globalizing environment, economic and business imperatives have emerged as the most significant driving force in our relations with the international community.

India's 'Look East Policy', the partnership we have been building with the ASEAN, our active engagement with the Countries of the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Economic and Technical Cooperation, our presence at the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, our extensive cooperation with the European Union, the Gulf Cooperation Council and our comprehensive involvement in the SAARC, are all part of the irreversible process of the integration of our country with the world economy. The Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement signed with Singapore in June this year, is a harbinger of similar arrangements that we would seek with major economic players.

Our quest for participation in the Galileo Satellite Navigation Project, and the International Thermo Nuclear Reactor Project are pointers to the kind of cooperation that we would seek from the developed nations.

For our nation today, deeper global engagement is no longer an option but an imperative. India's presence at the G-8 Summit was a forerunner.

(No. AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### **Recommendation**

The Committee note that the projected Actual Expenditure for the year 2004-2005 is 3758.85 crore against Rs. 3885.00 crore at RE. It means that Rs. 126.15 crore again remained unspent during the year 2004-2005 while, Rs. 65.47 crore was unspent during the year 2003-2004 which had been the case earlier also in the years 2000-2001 and in 2001-2002. As per the Ministry's own admission the projection under the Head "Capital Outlay" had been based on the plans for purchases of property and construction projects, some of which could not reach the anticipated stage of making payments due to unforeseen local developments. The Committee are of the view that Budget remained unspent only due to non-materialization of schemes/projects envisaged at the time of making budgetary provisions. The Committee, therefore, recommend that Ministry should initiate remedial measures with stringent and regular review for timely completion of projects/schemes to avoid the non-utilization of funds, so that the large unspent provisions can be eliminated.

**(Para No. 7)**

## Reply of the Government

The Ministry's Expenditure Monitoring Committee will be reviewing the progress of expenditure on various projects/schemes, on a quarterly basis, and take appropriate action, as necessary, to remedy the situation through suitable adjustments such as re-appropriation/reallocation of funds etc. Through this exercise, the Ministry hopes to minimize the surrender of funds in the current financial year. With regard to the projects and schemes mentioned by the Hon'ble Standing Committee, it is submitted that individual schemes/projects of the Ministry's bilateral assistance, especially those involving outlay of Rs. 5 crore and above are being monitored by the Project Monitoring Committees set up for the said individual projects/schemes. It is hoped that such a process of close monitoring by these Committees will prevent slippages, and ensure timely completion of projects/schemes and optimal utilization of funds.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July26,2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee note that large savings accrued during the year 2004-2005 under the Heads "Special Diplomatic Expenditure" (Rs. 145.43 crore), "Aid to African Countries" (Rs. 25.95 crore) and Capital Outlay (Rs. 62.17 crore). According to the Ministry these savings were re-appropriated to other Heads where there was a requirement of more funds for ongoing programmes/schemes and other commitments and thus the overall savings from MEA's allocation got reduced to Rs. 126.15 crore. It means that total projected saving was Rs. 233.55 crore out of which Rs. 107.40 crore was allocated to those Heads under which allocated funds were lesser than their requirements. In view of the explanation tendered before the Committee, they desire that they may be apprised of those ongoing programmes/schemes – where additional funds were provided by way of re-appropriation which consequently reduced the overall savings to the tune of Rs. 126.15 crore.

(Para No. 8)

### Reply of the Government :

SAVINGS HEAD OF ACCOUNT	AMOUNT AVAILABLE AS SAVING AT FE STAGE	AMOUNT REAPPROPRIATED
Special Diplomatic Expenditure	Rs.145.43 cr.	Rs.136.26
		Rs13.56 cr : Contribution to UN Organisations
		Rs. 60 cr + Rs 58.38 cr : Aid to Bhutan
		Rs.3.95 cr : Aid to Other Developing Countries
		Rs.0.37 cr : Nehru Awards &India-UK Round Table
		<b>Total: Rs.136.26</b>

SAVINGS HEAD OF ACCOUNT	AMOUNT AVAILABLE AS SAVING AT FE STAGE	AMOUNT REAPPROPRIATED
Aid to African countries	25.95 cr	Rs.13.15 cr : Aid to Other Developing Countries

		<b>Total: Rs.13.15 cr</b>

<b>SAVINGS HEAD OF ACCOUNT</b>	<b>AMOUNT AVAILABLE AS SAVING AT FE STAGE</b>	<b>AMOUNT REAPPROPRIATED</b>
<b>Capital Outlay</b>	62.17	Rs.17.25 cr : Loan to Bangladesh Rs.26.00 cr : Loan to Bhutan
	<b>Rs. 233.55</b>	<b>Total: Rs. 43.25 cr</b>
	<b>This takes into account savings under above Heads only</b>	

Total re-appropriated from above 3 Heads: **Rs. 192.66 cr.**

As desired by the Hon'ble Standing Committee, the above tables indicate the final figures of savings /re-appropriations under the Heads mentioned by the Hon'ble Standing Committee in Observation No.8 i.e. "SDE", "Aid to African Countries" and "Capital Outlay".

With regard to the further desire of the Hon'ble Standing Committee in Observation 8, a set of the re-appropriation orders for providing funds for various ongoing programmes/projects and schemes of the MEA in the FY 2004-5 , is given at Annexure I. It may be seen that the total re-appropriations amounted to Rs. 205.16 crores. Total savings (surrender) was Rs.126.15 crores.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee note that the BE projection in 2005-2006 is 7.89% higher than BE 2004-2005 while it is 1.11% over RE 2004-2005. Going by the Ministry's version, taking into account the anticipated inflation of only of 5% in the Financial Year 2005-2006, the increase in real terms – in the BE 2005-2006 allocation – will be only by 2.89%, while it will be less than RE 2004-2005 by 3.89%. The dearness, exchange rates, etc. which obviously affect the value of money had not been given due consideration while formulating the Budget Estimates and as a result thereof, 3.89% lesser amount against RE 2004-2005 has been allocated in BE 2005-2006 in real terms. The Committee are not able to understand as to how the Ministry will, thus, be in a position to do justice to its stated objectives and reinforce the positive image of the country abroad. Therefore, the Committee recommend that the Ministry should keep all these factors in view at the time of formulation of budget estimates and projection thereof.

(Para No. 9)

### Reply of the Government.

As recommended by the esteemed Committee, all factors such as dearness allowance, exchange rate fluctuations etc. are invariably taken into account while formulating the budget for the ensuing financial year. However, Ministry is constrained to restrict internal allocation under the various Heads to keep them within the overall allocations approved by the Ministry of Finance. At various stages, the internal monitoring mechanism of the Ministry reviews the expenditure under various Heads to provide for important items/activities where



there is a shortfall of funds – either from other Heads or through Supplementary Demands for Grants. The Hon'ble Committee's recommendation above endorses Ministry's current practice of calculating budgetary requirements and projecting demands after taking all relevant factors into account. Ministry will therefore continue to project its budgetary requirements to Ministry of Finance based on its realistic requirements under various schemes/projects.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee note that the Ministry of External Affairs has constituted an expenditure monitoring committee to regularly review the overall programme expenditure of the various Divisions of the Ministry. Through this monitoring, the Ministry has been able to ensure better phasing of expenditure on various projects/schemes and was able to utilize 71.23% of its BE allocation by December, 2004. With this, the rush of expenditure in the last quarter of the Financial Year 2004-2005 has been avoided. The Committee hope that this trend will continue in the years to come by better phasing of expenditure on various projects/schemes. The Committee also feel that the better utilization of funds in a phased manner will ensure the timely completion of projects/schemes. Thus, the problem of non-utilisation of funds can be rectified automatically.

(Para 11)

### Reply of the Government.

As pointed out by the esteemed Committee, the Expenditure Monitoring Committee of MEA will continue to periodically review the pace of expenditure in MEA, especially on various projects/schemes to be implemented, with a view to ensure proper phasing of expenditure and optimal utilization of funds.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee observe that the Actual Expenditure on account of "Rents, Rates, Taxes" under the Heads "Secretariat" and External Affairs: Passport and Emigration", has been less than BEs/REs from the year 2000-2001 onwards. The Committee feel that the Ministry has failed in making accurate estimation of requirement of funds under these Heads even at the RE stage. They note with concern that the unrealistic projection of Budget Estimates has become a routine in the Ministry. The assurances given by the Ministry in the last two years to this effect have not yielded the desired results as huge variations continue to exist. The Committee, therefore, recommend the Ministry to tighten the existing mechanisms to avoid such variations and ensure accurate estimate of requirement of funds to the maximum extent possible at the BE stage itself.

(Para No. 12)

### Reply of the Government.

Every effort is made to accurately estimate the requirement under the Head "Rents, Rates, Taxes". However, since 2000-2001, the actual expenditure has been lower than the BEs/REs on account of factors beyond the control of the Ministry. In the case of the "Secretariat" Head, Ministry is awaiting a decision on

the revised rent for Akbar Bhavan - which would be mutually acceptable to the Ministry and the New Delhi Municipal Committee. In the case of Passport Offices, it turned out that some of the offices did not eventually receive demands from the concerned authorities for ground rent etc. as had been anticipated.

The Ministry will however, take necessary steps to ensure that in future, the estimation and budgetary projections are more accurate at BE stage itself and that the existing mechanisms are tightened to ensure that variations between the BEs/REs and actual expenditure are avoided.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee note that the Ministry of Law and Justice have furnished a list of advocates for the formation of a panel of advocates for handling extradition cases and the Ministry in consultation with Legal and Treaties Division and the Additional Solicitor General of India has prepared a list of six advocates for various extradition cases and forwarded the same to the Ministry of Law and Justice for their concurrence. In view of the urgent need and desirability of having best counsels of proven professional competence to deal with extradition cases, the Committee would urge upon the Ministry to pursue vigorously the matter with the Ministry of Law and Justice to have the matter regarding formation of panel expedited on top priority. The Committee recommend that the decision in the matter may be taken at the earliest so that the realistic Budget Estimates could be made under this Head and the funds are not kept blocked in anticipation-without making any headway in achieving the desired objective. The Committee further desires that utmost care should be taken to include in the panel of advocates top legal luminaries having expertise in the local criminal laws of foreign countries.

(Para No. 17)

### Reply of the Government.

The proposal for formation of panel of advocates for extradition proceedings has since been finalized during the month of May 2005 after seeking approval of the Minister of State and the Ministry of Law and Justice. The concern of the Committee to include in the panel of advocates top legal luminaries having proven professional competence has been duly taken care of. The professional charges to be paid to the Government counsels in the panel of advocates are substantially higher than the amount being paid earlier. It is, therefore, felt that in the RE 2005-06, the projected estimates will be as close to the actual expenditure as possible, thereby effecting the bare minimum funds, if at all any, allowed to lapse.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee note that the construction of Foreign Service Institute building as of now is not complete and as such it is not possible for the FSI to start functioning from there. The Dean FSI has instructed the Additional Director General (TD) CPWD, the consultant, the representative of the contractor that even if the whole building is not completed, the FSI wants that the office rooms and the Lecture Halls be completed in the next 3-6 months so that the FSI moves in the premises. The remaining part of the building i.e. Hostel, auditorium etc. can be completed subsequently. The Dean has been assured that every effort will be made to comply with his instructions. The Committee recommend that a final time schedule should be firmed up at least now for the completion of construction works of the FSI Building so that the Institute starts functioning from its own premises at the earliest.

(Para No. 18)

### **Reply of the Government**

CPWD and consultant have been directed to take action for getting partial completion certificate in respect of the building from DDA so that Foreign Service Institute (FSI) could move into the new premises at the earliest. Such portions of the building as the FSI would occupy have been identified in consultation with Dean (FSI) and CPWD have been advised to complete those portions in respect of air-conditioning, electro-mechanical systems and interior works. Action regarding completion of other works is being continued simultaneously.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26,2005)

### **Recommendation**

The Committee are happy to note that the FSI is continuing its endeavour to make the training-cum-familiarization courses more dynamic, inter-active and result-oriented so as to make it on par with the best Diplomatic Institutes of the world. The Institute engages Guest Speakers who have achieved excellence in the academic and their professional fields, who impart knowledge and information to the participants on various issues like India's Foreign and Security Policy, International Relations, International Law, matters concerning terrorism, India's economic policy, multilateral and bilateral negotiations, protocol and so on. The Foreign Service Institute has entered into Memorandum of Understanding with the Foreign Service Institutes of several other countries. To date, such Agreements have been concluded with 22 countries in order to facilitate mutual cooperation and improve bilateral relationships. The Committee facilitate mutual cooperation and improve bilateral relationships. The Committee hope that the Foreign Service Institute will successfully meet the professional training requirements of the officers from Indian Foreign Services, Ministries as well as foreign diplomats. The committee, therefore, recommend that the required funds should not be a constraint for the effective functioning of FSI and Memorandum of Understanding should be negotiated by the Institute with more countries.

(Para No. 19)

### **Reply of the Government**

The Foreign Service Institute (FSI) has not found any difficulty in allocation of funds for organizing the various courses. It will continue its efforts to make the training cum familiarization courses more dynamic, interactive and result oriented so as to make it on par with the best Institutes in the world.

The FSI course modules for the Indian Foreign Service Officers under training, cover a variety of subjects through lectures, interactive seminars as well as visits to various institutions. It also organizes mid-career training programme for Officers, organizes a Basic Professional Course for Section Officers and Staff proceeding on transfer abroad and organizes Mission orientation programmes for officers of other Ministries and departments including Ministry of Defence who are proceeding on posting abroad. It recently also organized a Workshop on Entertainment and Etiquette for senior IFS officers and their spouses.

The FSI every year is also organizing three Professional Courses for Foreign Diplomats (PCFD), two Courses on Diplomacy and Foreign Policy Programme for Foreign Diplomats (DFPPFD) mainly for diplomats stationed in New Delhi and organizes Special courses for diplomats from friendly countries. Special courses were designed to suit the requirement of the respective countries were organized; a Special Course for Canadian Diplomats in March 2005 and a Special Course for Vietnamese Diplomats in June 2005.

The FSI has entered into Memorandum of Understanding with Foreign Service Institutes of several other countries. To date such Agreements have been concluded with 24 countries in order to facilitate mutual cooperation and improve bilateral relationships. During the month of June 2005 MoUs were signed with Norway and Saudi Arabia. FSI is also processing MOU with Mexico. Proposals for MOU with Latvia, Paraguay, Germany, Botswana and Malaysia are also under consideration.

The diplomats have very much appreciated the FSI's interest and effort in organizing the Courses and providing them with valuable information which would stand them in good stead in their careers. Suggestions made by them are also appropriately incorporated in the Course Modules while planning future courses for the diplomats. FSI efforts would continue to build bridges of friendship with various countries. The FSI will be provided with the required funds by the Ministry, from within the overall allocations received by the Ministry.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee note with concern that the Actual Expenditure under the Head "Embassies and Missions" has been increasing sharply since 2000-2001. The Actual Expenditure in 2000-2001 was Rs. 691.61 crore which has increased to Rs. 855.00 crore in 2004-2005. The Committee find that the increase has been attributed to increase in rates of Foreign Allowance, normal inflationary trends, increase in costs of goods and services which occurred after the computation of projections under this Head. The Committee has time and again, recommended for reduction of Administrative expenditure on Missions/Posts abroad. The Committee desire that the avoidable Administrative Expenditure on Embassies and Missions be pruned suitably so as to meet the expenses for other important activities and new initiatives of the Missions abroad. The Committee, further, recommend that the re-appropriation of savings from other Heads should be resorted to sparingly.

**(Para No. 20)**

### Reply of the Government

The Ministry has been trying its best to limit the overall Administrative/Establishment expenditure in Missions/Posts abroad to the minimum amount required for meeting the mandatory functional needs of Missions/Posts. However, some increase becomes inevitable for reasons such as expansion of activities of Government of India, or variable factors entirely beyond Ministry's control including currency fluctuations, local inflation etc. Over the last about three years, the local currency fluctuations, inflation and normal price escalations have contributed to increased overall expenditure in terms of Indian Rupees. It is submitted that Ministry has tried to ensure, through close monitoring of the expenditure of Missions/Posts throughout the budgeting process - from the initial budgetary projections of Missions/Posts to RE and FE stages - that the expenditure is prudent and in accordance with the broader objectives and priorities of Government of India.

As recommended by the esteemed Committee, re-appropriation of savings will be resorted to sparingly.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

#### Recommendation

The Committee also observe that a number of vacancies are lying vacant in various Missions/Posts abroad, which in turn affect their day-to-day functioning. The Committee recommends the Ministry to take immediate steps for filling up the required number of vacancies in Missions/Posts.

**(Para No. 21)**

#### Reply of the Government

The vacant posts are filled as per prescribed administrative procedures and on the basis of functional requirements of the Missions concerned keeping in mind the number of posts available. There are instances when some posts remain vacant for short periods on account of administrative or other reasons. In the interest of functional efficiency of our Missions/Posts, it has been the endeavour of the Ministry to fill such vacant posts as soon as possible.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

#### Recommendation

The Committee observed that an amount of Rs. 121.86 crore was allocated to the Ministry at BE stage in the year 2004-2005 and the Ministry enhanced the amount to Rs. 159.98 at RE stage. The reason stated by the Ministry for enhancement of requirements at RE stage is that the hike in RE for 2004-2005 is primarily on account of payment towards various travel documents to India Security Press, Nasik. The higher BE projection of Rs. 140.55 crore for the year 2005-2006 is stated to have been made to meet the expenditure on travel documents, scanning of passport documents, machine-writing of passports, salaries, administration, payments to State Governments and Union Territories for their Passport related services, verifications etc. While emphasizing the need for full utilization of the budgetary allocations during the financial year, the Committee trust that the enhanced BE of Rs. 140.55 crore for the year 2005-2006 will be fully utilized so as to avoid variation between BE/RE and the Actuals.

**(Para No. 22)**

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry will ensure that there is no variation between the BE/RE figures and actual utilization.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### **Recommendation**

The Committee are surprised to find that in spite of their earlier recommendation regarding sending of proposal for acquiring land for construction of building for the Passport Offices, which are still functioning in rented buildings, the proposals have been received from Mumbai and Jalandhar only. The Committee find that the Ministry are not serious enough in the matter. The Committee, therefore, once again strongly recommend that the proposals for the construction of building/acquisition of built up properties may be obtained from the remaining Passport Offices without any further delay and the proposals so received be cleared and completed expeditiously.

(Para No. 25)

### **Reply of the Government.**

The Ministry is very serious about moving the Passport Offices in owned premises. On the directions of Hon'ble Standing Committee, Ministry expeditiously processed the proposal for procurement of land for RPO Mumbai. The same has now been approved. Regarding PO Jalandhar, efforts are underway to persuade the State Government to sell the land at the reserve price and not through auction.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### **Recommendation**

The Committee recommend that the premises of the Passport Offices, should be renovated and maintained property and while doing so, facilities for the general public/applicants visiting these offices be increased to the best possible extent till they move to more spacious premises where adequate facilities are available for the applicants and the staff. The Committee also suggest that the Ministry should lay down some standard parameters for future expansion of the Passport Offices. Since Passport Offices are earning substantial revenue for the Government, adequate funds may be allocated for renovation and upgradation of public facilities.

(Para No. 28)

### **Reply of the Government.**

Passport Offices have been instructed to improve public amenities for the applicants and project the requirement of funds in their estimates accordingly. As and when Passport Offices move to owned premises, the problems of space shortage and congestion will be taken care of. Scope for future expansion will be kept in mind while designing new premises for Passport Offices.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

Recommendation

The Committee have noticed that in some Passport Offices touts operate in collusion with officials working in the Passport Offices. The Committee, therefore, desire that no effort should be spared to identity such linkages and nexus with unscrupulous elements who are out to subvert the procedure and exploit the public. The Committee would recommend that strict legal action be taken against the guilty in the matter.

**(Para No. 29)**

**Reply of the Government.**

The Ministry will abide by the Hon'ble Committee's above recommendation.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

Recommendation

The Committee note with satisfaction the efforts of the Government to expedite the issue of passports to applicants in certain categories through the Tatkaal Scheme. The Committee desire that the Ministry should issue necessary instructions to al the Passport Offices by setting clear cut guidelines for making available passports to the applicants under this Scheme. The success of Tatkaal Scheme apart, the Committee would recommend that the entire procedure of issuing passports ought to be made very simple and transparent so that the common man, who generally does not have access to the Scheme, is also able to secure a passport without much hassles and running around.

**(Para No. 30)**

**Reply of the Government**

Ministry has also sent guidelines to Passport Offices to carry out process re-engineering with a view to simplify the passport issuance process and expediting issue of passports.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

Recommendation

The Committee note that the same amount has been allocated in BE 2005-06 to ICCR which was allocated at RE 2004-05 stage. The Ministry itself has submitted that the amount of Rs.57.50 crore allocated to ICCR in BE 2005-06 will not be sufficient to meet all the proposed/projected activities of ICCR. The ICCR projected an amount of Rs.68.00 crore for BE 2005-06. During the course of evidence, the Ministry has stated that 'efforts will be made at RE stage to seek additional funds to bridge the short fall'. The Committee recommend that the budget of ICCR may be supplemented properly to take up critical activities as per the plan of action. The Committee also recommend ICCR that when their Budget is also being supplemented from the capital Budget of the Ministry of External Affairs, they should avail of the opportunity positively and the projects pending since long should be initiated immediately.

**Reply of the Government.**

As per the recommendations of the Finance Committee of the Council, a subsidiary Plan of Action will be prepared at the time of the finalization of RE 2005-06. Accordingly, additional of funds will be requested at the RE stage.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

**Recommendation**

The Committee note that the ICCR has undertaken four new initiatives such as the task of digitizing the CDs of artists and putting them in a digital format, designing of website to make it more attractive and more user-friendly, initiative to cut the cost on the scheme to have our chairs abroad and sending cultural delegations to take part in major Cultural Festivals. The Committee also note that the ICCR has evolved a system called "Performance Audit" to assess their activities like performances of outgoing and incoming cultural troupes or the distinguished visitors whom ICCR invites. According to the Ministry, for this purpose, ICCR has evolved a simple questionnaire with 'yes' or 'no' questions for which audience, Artist as well as visiting dignitaries can give their comments very briefly. The Committee while appreciating the few initiatives taken by the ICCR recommend that ICCR should evolve more broad-based and effective mechanisms to assess quality and performance of all their major activities so that the efficacy of certain existing activities can be gauged and improved as also more effective and practical schemes/projects in pursuit of cultural diplomacy can be put in place.

(Para No. 36)

**Reply of the Government.**

In addition to the feedback on performance of cultural troupes sent by the Council abroad and inviting comments of incoming distinguished visitors on the relevance and efficiency of the programme, the Council has also started examining relevance, contribution and effectiveness of various activities under taken by the Indian Cultural Centres abroad. The performance report from the cultural centers, on periodic basis, inter alia relates to performance of the teaching faculty at the Cultural Centres and outreach programme undertaken by them, organization of exhibitions, seminars, conferences, film screening and book launches as well as maintenance and utilization of library and reading facilities.

These reports provide fairly a good idea on quality of performance of various activities undertaken by the Council and thus enable it to address the deficiencies noticed. In addition, the Council is also evolving a system of performance audit of our Centres at regular intervals.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)



### Recommendation

In reply to a recommendation (1<sup>st</sup> Report, 14<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha), the Ministry had informed the Committee that multilateral Economic Relation Division of Ministry of External Affairs has projected Rs. 1.50 crore at BE stage for RIS for Financial Year 2005-2006. The Committee find that the proposed enhanced allocation could not be made in BE 2005-2006 – despite a solemn commitment by the Government in this regard to the Committee. Viewing this seriously, the Committee recommend that RIS should be encouraged wholeheartedly and paucity of funds should not be allowed to come in its way.

**(Para No. 37)**

### Reply of the Government

The proposed enhanced allocation of Rs. 1.5 crores for RIS will be projected at the RE stage. However, RIS has been advised to also explore external financing so that paucity of funds does not come in the way of the work being done by the organization.

As recommended by the esteemed Committee, the allocation for RIS will be augmented at the RE stage.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee note that the Ministry is making efforts to make Hindi an official language of the UN since quite long time, but no headway has been made in this regard so far. The Ministry is furnishing only stereo-type replies to this effect. The Ministry has again informed that a High Level Committee to seek the direction in this regard has been formed. Three meetings of that Committee have since been held. Subsequently the Ministry has taken some follow-up action as an assessment report on the procedure, requirement and impediments for making Hindi an official language of the UN have been obtained. Financial implications as well as political and diplomatic efforts required are being assessed, “Advocacy paper” to present India’s case to the Indian Diaspora is also being prepared. The Committee are of the view that these exercises should be undertaken in a focused manner and a time frame should be fixed to achieve this goal. The Ministry should not leave this matter on its fate.

**(Para No. 39)**

### Reply of the Government

The Ministry has taken a few steps to expedite efforts to make Hindi an official language of the United Nations. The high level Committee already constituted on the subject by the External Affairs Minister under chairmanship of Minister of State for External Affairs, Shri Rao Inderjit Singh, and comprising veterans like Sri Madhukar Rao Choudhary and Dr. Ratnakar Pandey, met on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2005. A framework of the Advocacy Paper in this regard, which has now been prepared, has been discussed in the Committee’s meeting and suggestions in this regard have been invited. It is also relevant to mention that the Government of India is making efforts to become a permanent member of the

United Nations Security Council. It is hoped that India's inclusion in the Security Council will also boost our efforts to make Hindi an official language of the UN.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee note that the Indian Missions/Posts abroad promote and assist in the learning Hindi through correspondence courses conducted by Central Hindi Directorate. In 2004-2005, out of 100 slots, only 43 students could be admitted from 18 countries to learn Hindi at Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra. The Ministry informed that 115 applications were received in all and 43 students out of those were given admissions by the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra. Admissions are allowed by the Sansthan keeping various factors such as suitability of the candidates, number of applications received from a particular country in comparison to number of slots allotted to it. Final decision regarding admissions is taken only by Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra. The Missions have been advised to carefully scrutinize the nominations and forward the applications of the candidates who fulfill the criteria so that the available slots can be utilized to the maximum extent. Facilities for foreign students at the Central Hindi Institute, Agra also need to be improved to attract more students from abroad. The Committee would like to suggest that the Ministry can request Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra to give more admissions against the available slots, even if, it involves fixing a bit liberal criteria for the selection of foreign students and at the same time, the improvement of facilities to attract more students from abroad is also suggested so that the available slots can be utilized to the maximum extent.

**(Para No. 40)**

### Reply of the Government

As directed by the Hon'ble Standing Committee on External Affairs, the Kendriya Hindi Sansthan, Agra, has been requested to ensure increased admissions against available slots, and at the same time, they have also been requested to improve facilities to attract more students from abroad so that the available slots can be utilized to the maximum extent. As against 100 slots of last year, this year we have requested 139 slots from the Sansthan.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee note that the allocation under this head shows steep increasing trend over the years as Rs. 886.73 (BE 2002-03), Rs. 982.07 (BE 2003-04), Rs. 1158.39 (BE 2004-05) and Rs. 1432.79 crore is allocated in BE 2005-06, which shows the increase of 10.75%, 19.95% and 23.69 % respectively. The reasons furnished by the Ministry for such enhancement are increase in training slots and better utilisation and higher anticipated expenditure on projects in Indonesia, Cambodia and Yemen. The Ministry has stated that these programmes generate tremendous amount of goodwill in friendly developing countries also further India's political interests in these countries thereby strengthening bilateral relations. The popularity of the training projects can be gauged from the fact that the number of the foreign nominees attending these courses has gone up by nearly 22% in the past two years. The Ministry has

also stated that some new projects will be undertaken during the year 2005-06. The Committee are of the considered opinion that if these programmes generate considerable amount of goodwill in friendly developing countries and also further promote India's political and economic interests in these countries and strengthen bilateral relations then enhanced allocations under the Head are quite justified and the shortage of funds should not be allowed to come in the way.

(Para No. 41)

### **Reply of the Government.**

#### **Indonesia**

1. Indonesia is among the largest recipients of training slots under the ITEC programme. Over the past three years, a large number of applications were received from Indonesian Government nominees. Not only are the slots allocated to Indonesia are fully utilized, Embassy of India, Jakarta have on occasion even accommodated additional slots for Indonesian nominees in view of the popularity of the ITEC Training programme. Details of ITEC allocations for Indonesia utilized over the last three years are placed below:

Year	Slots Utilized
2002-03	29
2003-04	41
2004-05	78

2. At the first meeting of the India-Indonesia bilateral Joint Commission held on 1 September 2003, it was announced that the number of ITEC training slots for Indonesia would be enhanced to 75. However, during the current year, the number of slots stands reduced to 50. Embassy of India, Jakarta has drawn attention of the Technical Cooperation (TC) Division to the need to maintain the commitment already made at the 1<sup>st</sup> Joint Commission Meeting.

3. In addition to the ITEC Training, a Vocational Training Centre (VTC) for the Construction Sector has been equipped, installed and commissioned in Jakarta. The VTC was visualized in April 2002 when a MoU was signed between India and Indonesia. It provided for setting up of a centre to impart training in the trades of carpentry, masonry and brick works, steel works, welding etc. This project was undertaken under ITEC at a cost of Rs. 3.08 crores and is being implemented by National Small Industries Corporation Limited (NSIC). The Indonesian Minister for Public Works formally inaugurated VTC on 10<sup>th</sup> May 2005, when the first batch of Indonesian trainers concluded their training. The eight member Indian training team from NSIC are currently conducting the second training course for Indonesian trainees at this centre. The Indonesian Government has emphasized the importance of this Centre for their Construction Sector training.

4. The Embassy of India, Jakarta is holding further consultation with the Indonesian Ministry of Public Works regarding future ITEC projects, which can be undertaken in Indonesia. It is likely that a project similar to the one just completed may eventually be proposed to the Ministry for approval for a regional location outside Jakarta i.e. Aceh.

## **Cambodia**

1. The Archaeological Survey of India is currently working on the Ta Prohm temple restoration project. The project will entail an projected expenditure of Rs.19.57 crores when completed.
2. Cambodia is also to receive 50 ITEC training slots for civilian courses and 13 for defence courses for the current financial year. During the last few years, Cambodia has been fully utilizing ITEC slots allocated to it.

Undoubtedly, ITEC and SCAAP Programmes of the Ministry of External Affairs generate considerable amount of goodwill in friendly developing countries and also further promote India's political and economic interests and strengthen bilateral relations with these countries.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

## **Recommendation**

The Committee note that in the five audit exercises conducted jointly by CAG's office and Royal audit authorities of Bhutan some discrepancies/misappropriations of funds were detected. The Committee would like to be apprised of those discrepancies/misappropriations and the remedial measures that have been taken by the both Governments in this regard. The Committee recommend that the updating of detailed project report should be completed within a time frame and the modalities of revival of Dungsum Cement Plant should be finalised without any further loss of precious time so that the plant is reactivated at the earliest. The Committee also recommend that major Hydro-power Projects in Bhutan should be completed expeditiously.

**(Para No. 42)**

## **Reply of the Government.**

The audit of the Tala Project is conducted annually and settlement of audit paras is an ongoing exercise. As most of the outstanding paras pertain to the previous audit, the management of the Project is taking remedial measures and keeping the audit authorities informed. At this stage, there is no major discrepancy or misappropriation which has been brought to the notice of the two Governments.

A meeting of Dungsum Cement Project Authority (DCPA) was held in February 2005. It was decided that the Technical and Economic Feasibility Report (TEFR) should be updated and the modalities for reactivating the project discussed thereafter by the two Governments. The TEFR is expected to be updated by October 2005. It was also decided in the meeting of DCPA that the approach road in Assam to the project site should be upgraded on an urgent basis. As the approach road has been notified as NH 152, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways has been requested to take urgent necessary steps.

The Tala Hydro-electric Project is progressing well and is expected to be commissioned in 2006. The Detailed Project Report of Punatsangchu-I will also be completed in 2006 and the decision to undertake the project will be taken on the basis of recommendations in the DPR and in consultation with Royal Government of Bhutan. The DPRs for Punatsangchu-II and Mangdechu Project are being initiated shortly.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

According to the Ministry Doha Construction Project could not take off because the local government has decided to shift the site of the plot allocated to India to the new diplomatic enclave. The Head of Mission has taken up the matter of allotment of an alternate plot with the Qatar Government at the highest level. The Qatar government has informed that a fresh plot in the new diplomatic enclave is likely to be allotted to us by mid-2005. The Committee hope that after allotment of fresh plot in new diplomatic enclave, the project will be taken up on urgent basis and the Ministry will prepare a comprehensive plan of action for its timely completion. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the developments taking place from time to time in this regard.

**(Para No. 47)**

### Reply of the Government

The Qatari Government has indicated that allotment of new plot would be made after completion of on going designing work of the infrastructure of the new diplomatic enclave. The matter is being regularly pursued with the concerned Qatari authorities. Once the new plot is allotted, Ministry will take necessary steps for early commencement of the construction project and its completion in a timely manner. The Committee will be kept informed of the developments taking place from time to time.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee are constrained to note that the construction of Chancery, Embassy residences in Tashkent, Muscat, Tehran, Buenos Aires, Istanbul and Bahrain are pending since long. The Committee Expect that with the creation of a separate Projects Division headed by a J.S., greater impetus would be provided to the construction and acquisition of properties. The Committee recommend that the Projects Division of the Ministry should sincerely focus their efforts on all the pending projects and workout a fixed time schedule for the start and completion thereof.

**(Para No. 48)**

### Reply of the Government

Construction and acquisition of properties in the stations named above is receiving due attention of the Ministry. The position with regard to each of the stations is given below:

**Tashkent:** The Ministry is in the process of obtaining financial approval of competent authorities for implementing the project. After financial and local body approvals, construction is expected to take two years with another six months for interiors.

**Muscat:** Tenders are being invited afresh from short-listed contractors and it is hoped that work will be awarded by the end of this year after obtaining financial approval of the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure. The last tender could not go through because of the lowest bid amount being higher than the approved cost of the project.

**Tehran:** Additional funds are being sought to finance purchase of the Embassy Residence. Parallely, visit of a Property Team is being planned for negotiating and finalizing the purchase proposal.

**Buenos Aires:** Ministry has approved purchase of a built-up property for Chancery. The draft Sale Deed is under examination of the competent authorities.

**Istanbul:** Purchase proposals received from the Post in Istanbul were far too expensive than the economic cost. The post has been advised to locate economically viable alternative properties.

**Bahrain:** A plot of land has been purchased from the Bahraini Government for construction of the Chancery. The Mission is in the process of obtaining the title documents. A short-list of architects is being drawn up for conducting a design competition.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee note that the Videsh Bhavan (now known as the Jawaharlal Nehru Bhavan) is proposed to be constructed on a plot of land measuring 7.785 Acres at the junction of Janpath and Maulana Azad Road as headquarters of Ministry of External Affairs. In November 2003, it was decided to entrust the project to CPWD for design and execution. The concept design prepared by CPWD had been approved by the Delhi Urban Arts Commission and the Central Vista Committee at the conceptual stage with some observation. Simultaneously, the project had been approved from financial angle by the Committee for Non-Plan Expenditure at a cost of Rs. 175.57 crore. Financial approval of the Cabinet was being sought. CPWD had indicated that the construction of the building will take forty months after receipt of the approvals. The Committee are of the view that the construction of Videsh Bhavan seems to be inordinately delayed. The Committee would like that this should be expedited and the Committee may be apprised of the progress made in this regard.

(Para No. 49)

### Reply of the Government

While awaiting financial approval of the Cabinet for the Jawaharlal Nehru Bhawan project, physical possession of the work site has been handed over to the CPWD on May 12, 2005. Funds have been released to CPWD for setting up their site office and commencing preliminary pre-construction activities like soil testing, etc. A Core Group of officers within the Ministry has been set up to work out the detailed space requirements of the Ministry. Ministry has been holding regular meetings with officers of the Architectural Wing of CPWD for preparation

of detailed design development plan for seeking approval of local bodies. Note for Cabinet, in final form, had been sent to Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Urban Development and PMO for their information/comments before submission to Cabinet. The Cabinet has since accorded its financial approval on 25.07.2005.

**(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)**

### Recommendation

As far as the matter of Second Diplomatic Enclave is concerned, the Committee note that nothing has materialised so far in this regard. As the Ministry is saying repeatedly that, despite its best intentions of meeting requirements of diplomatic Missions in New Delhi, it can only recommend allotment of land to Missions, the decision on the allotment of land for the second diplomatic enclave rests entirely with the Ministry of Urban Development and Poverty Alleviation – the sole decision making authority in this regard. The Committee believe that both the Ministries are the arms of the Government. While they can understand that both these Ministries might have their own rules and regulations but when the matter is pending between two Ministries of the Government, such a long delay cannot be justified. The Committee, therefore, recommend that both the Ministries should place their respective cases before the Prime Minister and whatever the Prime Minister decides, should be acceptable and binding on both. However, the Committee desire that all these pending projects should gain momentum and be completed. The Committee would like to suggest that before the beginning of each of these projects, comprehensive plan of action should be prepared and accordingly accomplished.

**(Para No. 50)**

### Reply of the Government.

Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development has now indicated that the option of the Second Diplomatic Enclave at Sarojini Nagar would be difficult in view of the lack of space as well as requirement to change land use from “ residential and partly government offices to partly diplomatic enclave and partly residential”. He has suggested that they would be willing to give up to one hundred acres in Dwarka.

Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development has also indicated that there are about twenty vacant plots in Chanakyapuri available for allotment to diplomatic missions.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

## CHAPTER-III

### RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSRVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN THE VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT REPLIES

#### Recommendation

The Ministry has informed the Committee that in order to manage expenditure within the allocation for BE 2005-2006, they have to carry out a review of its various commitments and prioritize them to meet expenditure within the given allocation. The Ministry has also requested the Ministry of Finance to allocation an additional amount of Rs. 432.00 crore for 2005-2006 to enable it to meet the bilateral commitments, which cannot be delayed. The Committee recommends that at the time of forwarding Demands of Ministry, it should in the first instance have been well explained to the fund allocating Agency (i.e. MoF), so that the funds could be obtained as per requirements of the Ministry to enable it to meet bilateral commitments of the country in a satisfactory manner.

**(Para 10)**

#### Reply of the Government

While forwarding the Demands for Grants of the Ministry, detailed justification is invariably provided to the Ministry of Finance. Ministry of Finance, however, has been giving MEA an overall allocation - duly taking into account the previous years' allocations. MEA is required to manage within this overall allocation.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

#### Recommendation

During examination of Annual Report [2004-2005] of the Ministry, the Committee find that 2826 slots under ITEC and 716 slots and SCAAP programme were allotted in 2004-2005, but only 1819 and 494 trainees respectively availed of the slots, which, according to the Ministry, is due to unforeseen reasons such as administrative requirements, personal requirements [as ill health, death in family and other urgent reasons] some of the nominated candidates do not utilise the offer resulting in under utilisation of slots. Some of the candidates who have option to choose between the offers from India and other countries do not avail the offer from India. This results in cancellation in the eleventh hour and under-utilisation. It was also mentioned before the Committee that the number of slots utilised upto end of March 2005 was 1886 under ITEC and 535 under SCAAP. The Ministry also informed that efforts are being made to ensure better utilization of allotted slots in the coming year by upgrading the scale of accommodation for the trainees as well as increasing the amount of living allowance payable to them during the period of training in India. The Committee are concerned to note that about 30% slots remained unutilised under both the schemes. The Committee feel that the Ministry have not able to find out any suitable remedy to cope up with this problem. The Committee,



therefore, recommend that the Ministry should explore an effective mechanism so that the full utilisation of the allotted slots under these schemes is achieved.

**(Para No. 43)**

### **Reply of the Government.**

Reasons for under-utilisation of slots are unforeseen circumstances such as administrative requirements of the ITEC partner countries and personal requirements of the trainees. For instance, during the year 2004-05, over 3,600 sanctions approving training to nominated participants were issued and these were up to the slots approved for each country. However, nominated participants from some countries such as Tsunami hit countries could not join due to requirements in their countries concerned. MEA have no control over such circumstances.

The other reason for under-utilisation for offered slots is that some of the nominated candidates who have the option to choose between the offers between India and other countries do not avail the offers from India, as these are considered less attractive as compared to offers made by other countries, despite the fact that Indian training courses are quality courses. To cope up with this, MEA have taken steps to make the stay of the trainees more comfortable by enhancing the stipend from the present monthly rates of Rs.8,000 for category 'B' courses and Rs.5,000 for category 'B' courses to a uniform rate of Rs.10,000 per month. Proposal to provide better accommodation in hotels/hostels has been moved and is likely to be implemented shortly after administrative approval.

The training courses and the institutions imparting training are constantly reviewed in response to the needs. For the year 2005-06, over 20 new training courses have been added and 3 new institutions have also been empanelled.

The institutes and all the courses are widely advertised through ITEC website and printed booklets which have been distributed to Indian Missions abroad as well as Missions of ITEC partner countries located in New Delhi. These booklets were also widely distributed at "2<sup>nd</sup> South Summit" in Doha and also by PMI, New York. Indian Missions accredited to ITEC partner countries have also been asked to make extra efforts to widely publicise and ensure full utilisation of slots offered to their countries/countries of accreditation. All ITEC trainees are also encouraged to publicise their experiences in India during their training so that the Government and the people in their countries will know more about the excellent opportunities available under ITEC/SCAAP programme.

It is hoped that with increase in living allowance, better accommodation and introduction of new training courses and empanellment of three new institutes to meet the demands, civilian training slots will be fully utilised.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### **Recommendation**

The Committee note that under ITEC and SCAAP programmes Rs.35.5 crore was allocated at BE 2004-2005 stage, which was raised to Rs.50.50 crore at RE stage. However, expenditure incurred up to 31 January, 2005 under this Head was Rs.38.86 crore, while the utilisation of allotted slots was a little more

than half of the total allotted slots. Thus, the expenditure incurred as on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2005 was much higher than the amount allocated at BE stage. The Committee find that there was gross under-estimation of the expenditure for these programmes at the BE 2004-2005 stage and the allocation of Rs.50.50 crore at RE stage was not sufficient had there been full utilisation of the allotted slots. The Committee do not agree with the reply furnished by the Ministry that the estimates more or less correspond to the expenditure that has been incurred during the year. From this, the Committee feel that the Ministry is only trying to justify its under-estimation of funds under this Head. Accordingly, the Committee conclude that the Ministry are presuming that slots will remain unutilised, hence enhancement in allocation is not required as such. The Committee recommend the Ministry to make all the possible efforts for full utilisation of slots and allocating sufficient funds for that purpose.

**(Para No. 44)**

### **Reply of the Government.**

It is true that the number of training slots offered were usually not fully utilised for reasons explained earlier. Keeping the trend in view, the number of slots offered the year 2005-06 have been reviewed to bring it nearer to the possible utilisation and the number of slots offered is 2,983. This will help the Ministry to better plan and manage the programmes. Increase in living allowance, better accommodation and more training courses and empanelment of new institutions to broad base the courses are the steps taken to enhance the utilisation of slots. For the purpose, a sum of Rs. 45 crore under ITEC and Rs.5.5 crore under SCAAP have been allocated in the year 2005-06, as compared to actual utilisation of Rs.46.77 crore on providing training in civilian and defence courses, projects and deputation of experts under ITEC and Rs.5.28 crore for training under SCAAP in the year 2004-05.

It may be mentioned that the funds allocated under ITEC are used for providing training in civilian and defence courses, projects and deputation of experts. Funds allocated under SCAAP are utilised for training in civilian courses only.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### **Recommendation**

The setting up of the Embassy Complex in Brazil is one of the conspicuous cases by itself, where in spite of repeated recommendations by the Committee for prioritizing the Brazil project and expediting the construction of the Embassy premises, the Ministry has not been able to make any headway and as such the idea of having Embassy Complex in Brazil has not been fructified as yet. The Project has been hanging fire for the last 40 years or so resulting in cost escalation from an estimated US \$3.37 lakh in 1971 to an estimated US\$ 30 lakh in 2004. Besides, huge expenditure was incurred during all these years on payment of rent, which could have been utilized for construction project in Brazil. However, the Ministry, in its reply, have once again simply stated in quite a routine manner that the language barrier in Brazil has been contributing to the delay. The Committee are totally dissatisfied by the reasons advanced by the Ministry in this regard. They are of the firm opinion that no logical reason could

stall the project for such a long period, particularly when the land gifted for the project was free from all encumbrances. The Committee would now desire the Ministry to prepare a time schedule for different stages involved in the construction of Embassy building on this plot of land, initiate all necessary steps to complete the project accordingly and keep the Committee apprised of the progress made in this regard from time to time.

**(Para No. 46)**

### **Reply of the Government**

The cost estimates and design concept provided by the Consultant were submitted to the Internal Finance in April 2005 for vetting. In the course of their examination, the latter have pointed out some discrepancies and arithmetical inaccuracies in the cost estimates. In the design concept also, some deviations from the design brief have been found. Mission has been requested to obtain necessary clarifications from the Consultant.

2. The time-schedule for completion of the project would be indicated by the Consultant at the tender stage. The Hon'ble Committee will be kept informed of the progress in the matter.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

## **CHAPTER-IV**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSRVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND REQUIRE REITERATION**

#### **Recommendation**

The Committee note that despite constructing/acquiring buildings for chanceries at 77 stations, residences for Head of Missions at 83 stations and acquiring 610 residential apartments for other officials at 44 stations, the Ministry has not been able to reduce the rental liabilities so far. Taking into account the fact that a large number of buildings have been hired by the Ministry in India and abroad, the Committee wonder as to how the Ministry would be able to reduce the rental liability in a substantial way – with limited plans of construction/acquisition. While deploring lackadaisical approach of the Ministry towards acquisition of properties/construction of buildings, the Committee strongly recommend the Ministry to draw a comprehensive and time-bound long term plan with adequate budgetary support and regular monitoring mechanism in place to gradually accommodate all their offices, Missions, residences in their own buildings to be acquired / constructed. The Committee are of the firm view that this will not only save huge rental outgo in the short run but also create assets for the country in the long run with the advantage of capital gains.

**(Para No. 13)**

#### **Reply of the Government**

Mindful of the high rental outgo on buildings hired for official as well as residential accommodation abroad, the Ministry had identified 18 stations with high rental liability. Missions in these stations have been requested to forward specific proposals for Ministry's consideration. Specific proposals from many of the stations are yet to be received because of non-availability of suitable properties/long lease of the existing rented premises.

2. As a result of the Ministry's concerted efforts, there has been progress in acquiring properties in two stations. Ministry has approved purchase of a plot of land for Chancery in Bahrain and built-up property for Chancery in Buenos Aires. Purchase proposal in respect of Tehran is under active consideration and Ministry proposes to seek supplementary grant to meet the cost of this proposal, as existing budgetary allocation is insufficient. Ministry, in the current financial year, has already approved purchase of a built-up property for Embassy Residence in Georgetown and Embassy Residence-cum-Chancery in Ulan Bataar.

3. With regard to construction projects, construction activity is likely to begin in Singapore, Abuja, Muscat and Warsaw in the current financial year. Some of the other projects are in an advanced stage of planning and pre-construction activity.

4. As for drawing up a comprehensive and time bound long term plan with adequate budgetary support, it may be mentioned that given the diverse social, political and commercial conditions prevailing in different countries, a universal approach to acquisition of properties is not possible. Within the constraints noted above, it is the endeavour of the Ministry to ensure that the construction projects and acquisition of properties are both fast tracked so as to reduce rental liabilities of the Ministry.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

#### Recommendation

The Committee find that the reasons advanced by the Ministry for under utilization of funds under the Head Advertising and Publicity are too general, not properly analysed and repetitive in nature. The Committee are constrained to point out that at the time of examination of demands for Grants of the Ministry for the year 2003-2004, the Ministry had cited somewhat similar reasons; stating that the expenditure on Advertising and Publicity could not be fully made due to India's nuclear tests, the Kargil incursion, IAC hijacking, Gujarat earthquake, World Trade Center attacks on September 11 and terrorists attack on Parliament.

The continuous variations in Actual Expenditure vis-a-vis BE/RE over the past years establishes the faulty budget estimation and more so, its execution by the Ministry. The Committee further find that though the Ministry has stated that it has been working in a coordinated manner with various Missions in drawing up their publicity plans and regular review is also undertaken to ensure better utilization of publicity budget, yet these efforts have failed to yield the desired results; as a result thereof, Ministry's publicity plans and budget are going haywire. The Committee, therefore, would like to recommend the Ministry to totally re-orientate its XP Division in prudently projecting and ensuring utilization of the funds allocate to it, so that the External Publicity, which is the most important area of Ministry's functioning and can be largely instrumental in projecting the opportunities available in the country in diverse fields to the outside world and in pursuing economic diplomacy, is handled professionally. The Committee hope that the Lobbying Firm in United States is functioning satisfactorily. They would like to be assured of the same.

**(Para No. 14)**

#### Reply of the Government.

Over the past few years the External Publicity Division has indeed re-oriented its publicity objectives and priorities. There is a lot of focus now on projecting the rapid strides made by India in areas like economy, S&T, IT, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, developmental issues etc besides the important role being played by India in world affairs. The opportunities available in various sectors in India are also consistently highlighted in promotional activities organized by the Indian Embassies and Missions. India is projected as a major destination for FDI.

At the Headquarters this emphasis is apparent from the documentaries and brochures brought out by the Division. For example, in 2004-05 out of the 15 documentaries produced 6 were on issues like IT, biotechnology, child labor, democracy etc. Similarly, the focus of publications was projecting India's achievements and its appeal as a land of opportunity. The Division also invites

senior foreign journalists on familiarization visits to India. These journalists visit various scientific, industrial and academic institutions and meet with business leaders and senior officials in key areas. Many of them have written extremely positive stories on India in foreign newspapers and magazines.

Our Missions are also consciously making efforts to project the opportunities available in India through business seminars, exhibitions, buyer-seller meets etc. Most of these activities are done in close cooperation with business chambers like CII, FICCI etc and have proved to be very successful. For example, Indian Embassy Beijing organized an India Day in Chengdu, Sichuan in May 2005 projecting Indian industry, tourism and India's cultural diversity as a package. An Indian Business Seminar was held as part of the India Day with participation of leading Indian companies like TCS, Ranbaxy, NIIT etc and over 70 Chinese companies.

In light of the Standing Committee recommendation the Division has renewed its focus on these publicity objectives. In the current financial year two publications "India: Partner for Development in the South" and "India-Africa: Partners in Peace and Development" have already been brought out. More such publications on India's aid to Afghanistan, India-China Joint Study Group Report on Comprehensive Trade and Economic Cooperation, emerging India etc are planned. Documentaries on India's bilateral and multilateral economic relations, technology applications in rural areas, women entrepreneurs etc are also planned.

The details of specific economic publicity activities planned by the Missions have also been obtained and the Ministry is ensuring full support for these activities.

We had engaged a firm M/s Akin Gump Strauss Hauer Feld LLP for the purposes of lobbying in the USA. The contract as initially signed by the Embassy of India, Washington DC for a period from February to December 2003 was later extended thrice on quarterly basis up to September 2004. The lobbying firm had been rendering its services satisfactorily and the extension of contact was based on periodic reviews and recommendations of the Embassy.

However, in September 2004, the contract with the firm was allowed to expire in view of the fact that the US Congress had gone into a recess till January 2005 and US Administration was involved in Presidential elections scheduled for November 2004. This meant that there was very limited scope for lobbying activity till well after the new Administration and the new Congress returned to work in January 2005.

The Embassy utilized the time so obtained to undertake a comprehensive review of our requirements and changing priorities and to undertake a new exercise of selecting the lobbying firm based on this review. After making due assessments, our Ambassador has sent a proposal on 20 May 2005 recommending appointment of M/s Barbour, Griffith & Rogers, LLC as our lobbyist for a period of one year starting from June 1, 2005. The proposal is presently under consideration of the Ministry of External Affairs.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

## Recommendation

The Committee had desired to know as to whether the Indian Missions abroad have drawn up any action plans for intensive publicity campaign during the year 2005-2006. In response, the Ministry has given information in respect of merely eight Missions only. While going through the specific publicity initiatives mentioned in respect of these eight Missions, the Committee have felt that none of these Missions have proposed anything specific and different in their initiatives. The usual publicity measures have only been projected before the Committee as specific publicity initiatives- which, in the opinion of the Committee, might not have any significant impact in their publicity drives or showcase India's interests or achievements to the outside world. The Committee are also concerned to note that only a small number of Missions are taking some initiatives in the matter.

**(Para No. 15)**

## Reply of the Government

As per the recommendation of the Committee the Action Plans with specific publicity initiatives from a significant number of our Missions have been obtained. The list of these Missions is as given below:

### ACTION PLANS 2005 – 2006 WITH SPECIFIC PUBLICITY INITIATIVES FROM INDIAN MISSIONS/POSTS ABROAD

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Name of the Mission</b>	
1.	High Commission of India	Accra
2.	Embassy of India	Addis Ababa
3.	Embassy of India	Almaty
4.	Embassy of India	Ankara
5.	Embassy of India	Austria (Vienna)
6.	Embassy of India	Baku
7.	Embassy of India	Bangkok
8.	Embassy of India	Belgrade
9.	Embassy of India	Bogota
10.	Embassy of India	Cairo
11.	Embassy of India	Caracas
12.	Embassy of India	Copenhagen
13.	Embassy of India	Doha
14.	Consulate General of India	Durban
15.	Embassy of India	Dushanbe
16.	High Commission of India	Dhaka
17.	Embassy of India	Harare
18.	Embassy of India	Kuwait
19.	Embassy of India	Lima
20.	Consulate General of India	Munich
21.	Consulate General of India	Medan
22.	Embassy of India	Minsk
23.	Embassy of India	Moscow

24.	High Commission of India	Nairobi
25.	High Commission of India	Lagos
26.	Consulate General of India	Osaka Kobe
27.	High Commission of India	Ottawa
28.	Embassy of India	Panama
29.	Embassy of India	Phnom Penh
30.	High Commission of India	Port Moresby
31.	Embassy of India	Riyadh
32.	Consulate General of India	Shanghai
33.	Consulate General of India	St. Petersburg
34.	Embassy of India	Thimpu
35.	Embassy of India	Tokyo
36.	Consulate General of India	Vladivostok
37.	High Commission of India	Windhoek
38.	Embassy of India	Yangon
39.	Embassy of India	Phnom Penh
40.	Embassy of India	Paramaribo
41.	Embassy of India	Yerevan

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

#### Recommendation

The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry may obtain information regarding specific publicity initiatives from all our Missions for the current fiscal. The Committee would like to be informed about details of specific publicity action Plans, if any, drawn up by our Missions in the economically and strategically important countries for India and also funds earmarked for such publicity drives.

**(Para No. 16)**

#### Reply of the Government

As mentioned above the Action Plans with specific publicity initiatives of some of our Missions are placed above (See Reply of Para 15). These also include specific plans drawn up by our Missions in some of the economically and strategically important countries alongwith the funds earmarked for these activities.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

#### Recommendation

The Committee express their concern over the fact that 16 Passport Offices namely Bhubaneswar, Bangalore, Bhopal, Guwahati, Jalandhar, Jammu, Jaipur, Lucknow, Mumbai, Pune, Ranchi, Trichy, Surat, Thiruvananthapuram, Thane and Vishakapatnam, are still functioning in the rented buildings involving annual rental outgo of Rs. 3.60 crore. The Committee, therefore, recommend the Ministry to chalk out a comprehensive plan to either acquire suitable properties or to take up the matter with the respective State Governments for early allotment of suitable land for the construction of remaining passport offices as well as the residential complexes on priority basis.



**Reply of the Government.**

Construction of new Passport premises is underway in Lucknow and Bangalore. Recently, Ministry has procured a plot of land for construction of owned premises in Mumbai. In Bhubaneshwar, the drawings and financial estimates have been approved. CPWD has given a time-frame of two years for construction of the building. In Jaipur, the Jaipur Development Authority has been requested to expedite the approval of the drawings. In Guwahati, the mutation of the land in Ministry's name is expected to be completed shortly. Jalandhar has submitted a proposal for procurement of land on auction basis. The State Government has been requested to give us the land at the reserve price and not through the process of auction.

Once the ongoing construction projects are completed, the rental liability on account of Passport Offices will come down substantially from the figure of Rs 3.6 crore annually.

Effectively, eight Passport Offices have not sent us any concrete proposals. These eight offices are: Bhopal, Pune, Ranchi, Surat, Trichy, Trivandrum, Thane and Vizag. These offices have been separately instructed to get in touch with the concerned State authorities and send us concrete proposals to this effect.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

**Recommendation**

The Committee had expressed their unhappiness over the fact that although the Chief Minister, Assam had offered a plot of land free of cost to construct the building for the Passport Office, Guwahati but nothing has been done so far and the Passport Office, Guwahati is still functioning in a rented building. The Committee feel that the Ministry should have pursued the matter at the highest level in right earnest which in their considered opinion has not been done. The Committee would like to stress upon the fact that since the Passport Office, Guwahati, which is catering to the need of all seven North-Eastern States, is facing extreme space shortage, urgent action is required to construct a new building for it. The Committee, therefore, urge upon the Ministry to expedite the examination of the proposal in hand for an early action in the matter.

**(Para No. 24)**

**Reply of the Government.**

The Deputy Commissioner, Kamrup has been requested to personally intervene in this matter. The matter is expected to be resolved shortly.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

As regards inadequacy of staff, the Committee urge upon the Central Passport Organisation to fill up the vacant posts immediately particularly those at the operational and first supervisory levels. The Committee also suggest that pending formal selection of staff and also to meet sudden increase in the workload, the RPOs/POs may be vested with necessary administrative and financial powers to recruit qualified temporary staff in clerical and messengerial grades on daily wages through the local employment exchanges. The Committee recommend the Ministry to have a fresh look at the Cadre of the CPO in view of the increase in the workload in various RPOs across the country. However, as a temporary measure, the Committee would suggest that the Ministry should firm up a transfer policy for utilizing the existing staff whereby the surplus staff in certain RPOs can be transferred to those RPOs where there is shortage.

(Para No. 26)

### Reply of the Government

A work-study by the Staff Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Finance is underway in Passport Offices to decide upon the quantum of augmentation of staff at various levels in Passport Offices. Once this exercise is completed, additional staff will be made available to Passport Offices. The exercise of Cadre Review can be carried out once the study is completed. Ministry is also exploring the possibility of outsourcing the services of data entry operators to tide over the shortage of staff. Due to the existing GoI rules and regulations, additional Casual Workers cannot be engaged in Passport Offices.

To meet the immediate staff shortage, Ministry has prepared a proposal for outsourcing of manpower to carry out specific tasks in Passport Offices. The proposal has been examined by the Internal Finance Division of the Ministry which has suggested certain changes. The same have been noted and the proposal is being resubmitted.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### Recommendation

The Committee also observed that a number of posts are lying vacant in various Passport Offices. Also, Passport Offices at least in Capital Cities of Uttranchal, Chattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh could not be opened due to shortage of staff. Keeping in view the increasing work load in various Passport Offices, the Committee desire that necessary steps be taken to fill up the vacant posts and also to create new posts at supervisory levels at the earliest so that the new Passport Offices could become operational soon and the increased work load could be reduced. The Committee also desire that the Ministry may consider the feasibility of opening of Passport Office at Agra also for the convenience of applicants from various districts of U.P. such as Firozabad, Etah, Mathura, Aligarh, Hathras, Jhansi, Lalitpur, Mohaba, Hamirpur and Banda.

(Para No. 27)

### **Reply of the Government.**

Opening of Passport Offices in the state capitals of Uttaranchal, Chattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh will be carried out only after an augmentation of the staff strength in the Central Passport Organisation. As regards opening of a Passport Office at Agra, a study of the existing workload will need to be carried out.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### **Recommendation**

The Committee note that with joining of kathak and Tabla Teacher, the Cultural Center in Suva has started functioning from the Embassy Premises in February, 2005. The Committee also note that, classes are being conducted at the Fiji India Cultural Centre, Indian College and the MGM High School and the Yoga Teacher designate for the sub-center at Lautoka is expected to join in May, 2005. The Committee feel that the progress made so far is not sufficient. Even after taking such a long time the Ministry is not in a position to say till date that task has been accomplished. Therefore, the Committee recommend that remaining formalities regarding Cultural Centres Suva and Lautoka should be completed in a fixed time schedule. The Committee also recommend that the Ministry should process the already pending proposals with it to open up Cultural Centers in Beijing, Tokyo, Tehran and Kathmandu at the earliest.

**(Para No. 35)**

### **Reply of the Government.**

The Cultural Centre in Suva has started operating from the Embassy premises in February 2005. Kathak and Tabla teachers have already joined the Cultural Centre and started regular classes. The Yoga Teacher for the Sub-Center at Lautoka has also joined in May 2005. While the residences for all the teachers have been secured, the Mission's proposal for hiring premises for the Cultural Centre in Suva along with the Council's recommendations are under consideration of the Ministry.

The Mission in Tokyo has been advised to start the Cultural Centre from the Embassy premises and the Council proposes to open the Centre by deputing a Yoga Teacher. Further expansion will be taken up when Mission locates a suitable premises.

The new Cultural Centres at Beijing, Tehran and Kathmandu will be opened subject to the allocation of requisite additional posts and budgetary resources.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### **Recommendation**

The Committee note that the Ministry had earlier stated that the works related to Sapru House will be completed in financial year 2004-2005, but the same has not been completed so far. On the question of formation of "Governing

Body” of the Council, the Ministry informed the Committee that the activities of the ICWA have not been affected adversely but the formation of the Governing Body could facilitate the demands for enhanced funding of ICWA activities and research. The Committee is of the view that without the Governing Body, no institution can function effectively for want of proper direction. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Governing Body of the Council should be constituted without further delay, so that the responsibilities entrusted upon the Council can be fulfilled without any constraints. The Committee also recommend that necessary renovation work in Sapru House should be completed by the end of May 2005.

**(Para No. 38)**

### **Reply of the Government.**

Ministry has initiated action to constitute the Governing Body of the Council. The Ministry is confident this will be completed in due course of time and the Governing Body will be in place before the end of the current financial year 2005-2006.

The renovation of the Sapru House is an ongoing process. Major repairs and related civil works in the main building has been completed by end May 2005. In the current financial year, the main building will be re-painted and given a face-lift. In addition, the annex to Sapru House will undergo repairs and related civil works. Subject to availability of funds, the work will be completed by end March 2006.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### **Recommendation**

The Committee going by the percentage variation figure over the last three years, note that there is a steep negative variation i.e. to the tune of Rs. 26.56% and 40% respectively under the Major Heads 4059 and 4216. The Ministry has informed the Committee that based on the progress of various ongoing construction projects and likely acquisition of properties abroad, Ministry had sought an allocation of Rs. 80 crore under MH 4059 and Rs. 30 crore under MH 4216 in its proposal to Ministry of Finance for BE 2005-2006. In view of the budgetary allocation agreed to by the Ministry of Finance being less than what was projected by MEA and taking note of other pressing requirements, capital outlay for public works (Major Head 4059) was kept at Rs. 51.41 crore and Capital Outlay for Housing (Major Head 4216) at Rs. 15 crore. In fact, the projected BE 2005-2006 figures of the Ministry represented a positive variation of 14.29% under MH 4059 and of 20% under Major Head 4216 vis-à-vis BE 2004-2005 allocation. The Committee are not convinced with the reply furnished by the Ministry that projected BE 2005-2006 figures of Ministry represented variation of 14.29% under Major Head 4059 and of 20% under Major Head 4216 vis-à-vis BE 2004-2005 allocation. In the opinion of the Committee, if projected amount could not be obtained, it serves no purpose just to say that there was a positive variation under these Heads. The Committee feel that the Ministry perhaps could not project their requirements properly, as a result of which, the required amount could not be obtained. The Committee, therefore, desire that while securing funds under particular Heads, proper justification should be given before the fund allocating authority so that the desired funds can be obtained at a right time.

**Reply of the Government**

Proper justification was provided for seeking an enhanced budgetary allocation under major heads 4059 and 4216 for the financial year 2005-06. However, since the overall approved budgetary allocation for the Ministry was lower than the projected figures, allocation under Capital Outlay was accordingly reduced. In fact, insufficiency of funds under Capital Outlay is proving to be a hindrance in pursuing some of the acquisition projects, which are under active consideration of the Ministry. Ministry proposes to seek additional funds under Major Head 4059 and Major Head 4216 through supplementary grant.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

## CHAPTER-V

### RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSRVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

#### Recommendation

The Committee, during their study visits to various Passport Offices, have noted with concern the plight of a large number of casual labourers employed there. The casual labourers working there for the last several years have been entrusted with various kinds of jobs but their requests for the regularisation of their services have not been considered favourably so far. The Committee, however, find that the Ministry had regularized the services of 34 casual labourers and 139 casual labourers were given temporary status but about 200 casual labourers still remain to be regularized. The Committee, therefore, urge the Government that priority may be given to regularize the services of remaining 200 casual labourers as and when the permanent vacancies under Group 'C' and Group 'D' fall vacant.

**(Para No. 31)**

#### Reply of the Government.

The existing Government rules do not allow for regularization of Casual Workers against vacant Group C posts. Regularisation against vacant Group D posts is permitted. However, there are very few such vacant posts available due to which this process will take some time.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

#### Recommendation

The Committee note that "Advisory Committees" for Regional offices in Jaipur and Mumbai have been constituted and first meeting of these Advisory Committees will be held soon. The Committee are not satisfied with the constitution of only two Advisory Committees and hope that similar Committees for the remaining Regional offices will be constituted shortly. The Committee recommend that the creation of posts, which is necessary for opening of new Regional offices should be processed without losing any further further time and Regional centers at Bhopal, Bhubaneswar and North-eastern Region, which had already been proposed to be opened, should be opened on top priority basis in order to remove the regional imbalances.

**(Para No. 33)**

#### Reply of the Government

The meeting of the Advisory Committees for Regional Offices in Jaipur and Mumbai have not been held. Action for the constitution of Advisory Committees for other Regional Offices has been initiated.

The Council has already moved a proposal for creation of new posts which are necessary for opening of new Regional Offices. In response, Ministry of Finance have sought clarifications regarding cadre structure of the Council. Necessary information will shortly be furnished to the Ministry of Finance.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

### **Recommendation**

So far as the question of setting up of a Cultural Centre in Washington is concerned, the Committee express its unhappiness over the fact that at least on five occasions in the past, opportunities have been allowed to slip out of hands due to lack of will on the part of Ministry. Now, as a new proposal has since emerged, the Ministry should seize this opportunity firmly so that the project regarding the opening of Cultural Center can be realized.

**(Para No. 34)**

### **Reply of the Government.**

The latest proposal of the Mission for purchase of a property to serve as the Cultural Centre is under active consideration of the Ministry. Views of the user agency, namely, ICCR have been sought. The proposal has also been examined by the Ministry's Technical Cell. Issues raised by ICCR and Technical Cell have been conveyed to the Mission for seeking clarifications and also for confirmation of the suitability of location of the building from point of view of holding large-scale public functions and non-availability of dedicated parking area. Mission has also been requested to confirm the likely cost of repair and renovation of the building presently being used as a Church, to get an idea of the total financial implication involved. Based on the Mission's feedback, visit of a Property Team would be planned to examine the proposal from various angles.

(No.AA/125/Parl/38/2005 dated July 26, 2005)

**NEW DELHI;**

December, 2005/Agrahayana, 1927 (Saka)  
Affairs

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

**MINUTES OF THE SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL  
AFFAIRS HELD ON 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2005**

**The Committee sat from 1530 hrs. to 1630 hrs.**

PRESENT

**Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey – Chairman**

**MEMBERS**

Lok Sabha

2. Shri S.P. Singh Baghel
3. Shri Narayan Chandra Borkataky
4. Shri Vinod Khanna
5. Shri Dinsha Patel
6. Shri Sebastian Paul
7. Dr. (Col.) Dhani Ram Shandil
8. Shri Damodar Barku Shingada
9. Shri Madhu Goud Yashki

II. Rajya Sabha

10. Smt. Prema Cariappa
11. Shri Jana Krishnamurthy K
12. Dr. Mahendra Prasad

Secretariat

1. Shri S.K. Sharma - Additional Secretary
2. Shri U.S. Saxena - Director
3. Dr. Ram Raj Rai - Under Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairman welcomed Members to the sitting of the Committee.

3. The Committee then took up for consideration the draft 8<sup>th</sup> Action Taken Report on the recommendations contained in the 7<sup>th</sup> Report (14<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of External for the year 2005-2006. The Chairman invited the Members to offer their suggestions, if any, for incorporation in the draft Report. The Members offered minor modifications.

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5. The Committee desired that modifications suggested by the Members be suitably incorporated in the body of the Report.

6. The Committee then adopted the draft Action Taken Reports and authorized the Chairman to finalise the Action Taken Reports and present the same to Parliament.

*The Committee then adjourned*

*(Vide Introduction of Report)*

**ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE SEVENTH REPORT OF  
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (14<sup>TH</sup> LOK SABHA)**

<b>I.</b>	<b>Total Number of Recommendations</b>	50
<b>II.</b>	<b>Observations/Recommendations, which have been accepted by the Government.</b>	
	Para Nos. 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,11,12,17,18,19,20,21,22,25, 28,29,30,32,36,37,39,40,41,42,47,48,49 and 50	
	Total	32
	Percentage	64%
<b>III.</b>	<b>Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government replies.</b>	
	Para Nos. 10,43,44 and 46	
<b>III.</b>	<b>Total</b>	
	<b>04</b>	
	Percentage	8%
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and require reiteration.</b>	
	Para Nos. 13,14,15,16,23,24,26,27, 35,38 and 45	
	Total	11
	Percentage	22%
<b>V.</b>	<b>Observations/Recommendations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited.</b>	
	Para Nos. 31, 33 and 34	
	Total	03
	Percentage	6%

## **Appendix-III**

### **STATEMENT OF OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Para No.</b>	<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Observations/Recommendations</b>
1.	9	External Affairs	<p>The Committee are not at all convinced with the justification given by the Ministry for not drawing up a comprehensive and time-bound programme with adequate budgetary support for acquiring properties abroad with an objective to reduce the rental liabilities on account of buildings hired for official as well as residential accommodations abroad. They have identified 18 stations with high rental liability but, they have not shown the desired determination to purchase/acquire properties on these stations. The Committee welcome the recent initiatives taken in the direction of acquiring properties at some stations and desire that the Government should take initiatives for an early acquisition of properties for Chancery in Bahrain and Chancery in Buenos Aires and Tehran and also the approved proposals for Embassy Residence in Georgetown and Embassy Residence-Cum-Chancery in Ulan Bator. The Committee also desire that construction activities in Singapore, Abuja, Muscat and Warsaw should start at the earliest for a timely completion of these projects. The Committee once again desire that the Ministry should prepare a comprehensive and time-bound short term plan for 18 identified stations with high rental liability followed by a long term plan for all other stations considering all the factors like diverse social, political and commercial conditions prevailing in those countries. The Committee are of the view that without any long-term plan and proper monitoring, they may not be able to accommodate all their offices, missions, and residences in their own buildings.</p>
2.	20	External Affairs	<p>The Committee are happy to note that the Ministry has reoriented its publicity objectives and priorities in the light of recommendation of</p>

			<p>the Committee and they have taken some praiseworthy initiatives in this direction. The Committee hope that these new initiatives in the form of publications and documentaries will help in projecting India as preferred destination for FDI in future. The Committee however note that while preparing such publicity materials, the Ministry has been adopting macro-level approaches incorporating only general types of issues. The committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should adopt a micro-level approach and try to incorporate and highlight the specific issues relating to the concern countries which could be resolved with the help of Indian Government. The Committee once again desire that the Ministry should continue similar efforts by utilizing the funds allocated for this purpose professionally. The Committee have noted that due to presidential elections, there was very limited scope for lobbying activity in USA till new Congress returned to work in January, 2005. So, the contract with the new firm was allowed to expire. The Committee also note that the new proposal sent by our Ambassador for appointment of lobbying firm is under consideration of the Ministry. The Committee, therefore, recommend that all formalities regarding appointment of the lobbying firm should be completed without any further delay and the Committee may be apprised of the latest position in this regard.</p>
3.	25	External Affairs	<p>The Committee had categorically desired to be informed about the details of specific publicity plan drawn up by our missions in the economically and strategically important countries for India and also funds earmarked for such publicity drives. But surprisingly the Ministry has not been able to furnish the relevant information. The Committee are anguished to note such a casual approach of the Ministry and desire that the details of the action plan with specific publicity initiatives may</p>

			<p>be obtained from our missions including funds earmarked for each such publicity drive and the action taken thereon may be furnished to the Committee without hiding any facts.</p>
4.	31-32	External Affairs	<p>The Committee are really surprised to note that no significant progress has been made during the last several years regarding construction of the Passport Office premises at various Passport Offices and the Ministry has been furnishing more or less same stereo type replies for the last 2-3 years. Rent liability on these offices has been increasing continuously. The Committee have repeatedly been asking the Ministry to chalk out a comprehensive plan to either acquire suitable properties and to take up the matter with the respective State Governments for an early allotment of suitable land for construction of Passport Offices as well as the residential complexes on priority basis. But, the Ministry has so far not taken any concrete initiative in this direction and has left the matter to the respective passport offices. The Committee, therefore, strongly criticize the approach of the Ministry and reiterate that the Ministry should now come up with a comprehensive plan of action to complete the projects in hand in the shortest possible time and persuade the remaining eight Passport Offices/State Governments who have not submitted any concrete proposal for constructing their own premises in a time-bound manner.</p> <p>The Committee are anguished to note the lackadaisical approach of the Ministry in resolving the matter relating to construction of building for Guwahati Passport Office. The Committee, therefore, strongly reiterate that the Ministry should take all initiatives for an early construction of the building for Passport Office, Guwahati in consultation with the State Government and apprise the Committee about the latest position in this regard.</p>

5.	36	External Affairs	<p>The Committee apprehend that the proposed work study by the staff Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Finance may take their own time. In view of the reply given by the Ministry, it seems that this process may take more time, therefore, the Ministry has taken initiatives for outsourcing the manpower for Passport Offices. The Committee are of the view that passport making process is a very sensitive matter and outsourcing of it may not be in national interest. The Committee feel that in this process, there is the possibility of sensitive information furnished by applicants being misused by anti social elements or even touts can exploit the condition easily. The Committee, therefore, recommend that in view of sensitivity of the matter, the Ministry of External Affairs should undertake the matter at the highest level for an early completion of the work study by the Staff Inspection Unit of the Ministry of Finance.</p>
6.	39	External Affairs	<p>The Committee observe that the Ministry of External Affairs have not informed about the stage of the process of augmentation of staff strength in Central Passport Organisation and the time frame fixed for completion of work in this regard. Establishing of Passport Offices in the State Capitals of Uttranchal, Chattisgarh and Himachal Pradesh related to large number of people residing in tough hilly and poorly connected areas of these States. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should persuade the augmentation of staff strength process for its early completion and simultaneously if there is any possibility of taking more time in this regard, they must start these Passport Offices by arranging small number of staff from other offices without any further delay. The Committee also reiterate that the Government should undertake study of existing workload for opening office at Agra on priority basis.</p>

7.	42	External Affairs	The Committee observe that there are limitations of the Ministry to regularize the services of casual labourers. However, they find that the Ministry are showing their reluctance in regularizing the casual workers even if there is an availability of vacancy. The Committee note that there are some vacant posts, but, the Ministry has not taken any initiative to absorb casual workers against these posts. The Committee, therefore, desire that a system should be developed so that as soon as any vacancy arises in Group 'D', the casual labourers are immediately regularized against it.
8.	46	External Affairs	The Committee are surprised to note that after the constitution of Advisory Committees for Regional Offices of ICCR in Jaipur and Mumbai, not a single meeting has been held so far. The Committee desire that these Committees should meet at regular intervals for better fulfillment of objectives for establishing these Committees. The Committee do not favour the slow progress in constituting Advisory Committees for other Regional Offices and desire that this should be expedited and completed at the earliest.
9.	49	External Affairs	The Committee are happy to note that the long pending proposal for setting up of a Cultural Centre in Washington is now moving in a positive direction. The Committee desire that the Ministry of External Affairs should utilize this opportunity and they should not create any administrative and financial hurdle at any stage of setting up of this dream project.
10.	54	External Affairs	The Committee find that some fresh initiatives have been taken by the Ministry to establish Cultural Centre in Suva. But, the proposal for hiring premises for Cultural Centre is still pending with the Ministry. The Committee

			<p>desire that the proposal should be approved without any further delay so that a well established Centre may start working there. The Committee desire that Tokyo Centre should also start working from the embassy and search of site for their own premises should also be completed at the earliest. The Committee expect a positive approach from the Ministry in the direction of setting up of new Cultural Centres in Beijing, Tehran and Kathmandu and desire that they must come with concrete proposals to obtain sufficient funds during supplementary Demands for Grants stage and start the work after obtaining the desired fund.</p>
11.	58	External Affairs	<p>The Committee do not find any justification for such an inordinate delay in formation of Governing Body of ICWA which is now proposed to be completed before the end of this financial year. The Committee do not understand as to how can the Ministry expect the Council to fulfill their responsibility entrusted to them by the Government under such circumstances. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should not wait for the financial year to end, rather they should take all initiatives to constitute the Governing Body of ICWA without any further delay. The Committee also desire that the Ministry should also ensure the completion of renovation work of Sapru House without any financial constraints by the end of current financial year.</p>
12.	61	External Affairs	<p>The Committee observe that the approved budgetary allocation for the Ministry of External Affairs was lower than the projected figures. This lower allocation is proving to be hindrance in pursuing some important acquisition projects of the Ministry. The Committee feel that these projects are very important and these should not be delayed due to non-availability of funds. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should try to get sufficient funds for these</p>



			<p>projects and other important projects through supplementary Demands for Grants. For this purpose, the matter should be undertaken at the highest level with proper justification.</p>
13.	64	External Affairs	<p>The Committee are happy to note that the Cabinet has given approval for the Jawahar Lal Nehru Bhawan Project. Now, there is no hurdle in actual implementation of the project. The Committee now hope that the Ministry of External Affairs should make all possible efforts to complete the project in proposed forty months' period.</p>