

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2024

ANSWERED ON:05.12.2012

SHORTAGE OF DIPLOMATS

Naik Dr. Sanjeev Ganesh;Singh Shri Mahabali;Sule Supriya ;Tanwar Shri Ashok

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of vacant posts at diplomat's level in his Ministry and the reasons therefor;
- (b) whether the Government would be able to achieve the target of the IFS Expansion Plan by 2018;
- (c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard along with the achievements made so far; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to attract the brightest and best talent to foreign service?

Answer

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

(a) There are some 25 diplomatic positions in Missions/Posts abroad currently vacant. Officers have already been selected for 21 of these positions and are in the process of joining their assignments. The selection process is underway for selecting suitable officers for the remaining vacancies.

(b) Yes.

(c) Five tranches of the posts under the IFS Expansion Plan have already been operationalised within the time frame.

(d) The recruitment to the Indian Foreign Service is through the annual Combined Civil Services Examination conducted by the Union Public Service Commission and the Service is able to attract some of the best talent from diverse fields. On its part, the Public Diplomacy Division of the Ministry of External Affairs organizes and participates in a whole range of focused activities and programs designed to foster greater awareness and stimulate interest in the foreign policy issues including amongst the student community.