

18

**STANDING COMMITTEE
ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(2012-2013)**

FIFTEENTH LOK SABHA

MINISTRY OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS

[Action Taken on the recommendations contained in the Thirteenth Report
(15th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of
Overseas Indian Affairs for the year 2012-13]

EIGHTEENTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

March, 2013/Phalguna, 1934 (Saka)

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(2012-2013)

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[Action Taken on the observations/recommendations contained in the Thirteenth Report
(15th Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of
Overseas Indian Affairs for the year 2012-13]

Presented to Lok Sabha on 14th March, 2013

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 14th March,, 2013



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI
March, 2013/Phalguna, 1934 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (2012-2013)

Sl.No. Name of Member
1. **Shri Ananth Kumar - Chairman**

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Anto Antony
3. Shri Sansuma Khunggur Bwiswmuthiary
4. Shri Bhudeo Choudhary
5. Shri Bhakta Charan Das
6. Shri Suresh Kalmadi
7. Shri Pradeep Kumar Majhi
8. Shri Jose K. Mani
9. Shri Gobinda Chandra Naskar
10. Shri Rakesh Pandey
11. Shri M.B. Rajesh
12. Shri J. Ramesh
13. Shri Rajendrasinh Rana
14. Shri Elangovan T.K.S.
15. Shri Francisco Sardinha
16. Dr. Bhola Singh
17. Shri Janardhana Swamy
18. Dr. Girija Vyas
19. Shri Sultan Ahmed *
20. Shri Inder Singh Namdhari @
21. Vacant \$

Rajya Sabha

22. Smt. Jaya Bachchan
23. Shri A.W. Rabi Bernard
24. Shri Murli Deora
25. Dr. Najma A. Heptulla
26. Shri Balbir Punj
27. Dr. K.P. Ramalingam
28. Dr. Karan Singh
29. Shri N.K. Singh
30. Shri D. P. Tripathi
31. Smt. Ambika Soni#

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri U. S. Saxena - Joint Secretary
2. Dr. Ram Raj Rai - Director
3. Shri A. Sivanandam - Under Secretary
4. Shri Vikas Gachli - Executive Assistant

* Shri Manish Tewari ceased to be Member of the Committee consequent upon his appointment of as Minister of State w.e.f. 28.10.2012 and Shri Sultan Ahmed is nominated w.e.f. 13.12.2012.

@ Dr. Shashi Tharoor ceased to be Member of the Committee consequent upon his appointment of as Minister of State w.e.f. 28.10.2012 and Shri Inder Singh Namdhari is nominated w.e.f. 13.12.2012 .

\$ Shri Nama Nageswara Rao ceased to be Member of the Committee consequent upon change of nomination to Committee on Commerce w.e.f. 13.12.2012.

Smt. Ambika Soni has been nominated to the Committee *vice* Dr. M. S. Gill w.e.f. 27th December, 2012 who has been nominated to the Committee on Urban Development w.e.f. the same date.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Standing Committee on External Affairs (2012-13) having been authorized by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present this 18th Report (15th Lok Sabha) on Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 13th Report (15th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Overseas Affairs for the year 2012-13.

2. The 13th Report was presented on 8th May, 2012. The Action Taken Replies of the Government on all the recommendations/observations contained in the Report were received on 6th January, 2013

3. The Committee considered and adopted this Action Taken Report at their sitting held on 12th March, 2013. 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 13th Report of the Standing Committee on External Affairs (15th Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix-II.

NEW DELHI
12 March, 2013
21 Phalguna, 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 (2012-13) of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs which was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 8th May, 2012.

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: -

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

Recommendation Nos.1, 2,3, 4, 5,6,8, 9,10,11,12,13,14,15 &16

Total-15

(ii) Recommendation/Observation which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government replies.

NIL

Total- 00

(iii) Recommendation/Observation in respect of which reply of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and require reiteration.

Recommendation No. 7

Total- 01

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

NIL

Total-00

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 Allocation of MOIA for the year 2012-13 is Rs. 114.77 crores comprising Revenue Section as Rs. 94.77 crores and Rs. 20.00 crores as Capital Section. The Budget Estimates for the year 2011-12 was Rs. 81.00 crores which was kept at the same level at Revised Estimates (RE) stage and Rs. 41.23 crores only were spent up to January 31st 2012. The Committee had observed that amidst the trend of lower expenditure even than Revised Estimates during the last several years, it was very pleasing to learn that for the first time the Ministry was perhaps be enable to spend hundred percent of BE and RE during the year 2011-12. But the Committee were still not satisfied with the trend of expenditure being made in each quarter of the Financial Year. The Committee had observed that during the last quarter of the year 2011-12, Rs. 41.41 crores were to be spent out of the total BE/RE of Rs. 81 crores. The Committee were also not convinced at all with the reasons given by the Ministry stating that due to mandate of the Ministry, the maximum expenditure was being made in the last quarter of the financial year. The Committee had suggested that since all the other activities/schemes of the Ministry except PBD are continuous activities, the expenditure and settlement should also be evenly distributed as far as possible during each quarter of the year. The Committee had therefore, desired that by regular monitoring of the progress of the schemes/programmes, the Ministry should ensure that there was no accumulation of expenditure at the end of the financial year. The Committee had also desired that as far as possible, the media awareness programmes should be scheduled equally during each quarter of the year with regular settlement of Bills. The Committee had further desired that the expenditure booked by

Ministry of External Affairs/Missions/Posts and other agencies should also be obtained on regular basis for an early settlement during each quarter. The Committee had expressed their hope that by those measures the issue of unevenly spread expenditure of the Ministry during each quarter of the year might be resolved appropriately.

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

“The observation has been noted.”

7. **The Committee had made certain observations about the trend of expenditure shown by the Ministry during last several years and had suggested some methodology to avoid such trend of making maximum expenditure during the last quarter of the financial year. But in their reply, the Ministry has simply conveyed that the observations made by the Committee have been noted. The Committee would like to draw the attention of the Ministry towards the procedure to be followed in communicating the replies to the recommendations of the Committee where it is clearly mentioned that the replies should be comprehensive and not inconclusive, vague or couched in general terms like noted or accepted etc. Despite such specific directions, the MOIA has been submitting the maximum number of replies in the similar vague and inconclusive terms using the similar phrases. The Committee, therefore, desire that Ministry should provide comprehensive, conclusive and clear replies to the recommendations made by the Committee in future. On the same lines, the Committee would like to be informed about the initiatives taken by the Ministry in maintaining the evenly spread expenditure during each quarter of the year and the outcome thereof. The Committee would specially like to know about the sum allocated and released and spent in each quarter of the year along with explanation if there is any gap in allocation and actual expenditure in any quarter. The Committee should also be apprised about the status of settlement of bills of media awareness programmes and settlement of bills relating to expenditure booked by MEA / Missions / Ports and other agencies which were mentioned as the main factors responsible for uneven expenditure of the Ministry during the last financial year.**

Recommendation No. 4

8. The Committee had observed that the approval of building plan of Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra (PBK) was delayed on one or the other pretext for a very long period and only after a repeated persuasion, the construction work of PBK has now been awarded to the contractor on firm rates. The progress of the project, both physical and in financial terms was reviewed by a Committee at least once in every month at the project site. The Committee had expected that the work relating to PBK would be completed within the fixed time frame of 24 months and had desired to be updated on the progress made with regard to PBK on a regular basis.

The Committee were however, not satisfied with the efforts made by the Ministry regarding establishment of Pravasi Bhartiya Bhawans (PBB) in states. The Ministry had simply written to the States and was awaiting their replies. The Committee had therefore, recommended that the Ministry should play a proactive role and make concerted efforts in consultation with the State Governments at the highest level so that the scheme to construct PBBs in the States takes a shape at the earliest.

9. The Ministry of Overseas Indian affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“All out efforts are being made to ensure that the work relating to PBK is completed within the fixed time frame. The progress of the project, both physical and in financial terms is regularly reviewed.

Regarding the establishment of Pravasi Bhartiya Bhawans (PBB) in the States, the observation has been noted.”

10. The Committee are happy to note that through regular review of the progress of the project, the Government has been trying to ensure that the work relating to Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra (PBK) is completed within the fixed time- frame. The Committee, however, are not satisfied with the approach of the Ministry in the direction of establishing Pravasi Bhartiya Bhawans in the states. In their reply, the Ministry have not given any information about the response of the state Governments and the progress made so far in this regard. The Committee endorse the concept of setting up of Pravasi Bhartiya Bhawans in the states to provide under one roof, the Migrate Resources Centres, Protector of Emigrants (PoEs) offices Counseling and predeparture orientation and space for state level Pravasi Associations. But perhaps due to lack of clear cut policy and proposals of the Central Government, a reluctant approach is being shown by the

states in this regard. The Committee, therefore, reiterate that the Government should come out with a structured scheme with clear cut demarcation of participation of the Central Government and the State Government in setting up of these Bhawans and prepare a time-bound programme in consultation with the concerned state Governments and take up the matter at the highest level so that the concept could get a definite shape in the shortest possible time.

(Recommendation No. 5)

11. As observed by Committee the Ministry had made some efforts to get land or office space for existing PoE offices in Government owned buildings. PoE offices at Chennai, Hyderabad and Jaipur were working in a rented building owned by the State Governments. PoE offices at Mumbai and Cochin were still working in private buildings. The Committee were, however, pained to learn that even after a lapse of several months, the Ministry had not received any proper response from State Governments or Urban Development Ministry except in one case where they had succeeded in getting office accommodation for PoE office at Thiruvananthapuram, In that context, the Committee had reminded the Ministry about the suggestion given by them during on-the-spot visit of PoE Offices, wherein the Ministry was asked to explore the possibilities to shift/place the PoE offices either in the Airport premises or any nearby places to the Airport for the benefit of emigrant workers. The Committee had, therefore, desired that the matter should not be delayed further and should be taken up sincerely at the level of Minister of Civil Aviation/Urban Development Minister or concerned Chief Ministers to finalize the proposal of land or space to accommodate the remaining PoE Offices on priority basis.

12. The Ministry of Overseas Indian affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“The Ministry, after due consideration, feels that POE offices should be easily accessible to the emigrant workers, as they need this clearance before making their travel plans. Offices within or near the airports may be difficult to access. The status of action taken on the Standing Committee’s recommendation in each case is as under:”

(i) POE, MUMBAI

The matter was taken up with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on 30.12.2010 for providing accommodation to house the POE office at Mumbai in its newly constructed building for Regional Passport Officer (RPO) at Bandra Kurla Complex. The 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, Secretary, MOIA has on 29.04.2011, also written to the Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra. However, 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 of POE office in the Government building under the control of Estate office at Mumbai.

The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, on 20.12.2011, took up the matter with Chief Minister, Government of Maharashtra for allotting land for constructing MOIA's own building or office space in a government-owned building to accommodate POE office at Mumbai.

The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs on 20.12.2011 has also requested the Hon'ble Minister for Urban Development for allotting office space for the POE office in a Central Government owned building at Mumbai. Protector General of Emigrants (PGE) has reminded the Principal Secretary, Urban Development Department (I), Govt. of Maharashtra on 6th Dec., 2012.

(ii) POE, CHENNAI

Secretary, MOIA, wrote on 15.04.2011 to the Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu for allotment of a plot of land identified by MOIA in the 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 of Overseas Indian Affairs to the Chief Minister, Government of Tamil Nadu to direct to the concerned authorities for allotment of the said plot of land. 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.

The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, on 20.12.2011, took up the matter with Chief Minister, Government of Tamil Nadu for allotting land for constructing MOIA's own building or office space in a government owned building to accommodate POE office at Chennai.

The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs on 20.12.2011 has also requested the Hon'ble Minister for Urban Development for allotting office space for the POE office at Chennai in a Central Government owned building. PGE has reminded the Secretary, Urban Development Department, Govt. of Tamil Nadu on 6th Dec., 2012.

(iii) POE, COCHIN

Secretary, MOIA has taken up the matter 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 MOIA also took up the matter with Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development on 12.07.2011 for providing space for accommodation for POE office in a Government building under the control of Estate office at Cochin. The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, on 20.12.2011, took up the matter with Chief Minister, Government of Kerala for allotting land for constructing MOIA's own

building or office space in the government owned building to accommodate POE office at Cochin.

The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs on 20.12.2011 has also requested the Hon'ble Minister for Urban Development for allotting office space for the POE office at Cochin in a Central Government owned building. PGE has reminded the Secretary, Urban Development Department, Govt. of Kerala on 6th Dec., 2012.

(iv) POE, HYDERABAD

Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs 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 directed to 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 a Government building under the control of Estate office at Hyderabad.

The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, on 20.12.2011, took up the matter with Chief Minister, Government of Andhra Pradesh for allotting land for constructing MOIA's own building or office space in a government owned building to accommodate POE office at Hyderabad. The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs on 20.12.2011 has also requested the Hon'ble Minister for Urban Development for allotting office space for the POE office at Hyderabad in the Central Government owned building. PGE has reminded the Principal Secretary to Govt. Municipal Administration & Urban Development Authority, Secretariat, Hyderabad on 6th Dec., 2012.

13. The Committee observe that despite repeated persuasion by the Committee, the Ministry has not been able to get suitable office spaces for the PoE offices at Mumbai, Chennai, Cochin and Hyderabad. The matter was taken up at Chief Minister and Urban Development Minister level during 2011 and after that no concerted effort seem to have been made to obtain/shift space or land to house the present PoE offices. During the year 2012 the Ministry has written another reminder letter only to the concerned states Governments without undertaking any other follow-up action. The Committee also note that the Ministry has not taken any initiative to explore the other alternative suggested by the Committee and find any suitable space in the areas adjoining airports to place these offices for the benefit of emigrants.

The Committee, therefore, reiterate that the Ministry should continue to renew the efforts at the highest levels in the State Governments or the Ministry of

Urban Development or Ministry of Civil Aviation to obtain the suitable office space which is easily accessible and convenient for housing PoE offices at Mumbai, Chennai, Cochin and Hyderabad for appropriate handling of the continuously growing quantum of Emigrant workers.

(Recommendation No. 6)

14. The Committee had expressed their concern over the lack of seriousness showed by the Ministry by not making any allocation of even a single rupee for construction/purchase of buildings of PoE offices during the year 2012-13. Surprisingly, no fund had been kept to establish the three new PoE offices at Jaipur, Rai Bareilly and Guwahati. The Committee had taken a serious view to note that on one side, the Ministry had stated that they were making all possible efforts to purchase space or accommodate existing PoE offices in Government buildings and they were also committed to establish three new PoE offices during the current year itself but on the other side, there was no Budgetary provision for that purpose. The Committee had desired that the Ministry should make all sincere efforts to show their commitment to complete the work relating to establishment of the PoE offices at the earliest and provide sufficient fund for that purpose at RE stage.

The Committee had also observed that a significant number of Posts were vacant in all the existing eight PoE offices and the three new PoE offices also required staff. Though, applications had been called from Ministries through circulars but there was very poor response. The Committee, had therefore, desired that if there was no proper response from the employees of other Ministries in joining PoE offices, the Ministry should try other options to fill up the vacancies in PoEs in the shortest possible time so that the emigrant workers did not face more difficulty. The Committee had desired that the new PoE offices should be provided with the staff required to handle work load and smooth functioning of these offices and the Ministry should explore the possibilities of opening new PoE Offices at places like Dehradun to cater to the needs of the people residing at difficult hilly areas.

15. The Ministry of Overseas Indian affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

”Budget allocation for construction/purchase of buildings for POE offices is made when a proposal for acquiring land/building is under consideration of the Ministry. Since

no proposal for acquiring land/building was under consideration when BE 2012-13 was prepared, no funds were sought.

POE office at Jaipur has already started functioning in a building provided by the Rajasthan Govt. Adequate funds for salary and the office expenses etc. have been sought in the Revised Estimate (RE).”

As regards the opening of new office at Guwahati, the State Govt. has been requested to provide suitable accommodation. As soon as suitable accommodation is made available, action will be initiated for opening of the new POE office at Guwahati.

As regards the filling up of vacancies in the existing POE offices, it is stated that vacancies are circulated to the various Ministries/Departments for forwarding the names of interested candidates. If no proper response is received for filling up the vacancies, outsourced staff is appointed in the POE office so that the emigration workers do not face any problem. Incidentally, it is stated that emigration clearance is given on the same day to the workers as per the Rules.”

16. The Committee observe that no allocation has been sought by the Ministry even at RE stage for the construction or establishment of the old and new PoE Offices during the year 2012-13. This simply shows very casual approach on the part of the Government as they do not look confident and determined for getting the land or space for shifting old PoE offices at important places like Mumbai, Chennai, Cochin and Hyderabad or to establish new offices at Jaipur, Rai Barieli and Guwahati. The Committee are of the opinion that as the matter of allocation of land or office space is already predominantly placed with the State Governments and the Ministry of Urban Development and they have been recently reminded by the PGE in December, 2012, they should have been prepared appropriately by putting a certain amount of allocation for establishment or construction of these PoE offices at RE stage. The Committee do not support such casual approach of the government because even if they get the office space/land for PoE offices any time during the current financial year, they may not be able to start the work due to lack of any allocation for that purpose.

The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should not stop making efforts to obtain land or space for PoE offices on the plea of non-availability of funds, rather they should show their determination to conclude the deals during the current year itself so that they can get sufficient funds at BE stage for the

establishing /shifting of PoE offices during the year 2013-14. The Committee also remind that the Ministry should certainly explore the possibility of opening PoE offices at places like Dehradun to cater the needs of the people residing in difficult hilly areas on priority basis.

(Recommendation No.7)

17. The Committee had noted that over 25 million Overseas Indians resided in around 189 countries of the world who claimed to be the second largest Diaspora in the world. But, unlike other countries like China, USA, etc. India had not been able to estimate the exact number of Indian Diaspora residing outside India. In the Committee's view, for better functioning and appropriate policy framing of the newly created Ministry for Indian Diaspora, the first and foremost work was to take initiatives to estimate the actual number of Indians living outside India and preparation of a database in that regard. It was unfortunate that the Ministry created for handling all the matters relating to Overseas Indians had no authentic data of its own and they had to depend upon the estimates projected in International documents. The Committee had been regularly asking the Ministry to take necessary initiatives in that regard but till date the Ministry had not come out with any concrete solution. The Committee were not convinced with the problems/difficulties showed by the Ministry based on the responses from Embassies/Missions/Posts or the hurdles of rules of some countries. The work could be undertaken on priority basis appointing a task force or selecting the agencies having expertise in the field. The Committee had also strongly recommended that necessary funds for that purpose could be obtained from the Finance Ministry at RE stage in view of importance and urgency of the matter.

18. The Ministry of Overseas Indian affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“It may not be feasible to compile exact database of the entire Indian Diaspora residing outside India due to the sensitiveness of the country concerned and the People of Indian Origin (PIOs)—who are citizens of that country-themselves. The number of PIOs is based on the estimates made by the Indian Missions, and sufficient as inputs for policy issues.

In so far as Indian passport-holders are concerned, data on emigration clearance given to the Emigration Clearance Required (ECR) category is available with this Ministry. In so far as non-ECR category is concerned, the data of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) leaving the country or returning, each year, is available with the Government.

Data on Indian passport-holders who have over-stayed abroad—having, for example, initially gone on tourist visas—is not available.

Estimates made by the Indian Missions cover all the above categories and, as stated, are sufficient as policy input.

The Ministry humbly submits that it is of the considered view that in view of the above, a separate study may neither be feasible, not affordable.”

19. The Committee are not convinced with the reply of the Government stating that it is not feasible for them to compile a database of the entire Indian Diaspora residing outside India based on grounds such as the sensitiveness of the countries concerned and the People of Indian origin themselves. The Committee are dismayed to observe that without making the desired efforts, the Ministry has shown their inability in collecting and compiling such authentic data have and a clear view that without proper estimations and adequate data in this regard the policy decisions and various programmes of the Ministry will certainly fall short of the expected results. If other countries having larger Overseas Diaspora have successfully compiled the similar data then why can't we take similar initiatives to prepare an authentic data base for Indian Diaspora. The Committee have a clear view that only the available data about the ECR passport holders and non-ECR category only may not serve the objectives of the formation of the MOIA. The Committee, therefore, reiterate that the Ministry should take all possible initiatives to compile the data of Indian Diaspora within three months and apprise the Committee of the progress made in this regard. The Committee believe that the formation of the Diaspora data-base with near exact figures it would be proved that the MOIA have been sincerely guided by their key policy imperatives thriving towards the much wanted Institutional arrangements for the benefits of the Overseas Indians and India as such.

(Recommendation 9)

20. The Committee had noted with happiness that the Ministry was organizing 'Know India Programme' (KIP) with the aim of creating awareness about the phenomenal transformation taking place in India and the country's progress from just a destination for culture, heritage and art to an emerging powerhouse in the global economic system. The Committee had also observed that the Ministry had proposed to launch another programme called 'Study India Programme' (SIP) in addition to 'Know India Programme' (KIP). SIP was to be held twice a year with the enhanced Budgetary provision under the budgetary head of know India Programme (KIP). The duration of SIP was to be four weeks in comparison to three weeks of KIP. No doubt, those programmes provided a forum for students and young professionals of Indian origin to bond with contemporary India in real terms and also share their views, expectations and experiences in their ancestral country. The Committee had also felt that the participants of the KIP and SIP, apart from the visit programme and study modules, might be entrusted with and educated about all the schemes and programmes of the Ministry and the initiatives taken by the Ministry with respect to Overseas Indians, PIOs and NRIs for a multiplying effect on the Overseas Indians in the International scenario.

21. The Ministry of Overseas Indian affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

The participants of KIP interact with the officers of the Ministry, when they are briefed about all the schemes and programmes of the Ministry. If possible, they also call on the Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs.

22. The Committee observe that there are routine courtesy Calls and limited meetings of the enrolled overseas Indian youths with the Officers of the Ministry and the Minister under 'Know India Programme' (KIP) and 'Study India Programme' (SIP). In Committee's view such meetings may not be sufficient for the visiting overseas Indian youths to establish permanent connections with the modern day India. The Committee, therefore, reiterate that the participants of KIP and SIP should be extensively educated about all the programmes and schemes of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs so that they are encouraged to go and get in touch with maximum number of youths of Indian Origin and propagate the Brand India.

(Recommendation No. 11)

23. The Committee had noted that with an objective to make higher education in India accessible to the children of overseas Indians and publicize India as an education hub, the Ministry under the 'Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC)' had been providing 100 scholarships every year for undergraduate courses. The Committee had also noted that the Ministry had lately increased the scholarship amount from US \$ 3600 per student per annum to US \$ 5000 but had kept the number of scholarships at

the level of 100 for the last several years. The Committee were surprised to note that the allocation for that scheme under BE 2012-13 had been reduced to Rs. 5 crores from the allocation of Rs. 5.44 crores in BE 2011-12. The scholarship amount was increased but the allocation was reduced to a lower level. 168 students had submitted applications for the year 2011-12 and 175 applications had been received for 2010-11 batch. That showed that more students had been showing their interest in getting education in India and the number of scholarships being offered after the revision in scholarship amount the number of aspirants would certainly increase. The Committee had, therefore, strongly recommended that the Ministry should appropriately increase the number of scholarships as well as the allocation at RE stage so that the interested students may be provided with maximum number of scholarships to study in India under the Scheme.

24. The Ministry of Overseas Indian affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“The matter of increasing allocation will be taken up at the appropriate time in consultation with the Ministry of Finance.”

25. The Committee are not satisfied with the vague and inconclusive reply given by the Government which does not show any determination of the Government to increase allocation for the Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC). The Committee feel that the SPDC is one of the most prestigious and popular welfare programmes of MOIA and a lot of overseas Indian Youths and Diaspora Youths are showing interest in getting higher and quality education from India. But the present number of scholarships under this programme does not commensurate with its demand and popularity of the scheme. That is why the Committee had recommended for an increase in the amount and number of this scholarship after taking into consideration the cost of living and quantity of aspirants. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their recommendation in this regard and desire that Government should come out with concrete revisions in this regard on priority basis and apprise the Committee accordingly.

Recommendation No. 15

26 The Committee had been regularly discussing on several occasions about the coordination between MOIA and MEA. This became very important particularly in the emergencies like global natural calamities/political crisis etc. where Indian nationals are stranded and immediate and deliberate rescue and relief is required in such emergent situation. The Committee were aware that MEA came into action through Missions/Posts and took care of such immediate and emergent situations in the country where the crisis arose. But the Committee had observed that almost nothing was left to be done by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs after bringing the Indian citizens in India as happened in the case of evacuation from Libya. The Ministry of Overseas Affairs are the nodal Ministry in the matters relating to NRIs and PIOs. The Committee had, therefore, desired that the MOIA must work in close association with MEA while dealing with such situations. Since, evacuation like situation or need for assistance to people of Indian origin might arise in several other countries facing political crisis, some budget allocation for handling such situation could be kept with MOIA.

27. The Ministry of Overseas Indian affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“The observation has been noted.”

28. The Committee are not at all satisfied with the response of the Ministry with regard to their recommendation regarding the role of MOIA in handling the emergent situations arising before Indian Nationals in the countries facing political crisis/calamities etc. The Committee had a clear intention that MOIA being the Nodal Ministry in the matter pertaining to NRIs and POIs, should play a defined role in coordination with MEA for the help and welfare /rescue of stranded Indians in the countries facing such emergent situations. As on date, MOIA has no defined role in such areas. The Committee had, therefore, desired that with a specific and defined role of MOIA and MEA a better coordination mechanism might be established and both the Ministries could execute in tandem. But the Ministry has neither clarified their intention nor informed about any initiatives taken or being taken in that direction. The Committee, therefore, desire that required measures should be taken by the MOIA in consultation with MEA and apprise the Committee about the developments on the suggested lines in future.

(Recommendation No.16)

29. The Committee had observed that during August 1991 to Dec 2010 the NRI investment accounted for Rs.29,347 crores. Keeping in mind the large Diaspora and sustainable growth of Indian economy despite the Global financial meltdown, the Committee had looked forward to a higher rate of healthy investments by NRIs in India. The Committee had recommended that Financial Services Division of the Ministry must work on some targets on yearly basis to attract NRI investment in India using all opportunities including PBDs. For such purpose, MOIA could have also consulted and deliberated with all the concerned Ministries/Departments/Agencies particularly with the Ministry of Commerce for chalking out a comprehensive plan to attract more and more investments in the fields where FDI have been allowed by the Government. The Committee had also desired that some more special incentives, tax benefits and exemptions, early start up of business and single window documentation facility could have been provided to attract higher NRI investments.

30. The Ministry of Overseas Indian affairs in their action taken reply have stated as under:

“Although Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs does not directly deal with policies related to investment by NRI’s in India and Foreign Direct Investments, it is represented in the Foreign Investment Promotion Board that is serviced by the Department of Economic Affairs and Board on Special Economic Zones that is serviced by the Department of Commerce. MOIA is also consulted by the Ministry of Finance and the Department of Commerce on policies pertaining to investment by Overseas Indians. MOIA is also kept informed of all matters relating to Overseas Indians.

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has established an organization, namely Overseas Indian facilitation Centre (OIFC) in 2007, to facilitate potential NRIs and overseas corporate bodies of overseas Indians that desire to invest in India. OIFC has organized several Investment and Interactive Meets/Road shows in different countries and also organized “market place” during Pravasi Bhartiya Divas in India. An electronic portal has also been launched by the Ministry to reply to the queries of potential overseas investors by OIFC and its knowledge partners to promote and facilitate economic engagement by Overseas Indians. The annual PBDs and regional PBDs also provide a platform for facilitation of investment by overseas Indians.”

31. The Committee are aware that MOIA is not directly concerned with the policies relating to Foreign Direct Investment but, they cannot deny their important role in presenting the needs of NRIs in the policy framing system with a view to protect their interests in making investments in the land of their origin. NRIs may not be treated like other foreign investors. They certainly deserve some special concessions because they are not only the investors but their

investments also involve their feelings and considerations for welfare of the country of their ancestors. They deserve liberal legal and procedural policies. The Committee, therefore, desire that with an objective to protect the interests of NRIs, MOIA should play a proactive role during the consultation process with concerned policy framing Ministries. The Committee are surprised to note that MOIA has not been able to utilize the opportunity of PBD for the purpose of attracting NRI investments whereas with similar meets, huge NRI investments are being finalized by the states every year. The Committee, therefore, desire that PBD platform should be appropriately used to attract and finalize more NRI investments and the Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC) should develop a better coordination with the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Commerce to develop it as a single window facilitation Centre for NRIs. The Committee should be informed from time to time about the efforts being made by the Ministry and the achievements made in this regard.

CHAPTER – II

RECOMMENDATIONS/ OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

(Recommendation No. 2)

2. The Committee note that as against the demand of Rs. 162.99 crores during 2012-13, only Rs. 114.77 crores has been allocated at BE stage. The Committee also observe a visible jump in BE is on account of just two major items i.e. Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra and e-Migrate Project. But actually, the Ministry has been allocated less funds and as such it has gone down. The Committee further observe that this curtailment in allocation for many important flagship schemes and projects of the Ministry like Scholarship Scheme for Diaspora Children, Overseas Indian Centres, Indian Council of Overseas Employment and even the lower allocation than the desired for construction of Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra will hamper the activities of the Ministry. The Ministry has to observe more realistic Budgetary projections, ensure judicious quarterly utilization of funds well within the BE allocation and thereafter take up the matter with Finance Ministry from beginning to obtain the required funds at RE stage. In the absence of this strategy programmes/projects will suffer due to downward revision and that will ultimately deprive the beneficiaries of the intended benefits.

Reply of the Government

The observation has been noted and the matter will be taken up with the Finance Ministry to obtain required fund at the RE stage.

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(Recommendation No. 3)

3. The Committee observes that in BE 2012-13, as against the proposed provision of Rs. 49.79 crores under Revenue Head the Ministry of Finance has agreed to an allocation of Rs. 38.10 crores only. As a consequence, out of the total cost of E-Migrate project of Rs. 92.67 crores, only Rs. 20.00 crores have been earmarked for the year 2012-13, which does not seem sufficient for timely implementation of the project. The Ministry has accepted that while distributing the balance provision, the Budget Expenditure in many object Heads has been kept at the same or lower level even than the last year making it inadequate to meet the expenditure on the items under these heads. The Committee note that a Master Service Agreement (MSA) has been signed between the Government of India and the implementing agency of the project in

December, 2011 and the e- Migrate project is scheduled to be completed within 58 weeks from the date of signing the agreement. The Committee are happy to note the Ministry has set up Project Management Unit (PMU) headed by a Director level officer to the Government of India and a Steering Committee headed by Secretary, MOIA has also been constituted for monitoring the progress of the project. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that MOIA should make all possible efforts to obtain the balance amount vital for implementation of the e-Migrate project by presenting the case based on actual progress and realistic projections at the RE stage so that implementation of this important project does not suffer due to paucity of funds. Similarly, all possible efforts should be made to obtain the required funds for other Object Heads at RE stage.

Reply of the Government

The observation has been noted and the matter will be taken up with the Finance Ministry to obtain required fund at the RE stage.

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(Recommendation No. 4)

4. The Committee observes that the approval of building plan of Pravasi Bhartiya Kendra (PBK) was delayed on one or the other pretext for a very long period and only after a repeated persuasion the construction work of PBK has now been awarded to the contractor on firm rates. The progress of the project, both physical and in financial terms is reviewed by a Committee at least once in every month at the project site. The Committee now can expect that the work relating to PBK would be completed within the fixed time frame of 24 months. The Committee desire to be updated on the progress made in this regard on a regular basis.

The Committee are however, not satisfied with the efforts made by the Ministry regarding establishment of Pravasi Bhartiya Bhawans (PBB) in states. The Ministry has simply written to the States and awaiting replies. The Committee therefore, recommends that the Ministry should play proactive role and make concerted efforts in consultation with the State Governments at the high level so that the scheme to construct PBBs in the States takes a shape at the earliest.

Reply of the Government

All out efforts are being made to ensure that the work relating to PBK is completed within the fixed time frame. The progress of the project, both physical and in financial terms is regularly reviewed.

Regarding the establishment of Pravasi Bhartiya Bhawans (PBB) in the States, the observation has been noted.

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(Recommendation No. 5)

5. The Committee observe that the Ministry has made some efforts to get land or office space for existing PoE offices in Government owned buildings. PoE offices at Chennai, Hyderabad and Jaipur are rented in a building owned by the State Governments. PoE offices at Mumbai and Cochin are still working in private buildings. The Committee are, however, pained to learn that even after a lapse of several months, the Ministry has not received any proper response from State Governments or Urban Development Ministry except in one case where for PoE office at Thiruvananthapuram, they have succeeded in getting office accommodation. In this context, the Committee would also like to remind the Ministry about the suggestion given by them during on-the-spot visit of PoE Offices, wherein the Ministry was asked to explore the possibilities to shift/place the PoE offices either in the Airport premises or any nearby places to the Airport for the benefit of emigrant workers. The Committee, therefore, desire that the matter should not be delayed further and should be taken up sincerely at the level of Minister of Civil Aviation/Urban Development Minister or concerned Chief Ministers to finalize the proposal of land or space to accommodate the remaining PoE Offices on priority basis.

Reply of the Government

The Ministry, after due consideration, feels that POE offices should be easily accessible to the emigrant workers, as they need this clearance before making their travel plans. Offices within or near the airports may be difficult to access. The status of action taken on the Standing Committee's recommendation in each case is as under:

(i) POE, MUMBAI

The matter was taken up with the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) on 30.12.2010 for providing accommodation to house the POE office at Mumbai in its newly constructed building for Regional Passport Officer (RPO) at Bandra Kurla Complex. The 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, Secretary, MOIA has on 29.04.2011, also written to the Chief Secretary, Government of Maharashtra. However, 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 of POE office in the Government building under the control of Estate office at Mumbai.

The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, on 20.12.2011, took up the matter with Chief Minister, Government of Maharashtra for allotting land for constructing MOIA's own building or office space in a government-owned building to accommodate POE office at Mumbai.

The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs on 20.12.2011 has also requested the Hon'ble Minister for Urban Development for allotting office space for the POE office in a Central Government owned building at Mumbai. Protector General of Emigrants (PGE) has reminded the Principal Secretary, Urban Development Department (I), Govt. of Maharashtra on 6th Dec., 2012.

(ii) POE, CHENNAI

Secretary, MOIA, wrote on 15.04.2011 to the Chief Secretary, Government of Tamil Nadu for allotment of a plot of land identified by MOIA in the 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 of Overseas Indian Affairs to the Chief Minister, Government of Tamil Nadu to direct to the concerned authorities for allotment of the said plot of land. 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.

The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, on 20.12.2011, took up the matter with Chief Minister, Government of Tamil Nadu for allotting land for constructing MOIA's own building or office space in a government owned building to accommodate POE office at Chennai.

The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs on 20.12.2011 has also requested the Hon'ble Minister for Urban Development for allotting office space for the

POE office at Chennai in a Central Government owned building. PGE has reminded the Secretary, Urban Development Department, Govt. of Tamil Nadu on 6th Dec., 2012.

(iii) POE, COCHIN

Secretary, MOIA has taken up the matter 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 MOIA also took up the matter with Secretary, Ministry of Urban Development on 12.07.2011 for providing space for accommodation for POE office in a Government building under the control of Estate office at Cochin. The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, on 20.12.2011, took up the matter with Chief Minister, Government of Kerala for allotting land for constructing MOIA's own building or office space in the government owned building to accommodate POE office at Cochin.

The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs on 20.12.2011 has also requested the Hon'ble Minister for Urban Development for allotting office space for the POE office at Cochin in a Central Government owned building. PGE has reminded the Secretary, Urban Development Department, Govt. of Kerala on 6th Dec., 2012.

(iv) POE, HYDERABAD

Secretary, Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs 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 directed to 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 a Government building under the control of Estate office at Hyderabad.

The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs, on 20.12.2011, took up the matter with Chief Minister, Government of Andhra Pradesh for allotting land for constructing MOIA's own building or office space in a government owned building to accommodate POE office at Hyderabad. The Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs on 20.12.2011 has also requested the Hon'ble Minister for Urban Development for allotting office space for the POE office at Hyderabad in the Central Government owned building. PGE has reminded the Principal Secretary to Govt. Municipal Administration & Urban Development Authority, Secretariat, Hyderabad on 6th Dec., 2012.

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(Recommendation No. 10)

10. The Committee are happy to note that the Ministry has conducted a study report on 'Impact Study on Know India Programme' through CII for analysis of performance of the programme and is exploring the possibilities to improve the quality of the programme. The Committee observe that recommendations of this study suggests an improvement in all the areas of the programmes viz pre-arrival, registration, arrival and departure assistance, programme scheduling, infrastructure and services and programme content also. The Committee, therefore, desire that these suggestions should be implemented from the next programme itself. The Committee also desire that the participants should not be restricted with the visit of only one participating State associated with a particular programme rather, they should be given an opportunity to take a view of diverse and heterogeneous Indian community representing different regions languages, cultures and faiths of present India.

Reply of the Government:

Noted for compliance.

(Recommendation No. 12)

12. The Committee observe that the India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI), a not-for-profit scheme Chaired by the Minister of MOIA has been established to serve as a credible single window to lead Overseas Indian Philanthropy into India's social development efforts and aims to provide a transparent and effective platform for volunteering, sharing knowledge, skills, expertise and social entrepreneurship along with contributions. It is being registered as a not-for-profit charity in US, Canada, Europe (UK and Germany), Gulf and APAC region (Australia and New Zealand) that will be organically linked to IDF-OI India. The trust will partner with international, national and State level NGOs as well as Panchayati Raj institutions. The Committee observe that IDF-OI is in the process of short listing NGOs. The Committee, therefore, specifically cautions that the NGOs only with an established track record of being genuine in implementing various schemes/projects funded by the Government of India should be selected for the purpose of implementation of the projects in a selfless manner in specific area of expertise. The selection of NGOs with credible and excellent track record only can inspire the faith and attract the contributors. The Committee are aware that a large number of Overseas Indians are interested to invest in social sector but they usually hesitate in doing so looking the ground reality and prevalent work culture in India. Therefore, there is a need to channelize Diaspora philanthropy. The Committee also desire that through wide publicity, the Trust should first convince and then persuade the prospects with an assurance of safe and genuine handling of their contributions in the country of their origin.

Reply of the Government

IDF-OI has developed a Credibility Assessment Framework for short listing recognized and credible International, National and State-level NGO's with an established track record of implementing philanthropic projects in Health Care, Education, Self Help Groups for women and sustainable livelihood.

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(Recommendation No. 13)

13. The Committee are pleased to note that the Government has approved the proposal of setting up of a Pension and Life Insurance Fund (PLIF) for Overseas Indian Migrant workers in the ECR countries. The Scheme has been recently launched. Under the scheme, the Ministry encourages the migrant workers with limited work years abroad to save for their old age, return and resettle through this scheme by making voluntary co-contribution. The Committee, however, have an apprehension that under the provision of voluntary contribution unskilled or semi-skilled workers may refrain from contributing to this scheme of Government of India without being convinced with the modalities/procedures of reaching or getting back the maturing amount. Therefore, the Committee recommends that all the arrangements should be made for wide publicity. Awareness material containing information, frequently asked question (FAQ) in English, Hindi and in major Regional Languages relating to this scheme should be prepared and made available to the workers at the stage of emigration clearance with immediate effect. Simultaneously, our missions/posts abroad should be provided with the same material for spreading awareness amongst the workers already working Overseas. The Committee also desire that possibilities should be explored to make the contribution mandatory so that the objectives of the scheme are achieved in a better way and every worker's life becomes happy and secure on return to India.

Reply of the Government

The Ministry has made necessary arrangements for the wide publicity of PLIF Scheme. Awareness material containing information, frequently asked questions (FAQ) in English, Hindi and in major Regional Languages relating to this scheme have been prepared which would be made available to the workers at the stage of emigration clearance. These materials would be provided to Indian Missions/Posts abroad for spreading awareness amongst the workers already working overseas.

(Recommendation No. 14)

14. The Committee were surprised to note that even after the repeated recommendations of the Committee, the Ministry had not been able to fill up the vacant posts in the Ministry and PoE offices. The Committee had expressed their concern to note that since eight years of the establishment, the Ministry was still struggling to get its sanctioned strength of staff and functioning without its own cadre. The Ministry was also not able to get proper response through the circular in other Ministries to fill the vacancies of PoE offices. In such situation, the vacancies in the existing PoEs and new PoE offices may not be filled up. The Committee once again reiterated that the matter relating to staff should be continuously pursued with the Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of DOPT so that the issue of filling up the vacancies in the Ministry and PoE offices and creation of separate cadre was to be resolved at the earliest. The Ministry were also requested to 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.

(Reply of the Government)

As regards vacancies in the POE offices, the vacancies are circulated to all the Ministries/Departments. If adequate response is not received, the vacancies are filled up by outsourcing the staff by the respective POEs, including new POE offices.

Recommendation No. 15

15. The Committee has been regularly discussing on several occasions about the coordination between MOIA and MEA. This becomes very important particularly in the emergencies like global natural calamities/political crisis etc. where Indian nationals are stranded and immediate and deliberate rescue and relief is required in such emergent situation. The Committee is aware that the MEA, comes into action through Missions/Posts and takes care of such immediate and emergent situations in the country where the crisis arises. But the Committee observe that almost nothing is left to be done by the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs after bringing the Indian citizens in India as happened in the case of evacuation from Libya. The Ministry of Overseas Affairs is the nodal Ministry in the matters relating to NRIs and PIOs. The Committee, therefore, desire that the MOIA must work in close association with MEA while dealing with such situations. Since, evacuation like situation or need for assistance to people of Indian origin may arise in several other countries facing political crisis, some budget allocation for handling such situation should be kept with MOIA.

Reply of the Government

The observation has been noted.

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Recommendation No.16

16. The Committee observes that during August 1991 to Dec 2010 the NRI investment accounted for Rs. 29,347 crores. Keeping in mind the large Diaspora and sustainable growth of Indian economy despite the Global financial meltdown, the Committee looks forward to a higher rate of healthy investments by NRIs in India. The Committee recommend that Financial Services Division of the Ministry must work on some targets on yearly basis to attract NRI investment in India using all opportunities including PBDs. For this purpose, MOIA should also consult and deliberate with all the concerned Ministries/Departments/Agencies particularly with the Ministry of Commerce to chalk out a comprehensive plan to attract more and more investments in the fields where FDI is allowed by the Government. The Committee also desire that some more special incentives, tax benefits and exemptions, early start up of business and single window documentation facility should be provided to attract higher NRI investments.

Reply of the Government

Although Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs does not directly deal with policies related to investment by NRI's in India and Foreign Direct Investments, it is represented in the Foreign Investment Promotion Board that is serviced by the Department of

Economic Affairs and Board on Special Economic Zones that is serviced by the Department of Commerce. MOIA is also consulted by the Ministry of Finance and the Department of Commerce on policies pertaining to investment by Overseas Indians. MOIA is also kept informed of all matters relating to Overseas Indians.

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has established an organization, namely Overseas Indian facilitation Centre (OIFC) in 2007, to facilitate potential NRIs and overseas corporate bodies of overseas Indians that desire to invest in India. OIFC has organized several Investment and Interactive Meets/Road shows in different countries and also organized "market place" during Pravasi Bhartiya Divas in India. An electronic portal has also been launched by the Ministry to reply to the queries of potential overseas investors by OIFC and its knowledge partners to promote and facilitate economic engagement by Overseas Indians. The annual PBDs and regional PBDs also provide a platform for facilitation of investment by overseas Indians.

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CHAPTER – III

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

(Recommendation No. 1)

The Committee note that the Budget Allocation of MOIA for the year 2012- 13 is Rs. 114.77 crores comprising Revenue Section as Rs. 94.77 crores and Rs. 20.00 crores as Capital Section. The Budget Estimates for the year 2011-12 was Rs. 81.00 crores which was kept at the same level at Revised Estimates (RE) stage and Rs. 41.23 crores only were spent up to January 31st 2012. Amidst the trend of lower expenditure even than Revised Estimates during the last several years, it is very pleasing to learn that for the first time the Ministry would perhaps be able to spend hundred percent of BE and RE during the year 2011-12. But the Committee are still not satisfied with the trend of expenditure being made in each quarter of the Financial Year. The Committee observe that during the last quarter of the year 2011-12, 41.41 crores were to be spent out of the total BE/RE of Rs. 81 crores. The Committee is also not convinced at all with the reasons given by the Ministry stating that due to mandate of the Ministry, the maximum expenditure is being made in the last quarter of the financial year. Since all the other activities/schemes of the Ministry except PBD are continuous activities, the expenditure and settlement should also be evenly distributed as far as possible during each quarter of the year. The Committee, therefore, desire that by regular monitoring of the progress of the schemes/programmes, the Ministry should ensure that there is no accumulation of expenditure at the fag end of the financial year. The Committee also desire that as far as possible, the media awareness programmes should be scheduled equally during each quarter of the year with regular settlement of Bills. The Committee further desire that expenditure booked by Ministry of External Affairs/Missions/Posts and other agencies should also be obtained on regular basis for an early settlement during each quarter. The Committee hope that by these measures the issue of unevenly spread expenditure of the Ministry during each quarter of the year may be resolved appropriately.

Reply of the Government:

The observation has been noted.

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CHAPTER – IV

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

(Recommendation No. 6)

The Committee expresses their concern over the lack of seriousness shown by the Ministry by not making any allocation of even single rupee for construction/purchase of buildings of PoE offices during the year 2012-13. Surprisingly, no fund has been kept to establish the three new PoE offices at Jaipur, Rai Bareilly and Guwahati. The Committee take a serious view to note that on one side, the Ministry has stated that they are making all possible efforts to purchase space or accommodate existing PoE offices in Government buildings and they are also committed to establish three new PoE offices during the current year itself but on the other side, there is no Budgetary provision for that purpose. The Committee desires that the Ministry should make all sincere efforts to show their commitment to complete the work relating to establishment of the PoE offices at the earliest and provide sufficient fund for that purpose at RE stage.

The Committee also observes that a significant number of Posts are vacant in all the existing eight PoE offices and the three new PoE offices also require staff. Though, applications have been called from Ministries through circulars but it seems that there is very poor response. The Committee, therefore, desires that if there is no proper response from the employees of other Ministries in joining PoE offices, the Ministry should try other options to fill up the vacancies in PoEs in the shortest possible time so that the emigrant workers do not face more difficulty. The Committee also desire that the new PoE offices should also be provided with the staff required to handle work load and smooth functioning of these offices and the Ministry should explore the possibilities of opening new PoE Offices at places like Dehradun to cater to the needs of the people residing at difficult hilly areas.

Reply of the Government

Budget allocation for construction/purchase of buildings for POE offices is made when a proposal for acquiring land/building is under consideration of the Ministry. Since no proposal for acquiring land/building was under consideration when BE 2012-13 was prepared, no funds were sought.

POE office at Jaipur has already started functioning in a building provided by the Rajasthan Govt. Adequate funds for salary and the office expenses etc. have been sought in the Revised Estimate (RE).

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Recommendation No.7

The Committee note that as a result of different waves of migration driven by mercantilism, colonialism and now, globalization over 25 million Overseas Indians reside in around 189 countries of the world which is claimed to be the second largest Diaspora in the world. But, unlike countries like China, USA, etc. India has not been able to estimate the exact number of Indian Diaspora residing outside India. In Committee's view for better functioning and appropriate policy framing of the newly created Ministry for Indian Diaspora, the first and foremost work is to take initiatives to estimate the actual number to Indians living outside India and preparation of a database in this regard. It is unfortunate to observe that the Ministry created for handling all the matters relating to Overseas Indian has no authentic data of its own and they have to depend upon the estimates projected in International documents. The Committee have been regularly asking the Ministry to take necessary initiatives in this regard but till date the Ministry has not come out with any concrete solution. The Committee are not convinced with the problems/difficulties shown by the Ministry based on the responses from Embassies/Missions/Posts or the hurdles of rules of some countries. As recommended earlier, the work should be undertaken on priority basis appointing a task force or selecting the agencies having expertise in this field. The Committee also strongly recommend that necessary fund for this purpose should be obtained from the Finance Ministry at RE stage in view of importance and urgency of the matter.

Reply of the Government

It may not be feasible to compile exact database of the entire Indian Diaspora residing outside India due to the sensitiveness of the country concerned and the People of Indian Origin (PIOs)—who are citizens of that country-themselves. The number of PIOs is based on the estimates made by the Indian Missions, and sufficient as inputs for policy issues.

In so far as Indian passport-holders are concerned, data on emigration clearance given to the Emigration Clearance Required (ECR) category is available with this Ministry. In so far as non-ECR category is concerned, the data of Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) leaving the country or returning, each year, is available with the Government.

Data on Indian passport-holders who have over-stayed abroad—having, for example, initially gone on tourist visas—is not available.

Estimates made by the Indian Missions cover all the above categories and, as stated, are sufficient as policy input.

The Ministry humbly submits that it is of the considered view that in view of the above, a separate study may neither be feasible, not affordable.

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Recommendation No. 9

The Committee are happy to note that the Ministry is organizing 'Know India Programme' (KIP) with the aim of creating awareness about the phenomenal transformation taking place in India and the country's progress from just a destination for culture, heritage and art to an emerging powerhouse in the global economic system. The Committee also observe that the Ministry propose to launch another programme called 'Study India Programme' (SIP) in addition to 'Know India Programme' (KIP). SIP will be held twice a year with the enhanced Budgetary provision under the budgetary head of know India Programme (KIP). The duration of SIP will be four weeks in comparison to three weeks of KIP. No doubt, these programmes provide a forum for students and young professionals of Indian origin to bond with contemporary India in real terms and also share their views, expectations and experiences in their ancestral country. The Committee also feel that the participants of the KIP and SIP, apart from the visit programme and study modules, may be entrusted with and educated about all the schemes and programmes of the Ministry and the initiatives taken by the Ministry with respect to Overseas Indians, PIOs and NRIs for a multiplying effect on the Overseas Indians in the International scenario.

Reply of the Government

The participants of KIP interact with the officers of the Ministry, when they are briefed about all the schemes and programmes of the Ministry. If possible, they also call on the Hon'ble Minister of Overseas Indian Affairs.

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CHAPTER – V

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

(Recommendation No. 8)

The Committee note that 10,29,131 number of OCI cards have been issued to the people of Indian origin by February, 2012. During the year 2011-12 there was a proposal of issuing 2.45 lakh OCI cards whereas, during the year 2012-13 only 2,30,000 more cards are proposed to be issued with a Budget of Rs. 1.45 crore. The Committee, therefore, desire that when there is every possibility of more demand of these cards after the proposed merger of OCI card and PIO card schemes, the target and outlay should be revised appropriately at RE stage so that maximum number of people can get the benefit during the year 2012-13. The Committee also find that there is a proposal to merge OCI card and PIO card schemes. The Bill moved by the Ministry of Home Affairs in this regard has already been examined by the Standing Committee on Home Affairs and Report has also been submitted. The Committee, therefore, desire that MOIA should take up the matter with the Ministry of Home Affairs so that suitably amended Bill incorporating the suggestions of the Committee on Home Affairs is brought before the Parliament at the earliest.

Reply of the Government

The Bill has been presented in the Rajya Sabha on 8th Dec., 2011 and is pending at present with the Rajya Sabha.

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(Recommendation No. 11)

11. The Committee note that with an objective to make higher education in India accessible to the children of overseas Indians and publicize India as an education hub, the Ministry under the 'Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC)' has been providing 100 scholarships every year for undergraduate courses. The Committee also note that the Ministry has recently increased the scholarship amount from US \$ 3600 per student per annum to US \$ 5000 but has kept the number of scholarships at the level of 100 for the last several years. The Committee are more surprised to note that the allocation for this scheme under BE 2012-13 has been reduced to Rs. 5 crores from the allocation of Rs. 5.44 crores in BE 2011-12. The scholarship amount has thus been

increased but the allocation has been reduced to a lower level. This year 168 students have submitted applications for the year 2011-12 and 175 applications have been received for 2010-11 batch. This shows that more students have been showing their interest in getting education in India and than the number of scholarships being offered after the revision in scholarship amount the number of aspirants will certainly increase. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommends that the Ministry should appropriately increase the number of scholarships as well as the allocation at RE stage so that the interested students may be provided with maximum number of scholarships to study in India under the Scheme.

Reply of the Government

The matter of increasing allocation will be taken up at the appropriate time in consultation with the Ministry of Finance.

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(Recommendation No. 14)

The Committee are surprised to note that even after the repeated recommendations of the Committee, the Ministry has not been able to fill up the vacant posts in the Ministry and PoE offices. The Committee expresses their concern to note that since eight years of the establishment, the Ministry is still struggling to get its sanctioned strength of staff and functioning without its own cadre. The Ministry is also not able to get proper response through the circular in other Ministries to fill the vacancies of PoE offices. In such situation, the vacancies in the existing PoEs and new PoE offices may not be filled up. The Committee once again reiterate that the matter relating to staff should be continuously pursued with the Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of DOPT so that the issue of filling up the vacancies in the Ministry and PoE offices and creation of separate cadre is resolved 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.

Reply of the Government

As regards vacancies in the POE offices, the vacancies are circulated to all the Ministries/Departments. If adequate response is not received, the vacancies are filled up by outsourcing the staff by the respective POEs, including new POE offices.

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NEW DELHI
12th March, 2013
Phalgun, 21, 1932 (Saka)

ANANTH KUMAR,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on External Affairs,

Appendix-I

**MINUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS HELD ON 12TH MARCH, 2013**

The Committee sat from 1600 hrs. to 1700 hrs. in Committee Room 'B', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Ananth Kumar – Chairman

Sl.No

Name

MEMBERS

(LOK SABHA)

- | | |
|----|-----------------------------|
| 2. | Shri Jose K. Mani |
| 3. | Shri Gobinda Chandra Naskar |
| 4. | Shri J. Ramesh |
| 5. | Dr. Bholu Singh |
| 6. | Dr. Girija Vyas |
| 7. | Shri Inder Singh Namdhari |

RAJYA SABHA

- | | |
|-----|---------------------|
| 8. | Dr. K.P. Ramalingam |
| 9. | Dr. Karan Singh |
| 10. | Shri D. P. Tripathi |

SECRETARIAT

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------|---|----------|
| 1. | Dr. Ram Raj Rai | - | 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 13th Report (15th Lok Sabha) of the Committee on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs for the year 2012-13. 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
THIRTEENTH REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (15TH LOK SABHA)**

- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| (i) Total Number of Recommendations | 16 |
| (ii) Recommendations/Observations, which have been accepted by the Government. | |
| Recommendation Nos.1, 2,3, 4, 5,6,8, 9,10,11,12,13,14,15 &16 | |
| . | |
| | Total-15 |
| | Percentage: 93.75% |
| (iii) Recommendation/Observation which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government replies. | |
| Recommendation Nos. - NIL | |
| | Total- 00 |
| | Percentage: 0% |
| (iv) Recommendation/Observation in respect of which reply of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and require reiteration. | |
| Recommendation No. 7 | |
| | Total- 01 |
| | Percentage: 06.25% |
| (v) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited. | |
| Recommendation Nos. - NIL | |
| | Total-00 |
| | Percentage: 0% |