

**12**

**STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
(2011-2012)**

**FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA**

**MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS**

[Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the Ninth Report  
(15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of  
Overseas Indian Affairs for the year 2011-12]

**TWELFTH REPORT**



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI**

***April, 2012/Chaitra, 1934 (Saka)***

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(15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of  
Overseas Indian Affairs for the year 2011-12]

*Presented to Lok Sabha on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2012*

*Laid in Rajya Sabha on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 2012*



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT**  
**NEW DELHI**  
*03 April, 2012/14 Chaitra, 1934 (Saka)*

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# CONTENTS

	PAGE
COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE 2011-2012.....	(iii)
INTRODUCTION.....	(v)
Chapter I Report.....	1
Chapter II Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government.....	19
Chapter III Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's Replies.....	30
Chapter IV Recommendations/Observations in respect of which Replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and require reiteration.....	31
Chapter V Recommendations/Observations in respect of which Final Replies of the Government are still awaited.....	33

## APPENDICES

I. Minutes of the sitting of the Committee held on 03.04.2012.....	38
II. Analysis of Action Taken by Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in the Ninth Report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs (15 <sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) .....	40

**COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (2011-12)**

**Shri Ananth Kumar - Chairman**

**MEMBERS  
LOK SABHA**

<b>Sl.No.</b>	<b>Name</b>
2.	Shri Anandrao Adsul
3.	Shri S. Alagiri
4.	Shri Anto Antony
5.	Dr. Shafiqur Rahman Barq
6.	Shri Bhudeo Choudhary
7.	Shri T.K.S. Elangovan
8.	Shri P. Karunakaran
9.	Shri Pradeep Majhi
10.	Shri Inder Singh Namdhari
11.	Shri Zafar Ali Naqvi
12.	Shri Rajendrasinh Rana
13.	Shri K. Chandrasekhar Rao*
14.	Shri Takam Sanjoy
15.	Smt. Sushila Saroj
16.	Dr. Bholu Singh
17.	Shri Janardhana Swamy
18.	Dr. Shashi Tharoor
19.	Vacant
20.	Vacant
21.	Vacant

## RAJYA SABHA

22. Shri Birendra Prasad Baishya
23. Shri A.W. Rabi Bernard
24. Shri Murli Deora
25. Shri H.K. Dua
26. Dr. K.P. Ramalingam
27. Dr. Bharatkumar Raut
28. Dr. Karan Singh \$
29. Shri Shivanand Tiwari
30. Shri Tarun Vijay
31. Vacant#

## SECRETARIAT

1. Shri U.S. Saxena - Joint Secretary
2. Shri K. D. Muley - Director
3. Dr. Ram Raj Rai - Additional Director
4. Shri A. Sivanandam - Under Secretary

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\* Shri K. Chandrasekhar Rao nominated to the Committee on External Affairs w.e.f. 25.11.2011.

\$ Ceased to be the Member of the Committee due to expiry of term of Dr. Karan Singh, Member Rajya Sabha w.e.f. 27.01.12 and re-nominated to the Committee w.e.f. 02.02.2012.

# Shri Sreegopal Vyas, Member Rajya Sabha ceased to be the Member of the Committee due to expiry of his term w.e.f. 02.04.12.

# INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Standing Committee on External Affairs (2011-12) having been authorized by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present this 12<sup>th</sup> Report (15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 9<sup>th</sup> Report (15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Overseas Affairs for the year 2011-12.

2. The 9<sup>th</sup> Report was presented on 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2011. The Action Taken Replies of the Government on all the recommendations/observations contained in the Report were received on 27<sup>th</sup> March, 2012.

3. The Committee considered and adopted this Action Taken Report at their sitting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2012. The Minutes of the sitting of the Committee have been given at Appendix-I to the Report.

4. An analysis of the Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 9<sup>th</sup> Report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs (15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix-II.

**NEW DELHI**  
**03 April, 2012**  
**14 Chaitra, 1934 (Saka)**

**ANANTH KUMAR,**  
**Chairman,**  
**Standing Committee on External Affairs**

# **CHAPTER – I**

## **REPORT**

This Report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs deals with the Action Taken by the Government on the observations/recommendations contained in their Ninth Report on Demands for Grants (2011-12) of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs which was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2011.

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

- |  |                  |
|--|------------------|
| <b>(i) Recommendations/Observations, which have been accepted by the Government.</b>   |                  |
| Recommendation Nos. 3,6 , 8-13 and 15  | <b>Total-09</b>  |
| <b>(ii) Recommendation/Observation which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government replies.</b>                            |                  |
| Recommendation No. 14  | <b>Total- 01</b> |
| <b>(iii) Recommendation/Observation in respect of which reply of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and require reiteration.</b> |                  |
| Recommendation No. 5   | <b>Total- 01</b> |
| <b>(iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited.</b>                                      |                  |
| Recommendation Nos. 1,2,4 and 7  | <b>Total-04</b>  |



**3. The Committee desire that final replies to the recommendation/observations for which only interim replies have been given by the government should be furnished within three months of the presentation of this Report.**

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

**(Recommendation No. 1)**

5. The Committee had noted that the Budget Estimates of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs for the year 2011-2012 was Rs. 81 crores. Similar allocation was made at BE stage during 2010-2011 which was subsequently reduced to Rs. 73 crores at Revised Estimates (RE) stage and the actual expenditure during 2010-2011 had remained at Rs. 72.80 crores. The Committee had also noted that as against a demand of Rs. 155 crores during 2010-2011, Rs. 81 crores were allocated by the Finance Ministry and similarly against the demand of Rs. 149.26 crores, the MOIA had again been allocated Rs. 81 crores only at BE 2011-2012 stage. The Committee were not convinced with the justification given by the Ministry for such trend of allocation stating that at the time of consideration of budget grants the Ministry of Finance had considered the expenditure incurred till the end of second quarter of the previous year whereas the major expenditure of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs was incurred during the 3rd and 4th quarter in respect of their schemes such as OCI card, ICWF and holding of PBDs. The Committee were of the clear view that the Ministry had utterly failed to justify the trend of expenditure being made during each quarter of previous year and their projection before Ministry of Finance. The Committee, therefore, had desired that the Ministry should make regular, proper and judicious reviews and develop an efficient monitoring mechanism so that genuine and realistic projections could be placed before the Ministry of Finance at BE and RE stage so that all the programmes activities were implemented without any downward revision, ultimately depriving the beneficiaries of the intended benefits. The

Committee had desired that there was a need for rescheduling the expenditure in each quarter of a financial year for better fund allocation. The Committee were relieved in noting that after concerted efforts of the Ministry the Building Plans of Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra had been approved with a revised estimates of Rs. 79.19 crores and that the work had started in April, 2011. The Committee had then expected that the construction of PBK was to be completed within the fixed time frame of 24 months. The Committee had desired that the proposed Monitoring Committee to monitor of the progress of the project in terms of physical and financial achievements should be constituted immediately to avoid cost and time over run in executing the project. As regards the proposed scheme of setting up of Pravasi Bharatiya Bhawans in the States, the Committee had desired that it should be further explored sincerely with State Governments who had concern for the NRI affairs/emigration. The Committee had desired to be informed, from time to time, about the progress made in that regard.

6. The Ministry of External Affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“As desired by the Committee, the Ministry is already taking regular reviews of trend of expenditure. Consequently, percentage of expenditure vis-à-vis the Budget allocation is improving every year.

The construction of PBK which commenced from April, 2011 is likely to be completed within a period of two years (i.e. by April, 2013). A Committee headed by Joint Secretary in MOIA and consisting Director (Fin.), and representatives of the NBCC monitors physical and financial achievement of the project to avoid cost and time over run.

In so far as setting up of Pravasi Bhartiya Bhawans in the States is concerned, the matter will be taken up with to examine the project in terms of allocation of land and other logistics.”

7. The Committee do not agree with the claim made by the Ministry that due to regular reviews of trend of expenditure, the percentage of expenditure vis-à-vis the Budget allocation is improving every year. As a matter of fact, during the period of last five years, in all the years except 2008-09, BE of the Ministry was revised downwards and actual utilization was even lower than RE. In 2008-09, the BE of Rs. 65.00 crores was revised to Rs. 45.00 crores and the Revised Estimates could be actually utilized by the end of the year. From the available expenditure details, it is evident that the Ministry has been able to spend Rs. 39.77 crores only upto January 31, 2012 against the Budget allocation of Rs. 81.00 crores made during 2011-12. The Committee, therefore, reiterate that through more regular proper and judicious reviews, the Ministry should improve their monitoring mechanism so that the trend of expenditure improves further.

The Committee further hope that all the initiatives will be taken by the Committee formed by the Ministry to monitor physical and financial achievements of the PBK project and the project will be completed without any cost and time overrun. The Committee also desire that sincere efforts should be made by the Ministry for setting up of Pravasi Bhartiya Bhawans in the states finalizing the projects in terms of allocation of land and other logistics. The Committee should be informed from time to time about the progress made in both the projects.

**(Recommendation No. 2)**

8. The Committee were not happy with the efforts made by the Ministry for acquiring land for construction of PoE Offices for the convenience of emigrants. Over Rs. 1 crores were being paid every year towards rent for these premises, when despite best efforts made by PoE at Kerala, Chennai and other places no tangible result had come and the Government was just paying huge rent month after month. The Committee had desired that the matter should not be left at the lower level and it should be taken up with the concerned Chief Minister by the Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs and the Committee had desired to be posted with the progress in the matter regularly.

The Committee were not satisfied with the allocation of meagre amount of Rs. 20 lacs only under the Head for purchase/construction of PoE Offices because that did not show the determination of the Ministry in purchasing land for constructing PoE Offices. The Committee, thereafter, had desired that the Government should make sincere efforts in that direction and ensure augmented allocation at RE or supplementary Demands for Grants stages for that purpose.

9. The Ministry of External Affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“Five POE offices, i.e., Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Trivandrum and Cochin are housed in private buildings taken on rent. The issue of allotment of land, or space in Government buildings to accommodate these five POE offices has been taken up with the State Governments of Maharashtra, Chennai, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala, the states in which the POE offices are functioning from private buildings. The status of action taken on the Standing Committee’s recommendation in each case is as under: -

POE, MUMBAI

The matter was taken up with the Ministry of External Affairs on 30.12.2010 for providing accommodation to house the POE office at Mumbai in the newly constructed building for RPO at Bandra Kurla Complex. MEA on 20.01.2011 informed that the completion of the construction of the new building is likely to take three more years and that the decision of allotting space will be taken after the RPO office is shifted to the newly constructed building. Further, the Secretary, MOIA on 29.04.2011 has also written to the Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra, but no response has been received so far. Secretary also took up the matter with Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development on 12.07.2011 for providing space for accommodation for POE office in Government buildings under the control of the Estate office at Mumbai. This matter has again been taken up with the Government of Maharashtra.

### POE, CHENNAI

It is stated that Secretary MOIA on 15.04.2011 has written to the Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu for allotment of a plot of land identified by MOIA in K.K. Nagar, Chennai for constructing its own building. This was followed up by a D.O. letter dated 18.04.2011 from Hon'ble Minister MOIA to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Government of Tamil Nadu for direction to the concerned authorities for allotment of the plot of land.

The Revenue Department, Government of Tamil Nadu has forwarded the letter dated 15.04.2011 from Secretary, MOIA to the District Collector, Chennai for necessary action. However, the response from the Government of Tamil Nadu is still awaited. Further, Secretary also took up the matter with Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development Government of India on 12.07.2011 for providing space for accommodation for POE office in the Government building under the control of Estate office at Chennai. This matter has again been taken up with the Government of Tamil Nadu.

### POE, TRIVANDRUM

MOIA has succeeded in getting office accommodation for POE office at Trivandrum from the Government of Kerala. The Government of Kerala, NORKA (B) Department vide their G.O. (Rt.) No.283/2011/NORKA dated 31.08.2011 has allotted space for re-locating the Office of POE, Trivandrum in their newly constructed building at Thycaud, Trivandrum. The POE, Trivandrum office will start functioning as soon as the wooden fixtures and partitions etc. are fixed in the new office premises.

### POE, COCHIN

The matter has been taken up at the level of Secretary, MOIA with Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala for allotting a plot of land measuring 1000 sq.m. in Cochin to house its POE office. Further, Secretary also took up

the matter with Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development on 12.07.2011 for providing space for accommodation for POE office in the Government buildings under the control of Estate office at Cochin. This matter has again been taken up with the Government of Kerala.

#### POE, HYDERABAD

Secretary, MOIA on 29.04.2011 has written to the Chief Secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh for allotting a piece of land measuring about 1000 sq.m. at Hyderabad for constructing its own building to accommodate its field offices functioning in Hyderabad. In response the Principal Secretary (Revenue), Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the Collector of Hyderabad for examining the proposal. Further, Secretary also took up the matter with Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development on 12.07.2011 for providing space for accommodation for POE office in the Government buildings under the control of Estate office at Hyderabad. This matter has again been taken up with the Government of Andhra Pradesh.”

**10. The Committee observe that the Ministry has taken some initiatives in the form of writing letters to the concerned State Governments and the Ministry of Urban Development on the issue of allotment of land or space in Government buildings to accommodate the five PoE offices situated at Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Trivandrum and Cochin. But even after a lapse of several months, they have not received any proper response from any agency except in one case where they have succeeded in getting office accommodation for PoE office at Trivandrum. The Committee feel that there is an urgent need of making more concerted efforts for getting space to house other PoEs. In this context, the Committee would also like to remind the advice of the Committee during on the spot visits of PoE offices asking the Ministry to explore the possibility to shift/place the PoE offices either in the Airport premises or any nearby places for the benefit of emigrant workers. The Committee, therefore, reiterate that the matter should not be delayed**

**more and should be taken up with the Minister of Civil Aviation or Urban Development Minister or concerned Chief Minister appropriately to finalize the proposal of land or space to accommodate the remaining four PoE Offices on priority basis.**

**(Recommendation No. 4)**

11. The Committee had regrettably noted that despite their recommendation made in Third Report (15<sup>th</sup> LS) expediting filling up the vacant posts in MOIA, the position had not improved at all but on the contrary the number of employees had further gone down from 155 to 146. As per information made available to the Committee, as against the sanctioned strength of 195, at that time only 146 employees/persons were in position in the Ministry. The Ministry was awaiting the final reply from DOPT in regard to creation of a separate cadre for MOIA and after completing of process, the Ministry was supposed to in a better position to take all the requisite measures to fill up those vacant posts. As regarding filling up of vacancies in PoE offices, the Committee had noted that MOIA intended to place the matter before the Cabinet after the Ministry of Finance cleared the proposal. The Committee had felt that the shortfall in manpower was affecting the working of the Ministry particularly in the execution of various schemes/programmes at their hand and, therefore, had strongly recommended MOIA to earnestly take up the matter with DOPT and the Ministry of Finance to get an early requisite clearance in the matter relating to MOIA and creation of posts in PoE Offices respectively. The Committee had asked to be apprised of the efforts made by the MOIA and the outcome thereof.

12. The Ministry of External Affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“The Ministry is making all possible efforts to fill up the vacant posts. Communications have been made at the appropriate levels. In a meeting held with at Joint Secretary Level , Ministry of Home Affairs has assured to fill up most of the vacancies of UDCs/Assistant in a near future. Some of the posts of

the Assistants have since been filled up. Proposal for opening of three POE offices has got approval from Ministry of Finance. The office of the POE Jaipur was inaugurated by the HMOIA on 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2012. The process for making the remaining two POE office at Guwahati and Rai Bareilly functional is under process. The Cadre separation issue is also being taken up vigorously with DOPT (CS Division).”

**13. The Committee are surprised to note that even after making all efforts, the Ministry has not been able to fill up the vacant posts in the Ministry and PoE offices. It is a matter of serious concern to observe that even after a lapse of eight long years since establishment of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, the Ministry has not been able to get its full sanctioned strength of staff in position and the Ministry is still functioning without its own cadre. The Ministry has also not clearly stated any specific reason for the delay in getting staff for the Ministry and PoE Offices and also any specific problem being faced by them in creation of separate cadre. The Committee therefore, desire that the matter should be taken up with the Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of DOPT so that Ministry gets its full sanctioned strength of staff as well as a separate cadre at the earliest. The Ministry should also apprise the Committee about the steps being taken to obtain the additional staff for the proposed new PoE offices at Jaipur, Guwahati and Rai Bareilly.**

**(Recommendation No. 5)**

14. The Committee had noted that ever since the Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) Scheme had been made operational, a total number of 7,57,740 PIOs had been registered as OCIs. The Committee had happily noted that in response to the recommendations of the Committee [(3rd report (15th LS))] the Ministry had approached 25 Indian Missions which handled the largest number of Persons of Indian Origins and the overseas Indians with a view to collecting more detailed information for data base about overseas Indians.



Those missions had been asked to start the process of compilation of a database with better survey and statistics. The Committee had also found that MOIA intended to merge OCI cards and PIO cards schemes and were then engaged in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs as those schemes came under the visa regime of India. In that context, the Committee had wanted that the issue of merger of two schemes needed to be extensively deliberated upon and the viewpoint of the Committee might also be considered before taking any final decision in the matter. The Committee had further desired that all steps should be taken by the Ministry/Missions abroad to encourage more and more overseas Indians to get those cards issued at the earliest. The Committee had also desired that the data base about the PIOs and overseas Indians should also be compiled in the shortest possible time so that the scheme of issuing OCI cards might be operationalised in a time bound manner so that the targeted groups were benefited properly.

15. The Ministry of External Affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“Now a proposal to merge the PIO Card and OCI Card Scheme has been approved by the Cabinet. The salient features of the this merger scheme is stated below:

- The merged Scheme will be called **Overseas Indian Card Scheme**
- It will enable acquisition of OCI registration by minors, both parents of whom are Indian citizens or one parent is an Indian citizen
- It will also grant OCI to the foreign spouse of OCI card holder.
- To be granted to PIOs up to 4 generation levels, i.e. PIOs whose parents, grand parents or great grand parents had been of Indian Origin.

The OCI Scheme is published by the Ministry and Indian Mission abroad. However the Scheme is voluntary in nature and as on 23/3/2012 on total number of 10,59,203 applicants have been issued OCI cards.

So far a collection of database of Overseas Indian's is concerned, the Indian Mission/Posts abroad have expressed their inability to collect an authentic information in their respective countries keeping in view the vast magnitude of the work individual non availability of a mechanism and in adequate staff at the disposal."

**16. The Committee are satisfied to note that by the end of year 2011, 10,59,203 applicants have been issued OCI cards. The Committee also note that the proposal to merge the 'PIO Card Scheme' and 'OCI Card Scheme' has been approved by the Cabinet. The Committee appreciate the objectives of the merger of schemes and feel that this merger will certainly provide a better opportunity to Indian Diaspora to establish a strong association with the country of their origin.**

**The Committee, also note with regret the inability shown by the Indian missions/posts abroad to collect authentic information towards the formation of the data base of the PIOs and Overseas Indians simply on the pretext of the magnitude of work at hand, non-availability of mechanism for collection of data and inadequate staff at their disposal. The work relating to collection of authentic data about PIOs and Overseas should not be considered as less important. On their part, the Ministry has also not shown any interest in collection of data. The Committee, therefore, desire that a task force should be appointed by the Ministry for collection of the basic data and compilation followed by creation and operation of the desired data base about Overseas Indians in certain shortest possible time-frame. If required, assistance of local Organizations/Associations of Indians may also be taken to collect this authentic basic data of immense use in preparation of policies and implementation of schemes of the Ministry in better way.**

**(Recommendation No. 7)**

17. The Committee had noted that the Government had appointed one Consular (Coordinating Officer) each in the Embassy of India, Washington and in the Embassy of India, Abu Dhabi on experimental basis. Considering that as very important and essential step, the Committee had strongly recommend that more such appointments should be considered, particularly in the Consultates/Missions situated in Gulf Countries. The Committee had also desired that while considering the appointment of such Consular(s) preference should to be given to the persons capable of communicating in regional language of the majority of immigrants residing in a particular country. Such consideration were also to be kept in mind while posting the staff in such Missions/Posts abroad with a view to providing better services to emigrants.

18. The Ministry of External Affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“The Ministry is exploring the possibilities of appointing Counsellor, Community Affairs in some of the Gulf Countries where the presence of Indian overseas workers is considerable. The Ministry has noted the recommendation of the Committee and in due compliance, preference will be given to the persons capable to communicate in regional language of the majority of immigrants residing in a particular country while appointing such Counsellor, Community Affairs/staff attached to the Mission for this purpose.”

**19. The Committee are happy to note that after a successful experimentation in Washington and Abu Dhabi, the Ministry has decided to appoint Counsellor (Community Affairs) in the Gulf countries where large number of migrants are present and the possibilities are being explored for these appointments in the identified missions/posts. The committee, therefore, desire that these appointments should be made on priority basis giving due preference to the persons having proficiency in regional language of the majority of migrants residing in that particular country. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress made regarding these appointments.**

**(Recommendation No. 11)**

20. The Committee were happy to note that the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs had undertaken a comprehensive e-Governance project on emigration with consultancy support from the National Institute for Smart Government (NISG), Hyderabad. The Committee had noted that the project was awaiting approval of the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure (CNE) after which the draft contract was to be finalized and signed with the Implementing Agency. The Committee had urged the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs to expedite the approval of the project from CNE so that the project could be implemented by the targeted date of 2012. The Committee had wished to be kept informed of the progress of the project from time to time. In order to create a better impression about the Ministry and to develop a feeling of trust in the minds of visitors, the Committee had strongly recommended that the Ministry should explore the feasibility to craft one holistic omnibus website with various links containing every possible information pertaining to programmes/schemes under the Ministry and other related information at one place so that the prospective users may get every type of information/assistance/knowledge by pressing one button. The Committee had desired to be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

21. The Ministry of External Affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“The e-Migrate Project envisages end to end computerized solution for all the processes and sub-processes involved in the emigration system and link all the key stakeholders on a common e-Migrate application which will be used by the workers, the PGE/POEs (or the proposed Emigration Management Authority), the recruiting agencies, the immigration Officials at the airports, the employers and the Indian Missions abroad. The key modules under the e-Migrate Project include the employer accreditation module, RA registration module, emigrant registration module, enrolment agency module, student module and the complaint management module.

The primary objectives of the Project are:

- (i) To design and implement processes and application for emigration ecosystem.
- (ii) To bring changes and technology that result in significant improvement in delivery of emigration services.
- (iii) To introduce systems that simplify different processes in the emigration cycle.
- (iv) To establish interfaces among key stakeholders.

The Project aims to transform emigration into a simple, transparent, orderly and humane economic process. It would result in significant improvement in the quality of services to emigrant workers since it would simplify different processes in the emigration cycle and improve effectiveness. The e-Migrate Project would provide a complete and comprehensive electronic platform linking all the stakeholders with minimum human intervention and automatic implementation of the emigration process (as required under the Emigration Act, 1983), with real time access to relevant information and data to all concerned. It is logical to assume that this project would, to a great extent, help reduce corruption, malpractices and irregular migration and thereby facilitate legal and orderly migration.

The project involves full automation of POE offices & PGE office, phased interlinking with recruiting agents, employers, immigration counters, Indian missions abroad, insurance companies and state governments etc and integration of labour market information with policy decisions through appropriate MIS. The project would develop integrated modules on recruiting agent system, emigration clearance system, immigration control system, complaint management system, RA rating system and the contract attestation system. Smart cards would be issued to the emigrants under the project after examining all pros and cons to ensure that the benefits are commensurate with the cost to the emigrant.

The Master Service Agreement (MSA) has been signed between the Government of India and the Tata Consultancy Services Ltd. (TCS), the Implementation Agency of the Project on 30.12.2011. The project is scheduled for completion within 58 weeks from the date of signing of the contract.

The recommendation of the Committee for exploring the feasibility to craft one holistic omnibus website with various links containing all significant information pertaining to programmes/schemes under the Ministry and other related information at one place so that the prospective users may get every type of information/assistance/knowledge by pressing one button is under consideration.”

**22. The Committee are happy to learn that a comprehensive e-Migrate Project envisaging end to end computerized solution for all the processes and sub- processes involved in the immigration system has come into existence. This will link all the key stakeholders on the common e-Migrate application. The Master Service Agreement (MSA) has already been signed. The Committee hope that the project will be completed within the fix time-frame i.e. by the first quarter of the year 2013. The Committee, however, desire that the Ministry should ensure that implementation of the project is not affected adversely due to non-availability of fund or administrative delays.**

**The Committee are also confident that the efforts being made by the Ministry in the direction of crafting a holistic omnibus website with various links containing every possible information pertaining to programmes/schemes under the Ministry and other related information at one place will show the results soon. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress made by the Ministry in this regard.**

**(Recommendation No. 13)**

23. Ministry had informed that the issues raised by the planning Commission regarding Scheme of Skill Upgradation and Pre-departure orientation of Emigrant workers were being taken up by them with the Ministry of Labour & Employment and its agency namely Directorate General of Employment & Training (DGET) and National Council of Vocational Training (NCVT) for redesigning the scheme. That it was very important scheme for the emigrant workers and any delay in taking decisions might hamper the welfare of poor workers. The Committee had, therefore, desired that MOIA should geared up the process so that the scheme could be made functional within a period of three months. The Committee had desired to be apprised of the status of scheme from time to time.

24. The Ministry of External Affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“The Ministry through the Indian Council of Overseas Employment (ICOE) has submitted a Plan Scheme titled, “SwarnaPravas Yojna” for imparting structured skills training to the youth, during the 12th and 13th Five Year Plans (2012-22). The Plan Scheme targets overseas employment opportunities in a public-private partnership, apart from establishing standards in skill development domain. The Ministry believes the Plan Scheme will position India as a preferred source country for skilled and trained workers in select sectors in the international labour market, diversify our destination country base with a focus on geographies/countries that will experience significant labour supply gaps & skills shortages and are of strategic interest to India and more importantly enable the overseas Indian workers to move up the value chain and enhance employability.

The SwarnaPravas Yojna envisages focusing on specific skill sets and selecting geographies in which India has a competitive advantage. It proposes to hone skilled and structured migration for better employment opportunities for 10 million youths between the years 2012-22 by providing globally-relevant international qualification that will set standards in curriculum, training and assessment leading to universally recognized certification. The Plan Scheme aims to seize around 25% global market share of 56.5 million of the projected global skilled worker shortage by the year 2020. The proposed Plan Scheme will be implemented by consolidating existing institutions to provide skills and services in line with global standards by establishing the International Skills & Standards Council of India (ISSCI), providing support to state governments to

evolve a larger network of existing homeland institutions and by offering a Global Employer loyalty. To monitor and sustain the effort, the Plan Scheme will establish a robust Skills Portal to support both- Migration Information System (MIS) and Labour Market Assessment (LMA) - that are critical to this effort. The Council has also launched a Skill Development Initiative in the North East for Potential Migrants from the North-Eastern States of India in August 2011. This will provide gainful employment opportunities for the youth and women from all the eight states of the North-East of India. The Ministry is the principal anchor of this project. Under the project, seven international vocational qualifications (IVQs) will be developed with focus on short, relevant and effective modules that will help potential migrants in the overseas job markets. The IVQs will cover hospitality, healthcare and education sectors, training 10,000 youth including women. The project will work on the basis of two franchisee and university embedded models which will use standard training, testing and certification to increase the effectiveness of the proposed framework. This internationally recognised certification will ensure that trainees are employable anywhere in the world.”

**25. The Committee are satisfied to note that the Ministry through the Indian Council of Overseas Employment has submitted a very ambitious revised plan scheme titled “Swarna Pravas Yojna” for imparting structured skills training to the youth during the plan period 2012-22. This scheme will not only target overseas employment opportunities in a public-private partnership, but will also establish standards in skill development domain. The ‘Swarna Pravas Yojna’ envisages competitive advantages to Indians and the scheme also proposes to provide structured migration for better employment opportunities to 10 million Indian youths between 2012-22. This aims at achieving 25% share of the Global Market of 56.5 million skilled workers shortage projected by the year 2020 through the newly formed International Skill & Standards Council of India (IS&SCI). The Committee, therefore, desire that Ministry should make all efforts to get this ambitious scheme approved at the earliest. The Committee may be apprised of the progress made regarding approval and implementation of the scheme regularly.**



**The Committee also welcome the launching of Skill Development initiative in the North-East for potential Migrants from the North-Eastern states of India. There was an urgent need of such initiative for the people of North-Eastern states. Therefore, now the Ministry being the principal anchor of this project should make all possible efforts to ensure that the objective of training 10,000 youth including women of North-Eastern states is achieved in a fixed-time frame. The Committee should be informed about the further development in the implementation of the project from time to time.**

## CHAPTER – II

### RECOMMENDATIONS/ OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

#### (Recommendation No.3)

The Committee noted that the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) convention is the flagship event of the Ministry which is organized every year with a view to connect India with its vast Indian Diaspora and to bring their knowledge, expertise and skills on a common platform. Keeping in line with this objective, the 9<sup>th</sup> PBD Convention was held in New Delhi from 7 to 9 January, 2011. The Committee observe that PBD 2011 at New Delhi focused on issues relating to health, education and the overseas Indian youth. Sessions were also held on investment, inclusive growth, investment opportunities in the North Eastern Region, Information, Communications and Entertainment including cultural ties, diaspora philanthropy and issues related to overseas Indian in the Gulf. It is a matter of satisfaction that organizers have started receiving good sponsorship also. However, it is clearly transpired that despite the fact that majority of persons of Indian origin and Indian migrants abroad are labourers or semi skilled labourers but they do not participate in the convention due to their various constraints. In view of the availability of sufficient finances under this head and interest of sponsorers, the Committee would like that the Ministry should hold mini PBDs on regular basis at overseas locations where the Indian migrants are in large number with a view to ensure the active participation of labourers or semi skilled labourers overseas to know their problems and help them through diplomatic system. Their representatives should also be sponsored in main PBDs. The Committee would also like that Ministry should ensure an active participation of Public Representatives by inviting the Members of Standing Committee on External Affairs and Members of Consultative Committees of MEA and MOIA in the interactions during the PBDs. In addition, the Committee would like that such important interaction should not be treated as annual rituals only. The issues raised during PBDs should seriously be taken up and in the next PBD the participants should be made aware about the initiatives taken by the Government on their suggestions. Only such fruitful discussion on permanent mutually beneficial issues can bring tangible benefits to target groups. The Committee surprisingly observe that PBDs are not actually being used for attracting more knowledge, expertise and investments from the Diaspora. Many of them come here with very ambitious plans for their motherland. But in absence of proper welcome, guidance and boost from the government side they oftenly go back without any achievement. On the contrary some State Governments organized similar event on nearby dates and they are successful in attracting huge investments. The Committee, therefore, desire that in order to achieve the objectives of mutual benefits, the Government should convince the NRIs and also offer them incentives to attract them to invest in their motherland during such PBDs. The Committee think that this approach of the Government will strengthen the link with the world community permanently.

## **Reply of the Government**

As advised by the Standing Committee, Ministry is going to organize mini Pravasi Bharatiya Divas later in september, 2012 in the Gulf region keeping in view the contribution of Indian migrant skilled and semi skilled workers living in the Gulf Countries. The Hon'ble Members of Standing Committee on External Affairs and Hon'ble Members of Consultative Committees of MEA and MOIA were invited in the PBD-2012 held at Jaipur from 7-9 January, 2012. The proceedings of PBD-2011 held at Delhi were printed by the Ministry wherein salient features of the event with all relevant details are stated. During the PBD Convention, business and investment related sessions alongwith State Governments sessions are organized to motivate NRIs regarding different kind of incentives available to them for investing in India. Ministry has set up an Overseas Indian Facilitation Center (OIFC) as a not-for-profit trust, in partnership with Confederation of Indian Industry (CII). The Centre will be a 'one stop shop' for serving the interests of the Overseas Indian community and has the mandate to cover two broad areas: Investment Facilitation and Knowledge Networking. OIFC was also engaged with the Diaspora at Pravasi Bhartiya Conventions both during the regional PBD hosted in South Africa in October, 2010, and the annual PBD in January, 2011 in New Delhi and PBD 2012 in Jaipur. In an effort to help build synergies between businesses in India and South Africa, OIFC organized a Business Roundtable in Durban on 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2010 on the sidelines of PBD Africa, hosted in the region. Over 100 business leaders from India and Africa, predominantly from South Africa, attended the Roundtable. Running for the 5<sup>th</sup> successive year, OIFC organized a Market Place Forum during the 9<sup>th</sup> PBD from 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2011. The Market Place served as a forum to connect the Diaspora delegates with OIFC's Partners through pre-scheduled business meetings. Over 85 business meetings were held with footfalls ranging from 700-800. Shri Vayalar Ravi, Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs; Shri B K Handique, Union Minister of Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER) and Mines; Shri Bhupinder Singh Hooda, Chief Minister of Haryana; and, Shri Sukhbir Singh Badal, Deputy Chief Minister of Punjab were some of the senior political leaders who visited the OIFC Market Place Pavilion.

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

### **(Recommendation No.6)**

The Committee are surprised to note that on the one side the Ministry is contemplating to increase the scholarship from the present limit of US \$ 3600 per student per annum to make the scheme more attractive and on the other side an outlay of 5 crores only has been made at BE 2011-2012 which was Rs. 5.38 crores during the year 2010-2011. The Committee do not find any possibility of expansion of scheme with reduced allocation. Therefore, the Committee desire that the Ministry should take all initiatives to obtain the required funds at RE stage to provide the enhanced scholarship to all the students studying in India under this Scheme. The Committee also desire that

Ministry should also conduct a study to know the reasons for not availing the scholarship by several selected students and also about the withdrawal of some students in between the course. The Committee further desire that on the basis of such a study the grievances should be attended properly to prevent such withdrawal of students at various stages. The fact should also be kept in mind that allowing withdrawal of student in the middle scholarship period is also wastage of public money and at the same time depriving of other students who deserve and who need this help to get better education.

### **Reply of the Government**

The Scheme was launched by MOIA in 2006-07 to make higher education in India accessible to the children of overseas Indians (NRIs / PIOs) from 40 countries with substantial Indian Diaspora population and promote India as a centre for higher studies. Under the scheme, 100 scholarships up to US \$5000/- per course per annum per student are offered to PIO and NRI students (50:50) for undergraduate courses in Engineering, Science, Law, Management, etc. Under this scheme, over 387 PIO/NRI students have benefited since inception & 100 students have been selected in the current batch.

The candidates are selected according to merit and are placed in Universities/Institutions against the quota fixed for NRI/PIO students. Sometimes overseas students after being selected are not willing to take admission on account of not getting admission in their first choice of / college / institute. Secondly the reason for withdrawal of some students in between the course is either due to poor academic performance or on account of failing in the examination. Otherwise the majority trend of overseas students is to complete their courses successfully in India. If any student withdraws in the middle of the scholarship period after one year or two year, the vacant slot can not be given to other students after such a long gap of time as per existing SPDC Guidelines. Before the beginning of the academic session, 100 scholarship are given to NRI and PIO students (50 each) on the basis of main first list of result for 100 students (Separately 50 for NRI and 50 for PIO) in order of merit and subsequent waitlisted panels (till 100 slots are filled up) accordingly to give opportunity to other students strictly in order of merit in case of dropout from the main first list of result for 100 students.

In view of the above, EdCIL (implemented by M/s. Educational Consultants India Limited (Ed.CIL), an autonomous body under the Ministry of Human Resource Development) was requested to send reasons for not availing the scholarship by several selected students and also about the withdrawal of some students in between the course. Ed.CIL has informed that selected students for SPDC do not join the scheme because of the following reasons: (i) good offers from other countries (ii) financial constrains (especially PIOs) and (iii) personal reasons. In case of withdrawal from the 2<sup>nd</sup> year onwards, often it is not Students who withdraw from the scheme, rather Ed.CIL discontinues their scholarship because of their poor academic performance.

So far as getting a higher allocation of budget under the Scheme is concerned, the Ministry is making all out efforts to get a higher allocation during the financial year 2.12-13

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

**(Recommendation No.8)**

The Committee note that an outlay of Rs. 8.73 crores has been made in BE 2011-2012 as compared to Rs. 8.71 crores in BE 2010-2011 on organizing Awareness Campaign/Media Plan Scheme. All the issues covered under the awareness campaign particularly relating to welfare of emigrant workers including problems relating to Indian housemaids overseas as well as the issues relating to NRI marriages are very important and need regular attention. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs to further strengthen their awareness campaign and effectively present their demands at the RE stage or at the stage of supplementary grants to obtain required funds so that the awareness campaign on such important issues does not suffer due to paucity of funds at any point of time.

**Reply of the Government**

Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs is making all out efforts to strengthen the awareness campaign of the Ministry. To make it more attractive to the audience/viewers new video spots are being created through National Film Development Corporation (NFDC).

Accordingly, during RE 2011-12 an increased allocation of Rs.9.50 crore and for BE 2012-13 Rs.10.00 crore has been sought from Ministry of Finance under this Head.

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

**(Recommendation No.9)**

The Committee note that in order to expand the entrepreneurial ties and engage overseas Indians as partners in India's progress, an Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre, a not for profit public private initiative of Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) and Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), was launched in 2007. With a strong intention to facilitate and bridge the gap between the Overseas Indians and India, OIFC has a mandate to cover broad areas such as investment facilitation, knowledge networking and ensuring business-to-business partnerships in focussed sectors like real estate, wealth management, taxation, legal, healthcare, education and infrastructure. The Committee are satisfied to note that over the years, the OIFC has developed a query redressal system, online business networking platform, live help Centre and many publications on investment for overseas Indians. The

Committee, however, desire that OIFC should also keep a track of investments made by those prospective NRIs who avail the services of OIFC so that they may assess the impact of their activities relating to economic engagements of overseas Indians with India. The Committee also recommend strongly that from time to time OIFC should arrange to conduct of market research and surveys to understand the need of the Indian Diaspora for effective engagement with India. The Committee also favour the suggestion of setting up of OIFC cell in CII Regional/State Offices in Bangalore, Chennai and Mumbai and desire that CII should be persuaded to set up the OIFC Cells in these cities at the earliest. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the specific steps being taken to give adequate publicity of the Centre so as the Diaspora population could make full use of services being dispensed by the Centre.

### **Reply of the Government**

Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) keeps a track of investment by Overseas Indians in India. To keep a track of overseas investment by OIFC, it has to have a continuous interaction with DIPP through Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs. To conduct market research and surveys to understand the need of Indian Diaspora the OIFC has already engaged an agency to conduct regional surveys in USA, UAE and Singapore. Survey Report will be available next year enabling this Ministry to proceed in this area.

In so far as creating a OIFC Cell in regional offices of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) including Bangalore, Chennai and Mumbai is concerned, a decision in principle has already been taken by the Ministry with CII in its Governing Council Meeting and is being implemented.

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

### **(Recommendation No.10)**

The Committee are happy to note that the services provided by the new Overseas Workers Resource Centre helpline has improved a lot. The Committee welcome the setting up of content rich website, the facility of walk in counseling of OWRC, SMS service to check the status of complaint which became functional after 31st December, 2010. The Committee however note that their recommendation to extend the resources the proposal for additional support in three more languages viz. Oriya, Marathi, Gujarati is awaiting approval of the Minister, MOIA. The Committee, therefore, desire that this should be approved and implemented without any further delay.

## **Reply of the Government**

The recommendation of Hon'ble Committee to extend the services of OWRC in three more languages, viz., Oriya, Marathi and Gujarati has been accepted and steps are being taken to implement it.

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

### **(Recommendation No.11)**

The Committee are happy to note that the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has undertaken a comprehensive e-Governance project on emigration with consultancy support from the National Institute for Smart Government (NISG), Hyderabad. The project is aimed at achieving greater user convenience and effective protection and welfare of the emigrant. The subsidiary benefits would include greater levels of efficiency, transparency and accountability in the emigration system, facilitation of legal emigration and prevention of illegal emigration. The scheme is expected to automate emigration clearance, computerized registration of RAs and employers' permits, dispense with discretion, mitigate harassment of emigrants and remove corruption. The Committee note that the project is awaiting approval of the Committee on Non-Plan Expenditure (CNE) after which the draft contract would be finalized and signed with the Implementation Agency. The Committee urge the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs to expedite the approval of the project from CNE so that the project could be implemented by the target date of 2012. The Committee may also be kept informed of the progress of the project from time to time. The Committee observe that there are separate websites relating to various schemes/programmes under the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs available to meet the varied expectations and needs of the diverse Indian community but these websites are either inconsistent or having incomplete information besides lot of broken links which creates more confusion than solution. It is, therefore, very difficult for the users, in particular the Overseas Indian community, to visit these websites to get the desired information. In order to create a better impression about the Ministry and to develop a feeling of trust in the minds of visitors, the Committee strongly recommend that the Ministry should explore the feasibility to craft one holistic omnibus website with various links containing every possible information pertaining to programmes/schemes under the Ministry and other related information at one place so that the prospective users may get every type of information/assistance/knowledge by pressing one button. The Committee may be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

## **Reply of the Government**

The e-Migrate Project envisages end to end computerized solution for all the processes and sub-processes involved in the emigration system and link all the key stakeholders on a common e-Migrate application which will be used by the workers, the PGE/POEs (or the proposed Emigration

Management Authority), the recruiting agencies, the immigration Officials at the airports, the employers and the Indian Missions abroad. The key modules under the e-Migrate Project include the employer accreditation module, RA registration module, emigrant registration module, enrolment agency module, student module and the complaint management module.

The primary objectives of the Project are:

- (i) To design and implement processes and application for emigration ecosystem.
- (ii) To bring changes and technology that result in significant improvement in delivery of emigration services.
- (iii) To introduce systems that simplify different processes in the emigration cycle.
- (iv) To establish interfaces among key stakeholders.

The Project aims to transform emigration into a simple, transparent, orderly and humane economic process. It would result in significant improvement in the quality of services to emigrant workers since it would simplify different processes in the emigration cycle and improve effectiveness. The e-Migrate Project would provide a complete and comprehensive electronic platform linking all the stakeholders with minimum human intervention and automatic implementation of the emigration process (as required under the Emigration Act, 1983), with real time access to relevant information and data to all concerned. It is logical to assume that this project would, to a great extent, help reduce corruption, malpractices and irregular migration and thereby facilitate legal and orderly migration.

The project involves full automation of POE offices & PGE office, phased interlinking with recruiting agents, employers, immigration counters, Indian missions abroad, insurance companies and state governments etc and integration of labour market information with policy decisions through appropriate MIS. The project would develop integrated modules on recruiting agent system, emigration clearance system, immigration control system, complaint management system, RA rating system and the contract attestation system. Smart cards would be issued to the emigrants under the project after examining all pros and cons to ensure that the benefits are commensurate with the cost to the emigrant.

The Master Service Agreement (MSA) has been signed between the Government of India and the Tata Consultancy Services Ltd. (TCS), the Implementation Agency of the Project on 30.12.2011. The project is scheduled for completion within 58 weeks from the date of signing of the contract.

The recommendation of the Committee for exploring the feasibility to craft one holistic omnibus website with various links containing all significant information pertaining to programmes/schemes under the Ministry and other related information at one place so that the prospective users may get every type of information/assistance/knowledge by pressing one button is under consideration.

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**



### **(Recommendation No.12)**

The Committee desire the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs to make all efforts to ensure that the Emigration Management Bill is introduced in the Parliament at the earliest.

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) administers the Emigration Act, 1983, which provides for the regulation of the emigration of Indian citizens for employment overseas. The Act provides for the institution of the Protector General of Emigrants acting through the Protectors of Emigrants as the institutional mechanism to manage the emigration of Indian workers for employment overseas. However, in order to better address the problem of the exploitation of the emigrant workers and also adapt suitably to the present day paradigm in the emigration management, the Ministry has proposed for introduction of the Emigration Management Bill, 2011 in the Parliament and repeal the existing Emigration Act, 1983. The proposed Emigration Management Bill (EMB) embodies a paradigm shift in the management of emigration.

Some of the salient features of the new Bill vis-à-vis the existing act are:

- (a) Under the existing Act the institutional framework responsible for regulation of recruitment for overseas employment, regulation of departure of emigrants and enforcement of the provisions of the Act consists of the Protector General of Emigrants (PGE) assisted by various Protectors of Emigrants (POE) in the field. This machinery has not been able to fulfil its mandate in a satisfactory manner. With a view to create a robust institutional framework to transform emigration into a simple, transparent, orderly and humane economic process for the benefit of all stakeholders and primarily that of the emigrant, the proposed EMB seeks to replace the present emigration machinery under the PGE with a new statutory and autonomous regulatory authority called the Emigration Management Authority (EMA)
- (b) Under the existing Act only those recruiting agents fall within the purview of the Act who recruit low-skilled workers. Under the new Bill, the entire recruitment industry for overseas employment irrespective of the nature of jobs for which they recruit workers will be regulated.
- (c) The existing Act focuses merely on the protection of low-skilled emigrants. Under the new Bill it is proposed to extend the legislative scope to capture data all categories of emigrants (ECR as well as ECNR).
- (d) Under the existing law there are no enabling provisions for giving legal status to ECR passports that signify vulnerability of certain classes of workers. The proposed Bill makes a specific provision for empowering the Central Government to lay down the criteria for ECR passport and to notify the specific countries (where emigrants are at greater risks of exploitations) as ECR countries

- (e) The new Bill defines the terms like ECR emigrants and ECNR emigrants to address the vulnerability of ECR emigrants through preventive interventions and to facilitate the emigration of ECNR emigrants while capturing all the relevant data pertaining to them.
- (f) The proposed Bill has provisions for black listing of overseas employers with a view to debar them from future recruitments in case of their indulging in malpractices.
- (g) Under the existing law, the recruiting agents are not permitted to employ sub-agents. However, in reality thousands of sub-agents are thriving and are regularly employed by recruiting agents to assist them in recruiting workers from remote villages and towns of the country. Under the proposed bill, only accredited sub-agents can be employed by a recruiting agent. This will enable the EMA to monitor the performance of the sub-agents and lay down standards for their performance for improving their capacity.
- (h) The new Bill provides for laying down performance standards, regular performance audit and periodical rating of recruiting agencies, employers and sub-agents to encourage ethical recruitment practices.
- (i) Under the proposed Bill, the ECNR emigrants will not be required to obtain emigration clearance. However, they will be required to register with the EMA through an online system giving all relevant particulars about their employers and employment, apart from themselves. This will enable the EMA to maintain the data base on all kinds of workers.
- (j) The provisions of the proposed Bill have been aligned to the e-Governance model developed by the Ministry.

Thus from the above, it could be seen that the proposed Bill will modernize the legislative framework governing emigration, facilitate legal emigration, discourage irregular migration, enhance protection and welfare of emigrants, encourage ethical recruitment practices, enable market-friendly regulation of recruiters and provide for more deterrent penalties against crime such as human smuggling.

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

**(Recommendation No.13)**

As regards Scheme of Skill Upgradation and Pre-departure orientation of Emigrant workers the Planning Commission had observed that the existing infrastructure should be utilised rather than working independently on a new scheme and the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs might dovetail with any of suitable training schemes presently running under the National Policy on Skill Development by the Ministry of Labour & Employment. As informed by the Ministry the issues are being taken up by them with the Ministry of Labour & Employment and its agency namely Directorate General of Employment & Training (DGET) and National Council of Vocational Training (NCVT) for redesigning the scheme. This is very important scheme for the emigrant workers and any delay in taking decisions may hamper the welfare of poor workers. The Committee therefore desire that MOIA should gear up the process so that the scheme could be made functional within a period of three months. The Committee may be apprised of the status of scheme from time to time.

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry through the Indian Council of Overseas Employment (ICOE) has submitted a Plan Scheme titled, "SwarnaPravas Yojna" for imparting structured skills training to the youth, during the 12th and 13th Five Year Plans (2012-22). The Plan Scheme targets overseas employment opportunities in a public-private partnership, apart from establishing standards in skill development domain.

The Ministry believes the Plan Scheme will position India as a preferred source country for skilled and trained workers in select sectors in the international labour market, diversify our destination country base with a focus on geographies/countries that will experience significant labour supply gaps & skills shortages and are of strategic interest to India and more importantly enable the overseas Indian workers to move up the value chain and enhance employability.

The SwarnaPravas Yojna envisages focusing on specific skill sets and selecting geographies in which India has a competitive advantage. It proposes to hone skilled and structured migration for better employment opportunities for 10 million youths between the years 2012-22 by providing globally-relevant international qualification that will set standards in curriculum, training and assessment leading to universally recognized certification. The Plan Scheme aims to seize around 25% global market share of 56.5 million of the projected global skilled worker shortage by the year 2020.

The proposed Plan Scheme will be implemented by consolidating existing institutions to provide skills and services in line with global standards by establishing the International Skills & Standards Council of India (ISSCI), providing support to state governments to evolve a larger network of existing homeland institutions and by offering a Global Employer loyalty. To monitor and sustain the effort, the Plan Scheme will establish a robust Skills Portal to support both- Migration Information System (MIS) and Labour Market Assessment (LMA) - that are critical to this effort

The Council has also launched a Skill Development Initiative in the North East for Potential Migrants from the North-Eastern States of India in August 2011. This will provide gainful employment opportunities for the youth and women from all the eight states of the North-East of India. The Ministry is the principal anchor of this project. Under the project, seven international vocational qualifications (IVQs) will be developed with focus on short, relevant and effective modules that will help potential migrants in the overseas job markets. The IVQs will cover hospitality, healthcare and education sectors, training 10,000 youth including women. The project will work on the basis of two franchisee and university embedded models which will use standard training, testing and certification to increase the effectiveness of the proposed framework. This internationally recognised certification will ensure that trainees are employable anywhere in the world.

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

### **(Recommendation No.15)**

The Committee find from the budget documents that besides concluding Labour Welfare and Protection Agreements with the Gulf countries and Malaysia for the benefit of the skilled and semi-skilled workers, the Ministry has entered into bilateral Social Security Agreements with Belgium, France, Germany, Switzerland, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Hungary, Denmark, Republic of Korea and Norway. The Ministry is also negotiating and concluding bilateral Society Security Agreements with countries in Europe, North America and the Asia Pacific for the benefit of Indian professionals. The Committee are, however, astonished to note that MOIA has no role in implementation and monitoring mechanism relating to social security agreements. The Committee, therefore, desire that there should be a direct role and responsibility of MOIA in monitoring process of social security agreements also so that the Ministry may be able to ensure that there is a proper implementation of these agreements which are signed with the objective of protecting the interests of Indian professionals working abroad. The Committee also desire that the negotiations on Human Resource Mobility Partnership Agreements with Poland, Czech Republic, Norway, Switzerland, Hungary, Sweden and France should be completed within a fixed time- frame.

### **Reply of the Government**

The Social Security Agreement is a multi-ministry endeavour and the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs is the nodal Ministry. MOIA is working with Ministry of Labour, Employees Provident Fund Organization (EPFO), Ministry of Commerce & Industry and Ministry of External Affairs for ensuring smooth implementation of Social Security Agreements (SSAs).

Efforts are being made for early start of negotiation of Human Resource Mobility Partnership with Poland, Czech Republic, Norway, Switzerland, Hungary and Sweden. The Human Resource Mobility Partnership negotiation with France is in advance stage of finalization.

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

## **CHAPTER – III**

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

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

Keeping in view with the recommendations made by the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora (HLCID) and commitment given at the highest level, the Govt. had approved the proposal for establishment of a PIO/NRI University for the benefit of children of overseas Indians. At the time of examination for Demands for Grants 2010-2011, the Ministry had stated that they had identified four cities where PIO/NRI Universities were to be set up. The advisory board constituted for the purpose had also recommended for introduction of a separate PIO University Bill for setting up such a university. However, the Committee are surprised to note that a decision has now been taken that the PIO University would be established by a private organization under the Innovation Universities Bill reportedly being brought by the Ministry of Human Resource Development. The Committee are unable to understand reasons for delay and change in decision on such an important commitment made at the highest level. It is also not clear whether the change in decision was also made at the same level or at the level of Ministry. The Committee, therefore, desire that the position in this regard should be clarified properly and MOIA should ensure that the PIO University is established as per the commitment made to overseas Indian community. The Committee may like to be apprised of the progress made in this regard at every stage.

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

The PIO University is proposed to be established by the Ministry of Human Resources Development organization under the Innovation Universities Act (once it is approved), where the support to the said University would come in the form of research support and student scholarships. The proposed structure of the 'Universities of Innovation' would have the advantages of a world-class institution.

As regard the reason for delay in setting up PIO University and change in decision in the establishment of the said university by Ministry of Human Resource Development (MoHRD) instead of MOIA, after examining the Innovation Universities Bill of MHRD. It was felt that the Innovation Universities Bill will have all features to enable setting up of PIO Universities.

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

## CHAPTER – IV

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

#### (Recommendation No. 5)

The Committee note that ever since the Overseas Citizenship of India (OCI) Scheme has been made operational, a total number of 7,57,740 PIOs have been registered as OCIs. The Committee are happy to note that in response to the recommendations of the Committee [(3rd report (15th LS))] the Ministry have approached 25 Indian Missions which handle the largest number of Persons of Indian Origins and the overseas Indians with a view to collect a more detailed data base about overseas Indians. These missions have been asked to start the process of compilation of a database with better survey and statistics. The Committee also find that MOIA intend to merge OCI cards and PIO cards schemes and are presently engaged in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs since these schemes come under the visa regime of India. In this context, the Committee would like that the issue of merger of two schemes needs to be extensively deliberated upon and the viewpoint of the Committee may also be taken and considered before taking any final decision in the matter. The Committee further desire that all steps should be taken by the Ministry/Missions abroad to encourage more and more overseas Indians to get these cards issued at the earliest. The Committee also desire that the data base about the PIOs and overseas Indians should also be compiled in the shortest possible time so that the scheme of issuing OCI cards may be operationalised in a time bound manner and target groups are benefited properly.

#### Reply of the Government

Now a proposal to merge the PIO Card and OCI Card Scheme has been approved by the Cabinet. The salient features of the this merger scheme is stated below:

- The merged Scheme will be called **Overseas Indian Card Scheme**
- It will enable acquisition of OCI registration by minors, both parents of whom are Indian citizens or one parent is an Indian citizen
- It will also grant OCI to the foreign spouse of OCI card holder.
- To be granted to PIOs up to 4 generation levels, i.e. PIOs whose parents, grand parents or great grand parents had been of Indian Origin.

The OCI Scheme is published by the Ministry and Indian Mission abroad. However the Scheme is voluntary in nature and as on 23/3/2012 on total number of 10,59,203 applicants have been issued OCI cards.

So far a collection of database of Overseas Indian's is concerned, the Indian Mission/Posts abroad have expressed their inability to collect an authentic information in their respective countries keeping in view the vast magnitude of the work individual non availability of a mechanism and in adequate staff at the disposal.

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

## CHAPTER – V

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

#### (Recommendation No.1)

The Committee note that the Budget Estimates of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs for the year 2011-2012 is Rs. 81 crores out of which Rs. 71.80 crores have been allocated towards Revenue Section and Rs. 9.20 crores towards Capital Section. Similar allocation was made at BE stage during 2010-2011 which was subsequently reduced to Rs. 73 crores at Revised Estimates (RE) stage and the actual expenditure during 2010-2011 remained at Rs. 72.80 crores. The Committee also note that as against a demand of Rs. 155 crores during 2010-2011 Rs. 81 crores were allocated by the Finance Ministry and similarly against the demand of Rs. 149.26 crores, the MOIA has again been allocated Rs. 81 crores only at BE 2011-2012 stage. The Committee are not convinced with the justification given by the Ministry for such trend of allocation stating that at the time of consideration of budget grants the Ministry of Finance consider the expenditure incurred till the end of second quarter of the previous year whereas the major expenditure of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs is incurred during the 3rd and 4th quarter in respect of its schemes such as OCI card, ICWF and holding of PBDs. The Committee are of the clear view that the Ministry has utterly failed to justify the trend of expenditure being made during each quarter of previous year and their projection before Ministry of Finance. The Committee, therefore, once again desire that the Ministry should make regular, proper and judicious reviews and develop an efficient monitoring mechanism so that genuine and realistic projections could be placed before the Ministry of Finance at BE and RE stage so that all the programmes activities are implemented without any downward revision ultimately depriving the beneficiaries of the intended benefits. The Committee also desire that there is a need of rescheduling the expenditure in each quarter of a financial year for better fund allocation. The Committee are relieved to note that after concerted efforts of the Ministry the Building Plans of Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra have been approved with a revised estimates of Rs. 79.19 crores and the work has also started in April, 2011. The Committee now expect that the construction of PBK will be completed within the fixed time frame of 24 months. The Committee also desire that the proposed Monitoring Committee to monitor of the progress of the project in terms of physical and financial achievements should be constituted immediately to avoid cost and time over run in executing the project. As regards the proposed scheme of setting up of Pravasi Bharatiya Bhawans in the States, the Committee desire that it should be further explored sincerely with State Governments who have concern for the NRI affairs/emigration. The Committee should be informed from time to time about the progress made in this regard.



## **Reply of the Government**

As desired by the Committee, the Ministry is already taking regular reviews of trend of expenditure. Consequently, percentage of expenditure vis-à-vis the Budget allocation is improving every year.

The construction of PBK which commenced from April, 2011 is likely to be completed within a period of two years (i.e. by April, 2013). A Committee headed by Joint Secretary in MOIA and consisting Director (Fin.), and representatives of the NBCC monitors physical and financial achievement of the project to avoid cost and time over run.

In so far as setting up of Pravasi Bhartiya Bhawans in the States is concerned, the matter will be taken up with to examine the project in terms of allocation of land and other logistics.

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

### **(Recommendation No. 2)**

The Committee are not happy with the efforts made so far by the Ministry for acquiring land for construction of PoE Offices for the convenience of emigrants. Over Rs. 1 crores are being paid every year towards rent for these premises. When despite best efforts made by PoE at Kerala, Chennai and other places no tangible result has come and Government is just paying huge rent month after month. Now the Committee desire that the matter should not be left at the lower level and it should be taken up with the concerned Chief Minister by the Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs and the Committee may, therefore, be posted with the progress in this matter regularly. The Committee are not satisfied with an allocation of meager amount of Rs. 20 lacs only under this Head for purchase/construction of PoE Offices because it does not show the determination of the Ministry in purchasing land for constructing PoE Offices. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Government should make sincere efforts in this direction and ensure the augmentation of allocation at RE or supplementary Demands for Grants stages for that purpose.

### **Reply of the Government**

Five POE offices, i.e., Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, Trivandrum and Cochin are housed in private buildings taken on rent. The issue of allotment of land, or space in Government buildings to accommodate these five POE offices has been taken up with the State Governments of Maharashtra, Chennai, Andhra Pradesh, and Kerala, the states in which the POE offices are functioning from private buildings. The status of action taken on the Standing Committee's recommendation in each case is as under: -

#### **POE, MUMBAI**

The matter was taken up with the Ministry of External Affairs on 30.12.2010 for providing accommodation to house the POE office at Mumbai in the newly constructed building for RPO at Bandra Kurla Complex. MEA on 20.01.2011 informed that the completion of the construction of the new

building is likely to take three more years and that the decision of allotting space will be taken after the RPO office is shifted to the newly constructed building. Further, the Secretary, MOIA on 29.04.2011 has also written to the Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra, but no response has been received so far. Secretary also took up the matter with Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development on 12.07.2011 for providing space for accommodation for POE office in Government buildings under the control of the Estate office at Mumbai. This matter has again been taken up with the Government of Maharashtra.

#### POE, CHENNAI

It is stated that Secretary MOIA on 15.04.2011 has written to the Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu for allotment of a plot of land identified by MOIA in K.K. Nagar, Chennai for constructing its own building. This was followed up by a D.O. letter dated 18.04.2011 from Hon'ble Minister MOIA to the Hon'ble Chief Minister, Government of Tamil Nadu for direction to the concerned authorities for allotment of the plot of land.

The Revenue Department, Government of Tamil Nadu has forwarded the letter dated 15.04.2011 from Secretary, MOIA to the District Collector, Chennai for necessary action. However, the response from the Government of Tamil Nadu is still awaited. Further, Secretary also took up the matter with Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development Government of India on 12.07.2011 for providing space for accommodation for POE office in the Government building under the control of Estate office at Chennai. This matter has again been taken up with the Government of Tamil Nadu.

#### POE, TRIVANDRUM

MOIA has succeeded in getting office accommodation for POE office at Trivandrum from the Government of Kerala. The Government of Kerala, NORKA (B) Department vide their G.O. (Rt.) No.283/2011/NORKA dated 31.08.2011 has allotted space for re-locating the Office of POE, Trivandrum in their newly constructed building at Thycaud, Trivandrum. The POE, Trivandrum office will start functioning as soon as the wooden fixtures and partitions etc. are fixed in the new office premises.

#### POE, COCHIN

The matter has been taken up at the level of Secretary, MOIA with Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala for allotting a plot of land measuring 1000 sq.m. in Cochin to house its POE office. Further, Secretary also took up the matter with Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development on 12.07.2011 for providing space for accommodation for POE office in the Government buildings under the control of Estate office at Cochin. This matter has again been taken up with the Government of Kerala.

## POE, HYDERABAD

Secretary, MOIA on 29.04.2011 has written to the Chief Secretary, Government of Andhra Pradesh for allotting a piece of land measuring about 1000 sq.m. at Hyderabad for constructing its own building to accommodate its field offices functioning in Hyderabad. In response the Principal Secretary (Revenue), Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the Collector of Hyderabad for examining the proposal. Further, Secretary also took up the matter with Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development on 12.07.2011 for providing space for accommodation for POE office in the Government buildings under the control of Estate office at Hyderabad. This matter has again been taken up with the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

### **(Recommendation No. 4)**

The Committee regret to note that despite their recommendation made in Third Report (15<sup>th</sup> LS) to expedite filling up the vacant posts in MOIA, the position has not improved at all but on the contrary the number of employees has further gone down from 155 to 146. As per information made available to the Committee, as against the sanctioned strength of 195, at present only 146 employees/persons are in position in the Ministry. The Ministry is awaiting the final reply from DOPT in regard to creation of a separate cadre for MOIA and once the process is complete, the MOIA would be in a better position to take all the requisite measures to fill up these vacant posts. As regard filling up of vacancies in PoE offices, the Committee note that MOIA intend to place the matter before the Cabinet after the Ministry of Finance clear the proposal. The Committee feel it needless to say that the shortfall in manpower affects the working of the Ministry particularly in the execution of various schemes/programmes in hand and, therefore, strongly recommend MOIA to earnestly take up the matter with DOPT and the Ministry of Finance to get an early requisite clearance in the matter relating to MOIA and creation of posts in PoE Offices respectively. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the efforts made by the MOIA and the outcome thereof.

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry is making all possible efforts to fill up the vacant posts. Communications have been made at the appropriate levels. In a meeting held with at Joint Secretary Level, Ministry of Home Affairs has assured to fill up most of the vacancies of UDCs/Assistant in a near future. Some of the posts of the Assistants have since been filled up. Proposal for opening of three POE offices has got approval from Ministry of Finance. The office of the POE Jaipur was inaugurated by the HMOIA on 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2012. The process for making the remaining two POE office at Guwahati and Rai Bareilly functional is under process. The Cadre separation issue is also being taken up vigorously with DOPT (CS Division).

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

### **(Recommendation No. 7)**

The Committee note that the Government has appointed one Consular (Coordinating Officer) each in the Embassy of India, Washington and in the Embassy of India, Abu Dhabi on experimental basis. Considering it as very important and essential step, the Committee strongly recommend that more such appointments should be considered particularly in the Consultates/Missions situated in Gulf Countries. The Committee also desire that while considering the appointment of such Consular(s) preference should be given to the persons capable to communicate in regional language of the majority of immigrants residing in a particular country. Such consideration should also be kept in mind while posting the staff in such Missions/Posts abroad with a view to provide better services to emigrants.

### **Reply of the Government**

The Ministry is exploring the possibilities of appointing Counsellor, Community Affairs in some of the Gulf Countries where the presence of Indian overseas workers is considerable. The Ministry has noted the recommendation of the Committee and in due compliance, preference will be given to the persons capable to communicate in regional language of the majority of immigrants residing in a particular country while appointing such Counsellor, Community Affairs/staff attached to the Mission for this purpose.

**[File No. H-11021/55/2011-P&C]**

**NEW DELHI**  
**03 April, 2012**  

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**14 Chaitra, 1934 (Saka)**

**ANANTH KUMAR,**  
**Chairman,**  
**Standing Committee on External Affairs**

**MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS HELD ON 3<sup>rd</sup> APRIL, 2012**

The Committee sat from 1100 hrs. to 1700 hrs. in Committee Room  
G-074, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

**PRESENT**

**Shri Ananth Kumar – Chairman**

**Sl.No**

**Name**

**MEMBERS**

**(LOK SABHA)**

2. Shri Anandrao Adsul
3. Shri S. Alagiri
4. Shri Anto Antony
5. Dr. Shafiqur Rahman Barq
6. Shri Bhudeo Choudhary
7. Shri T.K.S. Elangovan
8. Shri P. Karunakaran
9. Shri Pradeep Majhi
10. Shri Inder Singh Namdhari
11. Shri Zafar Ali Naqvi
12. Shri Rajendrasinh Rana
13. Shri K. Chandrasekhar Rao
14. Shri Takam Sanjoy
15. Smt. Sushila Saroj
16. Dr. Bholu Singh
17. Shri Janardhana Swamy
18. Dr. Shashi Tharoor

**RAJYA SABHA**

22. Shri Birendra Prasad Baishya
23. Shri A.W. Rabi Bernard
24. Shri Murli Deora
25. Shri H.K. Dua
26. Dr. K.P. Ramalingam
27. Dr. Bharatkumar Raut
28. Dr. Karan Singh
29. Shri Shivanand Tiwari
30. Shri Tarun Vijay
31. Vacant

## SECRETARIAT

1. Shri U.S. Saxena - Joint Secretary
2. Shri K. D. Muley - Director
3. Dr. Ram Raj Rai - Additional Director

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

3. The Committee then took up for consideration the draft Report on Action Taken by Govt. on the recommendations contained in the 9<sup>th</sup> Report (15<sup>th</sup> Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs for the year 2011-12. The Chairman invited the Members to offer their suggestions, if any, for incorporation in the draft Report. The Members suggested some minor modifications.

4. The Committee then adopted the draft Report and authorized the Chairman to finalize the Action Taken Report incorporating the suggestions made by the Members and present the same to Parliament.

*The Committee then adjourned.*

*(Vide Para 4 of Introduction of Report)*

**ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON  
THE RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS CONTAINED  
IN THE NINTH REPORT OF THE STAN DING COMMITTEE  
ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (15<sup>TH</sup> LOK SABHA)**

- |              |  |                           |
|--------------|--|---------------------------|
| <b>(i)</b>   | <b>Total Number of Recommendations</b>   | <b>15</b>                 |
| <b>(ii)</b>  | <b>Recommendations/Observations, which have been accepted by the Government.</b>   |                           |
|              | Recommendation Nos. 3,6, 8-13 and 15.  |                           |
|              |  | <b>Total-09</b>           |
|              |  | <b>Percentage: 60%</b>    |
| <b>(iii)</b> | <b>Recommendation/Observation which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government replies.</b>                           |                           |
|              | Recommendation No. 14  |                           |
|              |  | <b>Total-01</b>           |
|              |  | <b>Percentage: 06.67%</b> |
| <b>(iv)</b>  | <b>Recommendation/Observation in respect of which reply of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and require reiteration.</b> |                           |
|              | Recommendation No. 5   |                           |
|              |  | <b>Total- 01</b>          |
|              |  | <b>Percentage: 06.67%</b> |
| <b>(v)</b>   | <b>Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited.</b>                                     |                           |
|              | Recommendation Nos. 1,2,4 and 7  |                           |
|              |  | <b>Total-04</b>           |
|              |  | <b>Percentage: 26.66%</b> |