

51

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
—FOREIGN MISSIONS

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
1994-95

FIFTY-FIRST REPORT

TENTH LOK SABHA



सत्यमेव जयते

LC
351-72225R
N4.51/4

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

**FIFTY-FIRST REPORT
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1994-95)**

(TENTH LOK SABHA)

**MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
—FOREIGN MISSIONS**

*[Action Taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the
Forty-Fifth Report of Estimates Committee (Tenth Lok Sabha) on the
Ministry of External Affairs—Foreign Missions]*



सत्यमेव जयते

**PARLIAMENTARY PUBLICATIONS
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
New Delhi**

Presented to Lok Sabha on 26 April, 1995.

**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

April, 1995/Vaisakha, 1917 (S)

C O R R I G E N D A

TO

FIFTY-FIRST REPORT OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE ON ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE FORTY-FIFTH REPORT OF ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (TENTH LOK SABHA) ON THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS - FOREIGN MISSIONS.

.....

<u>Page</u>	<u>Para</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Read</u>
(v) 1	4	3	Appendix-I	Appendix-X
2	1.4	1	not	now
7	1.6	7	security	security
	1.21	9	Add 'to'	after 'required'
		10	India	Indian
9	1.26	1	perusing	perusing
19	5(i)	4	utilise	utilise
28	-	9	Add 'X'	after 'Appendix'
30	-	19	Delete	'can' after 'NIC'
42	-	6	perused	perused
85	-	19	21.2%	21.21%

CONTENTS

	PAGE
COMPOSITION OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (1994-95)	(iii)
INTRODUCTION	(v)
CHAPTER I Report	1
CHAPTER II Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by Government	13
CHAPTER III Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's reply	42
CHAPTER IV Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee	52
CHAPTER V Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government are awaited	56
APPENDICES	
APPENDIX I Minutes of the sitting of the Estimates Committee held on 19.04.1995	57
APPENDIX II Plan for purchase/construction of property	59
APPENDIX III Requirement of funds for purchase/construction of property in India and abroad over the next 10 years (beginning 1995-96)	65
APPENDIX IV Control of travel expenses budget for 1992-93	66
APPENDIX V Statements showing surrender of funds from 1990-91 to 1993-94	74
APPENDIX VI Technological developments in the field of communications	76
APPENDIX VII Computer courses held during 1993-94 and 1994-95	77
APPENDIX VIII Creation/regularisation of local post in Indian Missions abroad	78
APPENDIX IX Publicity efforts in Missions abroad	80
APPENDIX X Analysis of action taken by Government on the 45th Report of Estimates Committee (10th Lok Sabha)	85

**COMPOSITION OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE
(1994-95)**

CHAIRMAN

Dr. Krupasindhu Bhoi

MEMBERS

2. Shri B. Akber Pasha
3. Shri A. Asokaraj
4. Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal
5. Shri Anadi Charan Das
6. Shrimati Saroj Dubey
7. Shri Chhitubhai Gamit
8. Dr. Parshuram Gangwar
9. Shri Bhupinder Singh Hooda
10. Shri Imchalemba
11. Shri Barelal Jatav
12. Shri Dau Dayal Joshi
13. Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan
14. Shri Suraj Mandal
15. Shri K.M. Mathew
16. Shri Bhubaneshwar Prasad Mehta
17. Shri Ajoy Mukhopadhyay
18. Shri Kabindra Purkayastha
19. Shri Mohan Rawale
20. Shri Sudarsan Raychaudhuri
21. Shri K. P. Reddaiah Yadav
22. Shri Rajnath Sonker Shastri
23. Shri Rampal Singh
24. Shri Satya Deo Singh
25. Shri K. D. Sultanpuri
26. Shri P.C. Thomas
27. Shri Arvind Trivedi
28. Shri Lacta Umbrey
29. Shri Sobhanadrecswara Rao Vadde
30. Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav

SECRETARIAT

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Shri S. N. Mishra | — <i>Additional Secretary</i> |
| 2. Shrimati Roli Srivastva | — <i>Joint Secretary</i> |
| 3. Shri K. L. Narang | — <i>Deputy Secretary</i> |
| 4. Shri Raj Shekhar Sharma | — <i>Under Secretary</i> |
| 5. Shri R. C. Kakkar | — <i>Committee Officer</i> |

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Estimates Committee having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Fifty-First Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Forty-Fifth Report of Estimates Committee (Tenth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of External Affairs—Foreign Missions.

2. The Forty-Fifth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 26th August, 1994. Government furnished their replies indicating action taken on the recommendations contained in that Report on 2nd March, 1995. The Draft Report was considered and adopted by the Committee on 19th April, 1995.

3. The Report has been divided into the following Chapters:—

- I. Report;
- II. Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by Government;
- III. Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's reply;
- IV. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee; and
- V. Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited.

4. An analysis of action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Forty-Fifth Report of Estimates Committee (Tenth Lok Sabha) is given in Appendix-I. It would be observed therefrom that out of 66 observations/recommendations made in the Report, 48 recommendations *i.e.*, 72.73% have been accepted by the Government and the Committee do not desire to pursue 14 recommendations *i.e.*, 21.21% in view of Government's replies. Replies of Government in respect of 4 recommendations *i.e.*, 6.06% have not been accepted by the Committee.

NEW DELHI;
April 21, 1995

Vaisakha 1, 1917 (S).

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI,
Chairman,
Estimates Committee

CHAPTER I

REPORT

1.1 This Report of Estimates Committee deals with action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in their Forty-Fifth Report of Estimates Committee (10th Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of External Affairs—Foreign Missions.

1.2 The Committee's 45th Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 26th August, 1994 and contained 66 observations/recommendations. Action Taken Notes have been received in respect of all the 66 observations/recommendations.

1.3 The Action Taken Note received from the Ministry of External Affairs on the recommendations of the Committee have been categorised as follows:

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

Sl. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 37, 40, 41, 44, 45, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55, 56, 60, 61, 64, 65, and 66.

(Total: 48, Chapter-II)

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

Sl. Nos. 5, 20, 32, 38, 39, 46, 47, 48, 49, 57, 58, 59, 62 and 63.

(Total: 14, Chapter-III)

(iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which Government's replies have not been accepted by the Committee:

Sl. Nos. 36, 42, 43 and 54.

(Total: 4, Chapter-IV)

(iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies is still awaited:

(Total: Nil, Chapter-V)

1.4 The Committee will not deal with action taken by Government on some of the recommendations.

Security arrangements in Security Risk Missions (Sl. Nos. 7 to 9, Paras 2.36 to 2.38)

1.5 The Committee were informed that the security of diplomatic Missions and its personnel abroad was the responsibility of the host

Government. However, it had also become necessary to supplement these security measures through deployment of well trained India-based security guards and installation of security related aids both electronic and otherwise depending upon the security environment prevailing in the concerned country due to the intensification of terrorist activities and deterioration in law and order situation in a number of countries abroad.

1.6 Keeping in view of the above situation, the Committee had recommended that:

- (i) Wherever security arrangements need to be enhanced, the requisite resources both in terms of equipment and personnel should be made available.
- (ii) High security risks Missions/Posts should be identified for taking effective measures and the overall security needs of all the Missions/Posts abroad should be kept under constant review.

1.7 The Ministry in their action taken reply has stated as follows:

"MEA accept this recommendation of the Estimates Committee.

MEA's Bureau of Security is engaged in consultation with the specialised agencies concerned in India and abroad, in constantly monitoring the security situation in various countries and its implication for our Mission and its personnel. Adequately trained security guards from various central police organisations are being inducted in the BOS and posted to the various Missions abroad to carry out security related functions. At times Missions are also permitted to hire the services and security guards from private agencies, should the situation warrant to supplement the security. Other physical measures like boundary walls, fencing, technical and electronic gadgets are used to secure our Mission abroad depending on requirements.

High security risk Missions/Posts are identified periodically and security measures enhanced depending on the situation. Wherever necessary, personal visits are made by an expert officer for on-the-spot study. In 1993-94 and 1994-95 17 visits were made by a Joint Secretary level and above officer of MEA to 19 countries where the primary or *inter alia* purpose, was security of our property and personnel."

1.8 The Committee appreciate the various measures taken by the MEA's Bureau of Security for the security of diplomatic Missions and its personnel abroad as also to safeguard them against terrorist activities prevalent in various countries. They note that 17 visits were made by a Joint Secretary level and above officers of MEA to 19 countries where primary or *inter alia* purpose was security of property and personnel. However, no specific findings/deficiencies pointed out by these officers and follow up action or any remedial measures taken or proposed to be taken have been enumerated by the Ministry in their reply as an outcome of personal visits by Expert Officer.

1.9 The Committee are unable to understand the purpose of such visits in the absence of any findings/deficiencies pointed out by such officers during their visits and remedial measures, if any, suggested for tightening the security arrangements in those Missions. The Committee would have commended the efforts of the Ministry, if such visits would have been made by experts on specific necessity of security arrangements so that they could have taken stock of situation and suggested some remedial measures to tighten the security arrangements in those Missions. The Committee, therefore, desire in future only expert officer on security arrangement may be sent to such security risk Missions so that they could identify the security lacunae, if any, for taking timely remedial measures in this regard.

1.10 The Committee also desire the Ministry to post young, energetic and well trained commandos in the security risk Missions.

Need for Cultural Centres (Sl. No. 19, Para No. 3.16)

1.11 Stressing the need for setting up Cultural Centres in important countries, the Committee recommended as follows:

“Recognising the importance of culture as a positive and significant medium for improving foreign relations and diplomacy, the Government have been making concerted efforts to utilise the vision, diversity and dynamism of Indian Culture for establishing meaningful and friendly relations with other foreign countries are being channelised through Indian Council for Cultural Relations which is working under the operational control of the Ministry of External Affairs. The Committee have been informed that ICCR has cultural centres in Georgetown (Guyana), Paramaribo (Suriname), Moscow (Russia), Jakarta (Indonesia), Port Louis (Mauritius), Berlin (Germany), Cairo (A.R.E.), London (U.K.) and they are discharging the work of projecting India’s image abroad successfully. The Committee are, however, dissatisfied to know that in many important countries like Iran, Uzbekistan, France, United States and Nigeria, etc., there are no cultural centres. In order to inculcate friendly relations with these countries there is a need to set up more cultural centres in such countries. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of External Affairs should seriously ponder over this issue and make concerted efforts in this regard.”

1.12 The Ministry of External Affairs have in their action taken reply stated as follows:

“New cultural centres have been opened in Uzbekistan (Tashkent) and Kazhkstan (Almaty). These are already functional and Directors of the cultural centres are in position. It has also been decided to open a cultural centre in Johannesburg, with a Branch Office in Durban, which is where the population of Indian Origin largely resides.

Another Centre is proposed to be opened in Trinidad and Tobago (Port of Spain). Land has been made available, free of cost, by the local Government. However, proposal is being considered to start the cultural in rented premises even before our own building comes up.

MEA has carefully noted the Committee's recommendation regarding setting up of Cultural Centre in other important countries also. A concrete proposal is already being prepared for a Cultural Centre in France, and will be submitted for approval to the authorities concerned. This will be in the Maison de l'Inde, a building that already belongs to us in Paris and which is now being used as residential accommodation for students. Rental income from the students would be utilised for the maintenance of existing building as well as to help towards the budget of the Cultural Centre.

Our Mission in the United States has also made a recommendation for setting up a full-fledged Cultural Centre, which is now under examination.

In consultation with our Head of Missions, a careful assessment will be made as regards the opening of more Cultural Centres. Since these involve substantial financial outlay, our decisions would also require an assessment of the mileage that we would derive, in terms of national interest, from the investment in the Centre.

Only recently, a Committee under the ICCR headed by Shri P. Upendra, MP was set up to examine all aspects of the functioning of ICCR's cultural centres abroad. The Committee's main recommendations dated 16th December, 1994 are summarised as under:

- (i) Activities of the centres should be tailored to the needs of the country or countries they serve.
- (ii) Activities should be also organised as to have a more permanent impact, without necessarily demanding huge financial outlays.
- (iii) Each centre should publish and distribute a calendar of events.
- (iv) Instead of deputing dance, music, yoga and Hindi teachers for a full three-year contract, teachers should be sent on an annual contract with a provision of renewal for an extra year. Accomplished teachers should be sent to shorter periods for intensive lecture-demonstration courses.
- (v) Centres should strengthen contacts with reputed local organisations to reach a wider audience.
- (vi) Cultural troupes as well as scholars sent abroad should be utilised not just for one country but for neighbouring countries also.
- (vii) Centres should not confine their activities to the city where they are located but reach out to other population centres.
- (viii) More cultural centres should be established where cultural diplomacy could make an impact and a priority list worked out.

(ix) The budget should be utilised to the maximum extent possible for activities rather than for administration/establishment costs."

1.13 The Committee are happy to note that the Ministry has set up cultural centres in some countries in pursuance of the recommendation made by them. The proposal for setting up Cultural Centres in USA and France is stated to be under examination of the Ministry.

1.14 The Committee are of the view that these cultural centres play an important role in depicting the true image/vision and diversity of Indian culture abroad and also help in establishing friendly countries. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to take appropriate steps to set up cultural centres in important countries identified for the purpose.

*Reorientation of measures for projecting positive image of India abroad
(Sl. Nos. 25 & 26, Para Nos. 3.43 and 3.44)*

1.15 Emphasising the need for reorientation of measures for projecting positive image of India abroad, the Committee recommended as follows:—

"The Committee note that main objectives of the Information Wings of the Indian Mission, abroad are to monitor coverage of India in local media, to promote suitable coverage of India by tapping whatever resources are at their disposal and to pre-emptor counter negative or adverse publicity against India and that India based officers are primarily responsible for this task. The Committee, have also been informed that officers posted to the Information Wing have the ability, experience and requisite training in information work and in bigger Missions they work under the able guidance of the Senior Diplomats. Their performance, according to the Ministry is reported to be quite satisfactory.

The Committee, however, feel that Indian diplomatic machinery intrusted with the responsibility of information work in Missions/Posts abroad needs to be restructured and revitalised with a view to enhancing positive coverage on India abroad and monitoring effectively, countering incorrect and distorted reportage and also misleading, false and disinformation campaign conducted by certain countries against India. The Committee are also of the considered opinion that there is need and scope to intensify publicity efforts and reorient our presentation so as to convincingly project a more positive image of India abroad. Our publicity material and efforts should also be addressed not only for foreign media but also for foreign institutions abroad and all people, including people of Indian origin. The Committee suggest that the Ministry should examine the feasibility of organising programmes, to sponsor exchange visits by eminent people who have earned special distinction in the field of education, culture, trade and literature."

1.16 In their reply, the Ministry have stated as follows:—

“Press and Information Wings of our Missions play an important role in the projection of our policies and in countering adverse publicity against us. It has been our constant endeavour to ensure that these wings are adequately staffed bearing in mind the importance of the Mission to our national interest.

In important Missions publicity wings are under the exclusive charge of an officer of Minister/Counsellor rank.

In the light of the recommendation of the Committee and other such views expressed, a group has been appointed in the Ministry led at Secretary level to examine the methodology for strengthening of our Information Wings both in terms of personnel as well as infrastructure. The group will also consider the support systems being provided by the Ministry to Mission for information work.

The Ministry prepares both printed and audio-visual material for dissemination abroad to the media, think-tanks, decision and opinion makers as well as non-resident Indians and organisations of people of Indian origin. It is also the intention to increasingly use persons of distinction for promotion of our information efforts abroad and, already in the past one and a half years, the Ministry has assisted in organising visits of eminent persons from different walks of life to the USA, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia to project India's point of view on critical issues such as Kashmir and to acquaint with developments in India covering different facets such as secularism, democracy, economic liberalisation, the impact of foreign-inspired in India etc.”

1.17 The Committee are happy to note that a Group has been appointed in the Ministry headed by Secretary to examine the methodology for strengthening of information wing both in terms of personnel as well as infrastructure and also to consider the support systems which could be provided by the Ministry to Missions for information work.

1.18 The Committee hope that this Group will submit their recommendations with regard to strengthening of Information Wing etc. at an early date. The Committee trust that the Ministry will in turn take expeditious steps for improving and strengthening the functioning of Information Wing in the light of recommendations given by this Group.

1.19 The Ministry's reply on the recommendation of the Committee for sponsoring of exchange visits of eminent persons is silent and that no mention has been made in the reply for inviting eminent personalities of other countries to India. The Committee expect action in this direction.

Labour Attaches for Overseas Indians
(Sl. No. 36, Para No. 3.77)

1.20 To look effectively into the problems of Indian settled abroad, the Committee recommended as follows:—

“The Committee are also of the view that there is a need to monitor the existing arrangements so as to enable the Ministry to make improvements wherever it is considered necessary in view of increasing number of visitors. An assessment could be made of specific problems faced by the visitors and the assistance and services rendered to them. The Committee are of the view that in countries where large numbers of people of Indian origin are settled or there are large number of workers, there is a case for providing additional consular staff including Labour Attaches in adequate numbers commensurate with the size of the working population. The Committee, therefore, desire that adequate steps in this regard, should also be taken by Ministry of External Affairs expeditiously.”

1.21 The Ministry in their action taken reply have stated as follows:—

“Missions receive complaints for issue of duplicate passports from Indians who have lost their original travel documents or have been detained in foreign jails for illegal stay. The procedure laid down for issue of duplicate document requires a check on genuine nationality and references to several agencies in India which, on occasion, delays the issue of duplicate passport. Complaints against delays in the consular Sections on this account is not always well directed.

The Mission is required exercise care in such situations to safeguard against issue of India passports to unauthorised persons.

In Gulf countries where a large number of Indians are employed, Missions receive complaints about non-settlement of labour disputes, non-observation of contracts, ill-treatment to worker and delays in sending back the mortal remains of persons who have died abroad. The Missions, however, function at a disadvantage in this respect as some local Governments and sponsors are not forthcoming in sharing of information regarding compensation, illegal detainees and death of Indians. The Missions try to keep abreast of these developments and make every effort to intercede on behalf of the Indian national. The Ministry also follows up individual cases which are brought to its attention with the Missions the Government and the sponsors. Attention is given to the staff needs of Consular and Labour sections of the Missions, wherever required especially in countries with a heavy concentration of Indian nationals. There are severe constraints in regard to staffing due to inability to create more posts. Already MEA staff are spread too thin in Missions/Posts abroad. Strengthening one Mission, therefore, means compensatory reduction elsewhere, which we can ill afford. Nevertheless MEA accept the essential

lity of adequate consular and labour services staff in countries where there are more consular problems.

Some of our Missions in countries with a large Indian population, either holding Indian passports or Indian origin have informed that regular emergency services are provided on holidays, through deployment of a skeleton staff on holiday duty. In smaller Missions, the consular staff is usually available to assist distressed persons needing services in a genuine emergency."

1.22 The Committee are not satisfied with the reply of the Ministry. The reply of the Ministry merely gives an indication of the gigantic problems faced by the Indian settled in other countries but it is silent about the concrete steps taken by the Ministry for providing additional Consular Staff including Labour Attaches in adequate numbers where large number of people including workers are settled. Even the Ministry has not indicated any steps taken by them to ascertain the specific problems being faced by the visitors, which gives an impression to the Committee that Ministry had not attached much importance to the recommendations of the Committee, which it deserved.

1.23 The Committee are unable to appreciate the submissions made by the Ministry of External Affairs that "there are severe constraints in regard to staffing due to inability to create more posts". In order to provide effective redressal of grievances of Indian workers abroad, the Committee reiterate their recommendation for provision of special staff including Labour Attaches especially in countries with a heavy concentration of Indian nationals and where problems of Indian workers are galore.

Performance of Missions
(Sl. No. 42 & 43, Para Nos. 4.18 & 4.19)

1.24 In regard to performance of Missions, the Committee recommended as follows:—

"In order to improve the quality of inspection, the Ministry of External Affairs has suggested setting up an Inspectorate separately headed by a Secretary/Additional Secretary to conduct inspections only.

The Committee expect that the suggested Inspectorate which could exclusively undertake inspection of all Missions at regular interval, would be set up early. The Committee desire that assessment of effectiveness of the Mission should be judged not only from its functioning in the light of current foreign policy objectives but also from its performance from economic bench mark in the field of exports, foreign investments and technology."

1.25 The Ministry in their reply have stated as follows:—

“It is essential for officials going on inspection of Missions abroad to have, among other things, intimate knowledge and experience of the working of administration and its inter-action with Finance. This ensures that the recommendations of the Foreign Service Inspectors are in keeping with the norms, the regulations and the budgetary provisions of the Ministry. Recommendations not in consonance with these considerations will create difficulties in implementation.

The Inspectors are fully briefed by Administration and Territorial Divisions in the Ministry as well as Missions abroad about the political, economic, strategic and consular importance of the country. Inspectors, therefore, do not confine their assessment of the Mission in terms of administrative matters only but also take an overall view keeping in mind the political and economic importance of the country.

The other factors kept in view are the size of the Indian community, scope for cultural work, quantum of trade, exchange of scholars, intellectuals etc. There has been some difficulty in maintaining regular and frequent inspections of Missions. One reason for this is that there are a large number of Missions abroad (about 109 Embassies/High Commissions and 38 consulates/Assistant High Commissions/Commissions/Special Missions) that have to be inspected. Also, in some cases, due to very high inflation, exchange rate fluctuations etc., it becomes essential to have more frequent inspections. This results in delay in inspection of Missions where the problems are not pressing. Efforts will be made to increase the number of inspections. Moreover, whenever senior officers or property teams go to a Missions, their visits are utilised for looking into the various needs of the Mission. A separate inspectorate without experience of day-do-day matters and issues, may not be conducive to effective in-depth inspection of the Mission and coordination with various administrative departments. Rather than creating a separate inspectorate, working in isolation, effort will be made to enhance the number of inspections. This is not only possible but will also ensure correct perspective when inspections are carried out.”

1.26 The Committee after perusing the action taken reply of the Ministry find that there is no specific reference to assess the performance of the Missions in the field of exports, foreign investments and technology, as recommended by them. The Committee reiterate their earlier recommendations that “assessment of effectiveness of the Mission should be judged not only from its functioning in the light of current foreign policy objectives but also from its performance from economic bench mark in the field of exports, foreign investments and technology.

Posting and Transfer Policy
(Sl. No. 54, Para No. 5.40)

1.27 With a view to introducing fairness and objectivity in posting in Missions abroad, the Committee recommended as follows:—

“The Committee are really surprised to learn that the Ministry of External Affairs has not fixed any tenure where an officer/staff member has to serve at a hard station. According to a former Diplomat, one of the most important causes for demoralisation in the Service is the feeling that favouritism is prevalent in postings. The Committee feel that arbitrariness in posting and transfer creates heart-burning and bitterness among the officers and staff and the same should be ended. The Committee, therefore, recommended that Ministry of External Affairs should introduce a concept of fairness and objectivity in postings and evolve a definite transfer policy as well as fix a definite tenure for officers and staff required to serve at difficult stations.”

1.28 The Ministry of External Affairs in their reply in the matter have stated as follows:—

“The Foreign Service Board which is established under statute and consists of the Foreign Secretary and other Secretaries in MEA as well as Commerce Secretary, is responsible to make recommendations to EAM for posting and transfers of officers of the rank of Third Secretary and above. The recommendations of the Board have to be approved by EAM. For the purposes of postings and transfers of staff, two Boards have been set up on the basis of regulations which have been framed under statute. The Senior Establishment Board which consists of two Joint Secretaries in MEA, Director from Commerce Ministry and three Deputy Secretaries/Under Secretaries from MEA is responsible to make recommendations of postings and transfers of Sections Officers and all officers of the Stenographers Cadre. These recommendations require the approval of the Minister of State. The Junior Establishment Board consists of a Director in MEA as well as Director from Commerce Ministry and three Deputy Secretaries/Under Secretaries level officers from MEA makes recommendations for postings and transfers of Assistants, Clerks, Chauffeurs and Group ‘D’ Staff. These recommendations also require the approval of the Minister of State.

The objective of establishing an elaborate method of submitting recommendations for Ministerial approvals for postings and transfers through a system of Boards was to ensure that no personal preferences of senior officials, arbitrariness or injustice comes into postings and transfers. The Composition of the Boards ensures that postings and transfers are made on the basis of objective and fair criteria. These criteria include the rotation of postings among more

difficult and comfortable stations. All stations abroad are put in the following categories:

A*, A, B, C, C*

A* Stations are the most comfortable offering the best facilities possible and C* stations are the hardship stations. It is ensured that during the career of an officer he serves in a mix of such stations. It is also ensured that no officer proceeds from a comfortable station to another comfortable station. The only departures are on account of exigency of service *i.e.* the requirements of a particular job which necessitate an exception to be made.

The normal term of postings is three years. This is in line with the view of the Standing Committee of Parliament. The exceptions are very few hard stations where the term is two years. These are:

- (i) Algiers
- (ii) Baghdad
- (iii) Pyong Yang
- (iv) Vladivostok
- (v) Ulan Bator
- (vi) Kiev
- (vii) Luanda
- (viii) Kabul

It would, therefore, be seen that there is a normal term of posting for all stations, including hardship stations. It is submitted that the system of posting and transfers followed in the Ministry of External Affairs ensures equity and fairplay. The Ministry is happy to note the Committee's emphasis on justice and fairplay in the matter of postings, which is so essential for the morale of officers and staff. The Committee's views will strengthen the resolve of the Ministry to resist extraneous pressures in this regard."

1.29 The Committee find that in existing system Foreign Service Board consisting of Foreign Secretary, other Secretaries of the Ministry and Commerce Secretary is responsible for making recommendations for postings and transfers of officers of the rank of third Secretary and above. These recommendations have to be approved by the External Affairs Minister. For posting and transfer of other staff, two other Boards have been set up on the basis of regulation framed under statute.

1.30 The Committee are unhappy to note that even after a lapse of more than seven months, the Ministry have not taken any concrete steps for evolving a definite transfer policy, as recommended by the Committee. It is highly regrettable that the Ministry of External Affairs have not given serious thought to the well considered recommendations made after a great

deal of deliberations and devoting considerable time and labour. The Ministry have not even furnished the reasons for not formulating this Policy so far. The Committee fail to understand why Ministry hesitate in laying down a well thought cut posting and transfer policy. Reiterating their earlier recommendation, the Committee desire the Ministry to initiate action for evolving transfer policy without any further loss of time. The Committee desire that they should be apprised of the action taken by the Ministry in this regard within a period of six months.

*Expert Committee to review recruitment system
(Sl. Nos. 60 & 61, Para Nos. 6.35 & 6.36)*

1.31 The Committee felt that there was need for review of the existing recruitment system for selection to Indian Foreign Service. The Committee, had, therefore desired the Ministry to constitute an Expert Committee to examine the existing recruitment system in the light of recruitment procedure/system in vogue for selection for diplomatic services in other countries and suggest modifications/improvements to be made in the present system and recommend other measures and incentives to attract talent to Foreign Service in order to meet its requirement adequately.

1.32 The Ministry, in their action taken reply have stated as follows:—

“The Foreign Service is important to our national interest. It is the only established instrument for the conduct of our diplomacy. Issues relating to its recruitment are, therefore, of vital importance. The Committee’s views are valuable and the Ministry will appoint an Expert Committee to examine the existing recruitment system.”

1.33 Although the Ministry found the issue relating to recruitment to foreign service of vital importance but they have not yet constituted the Expert Committee to examine the existing recruitment system as recommended by the Committee.

The Committee, desire the Ministry to constitute an Expert Committee to examine the existing recruitment system expeditiously and apprised accordingly of action taken by the Ministry in this regard within a period of six months.

Implementation of Recommendations

1.34 The Committee would like to emphasise that greatest importance has to be attached to the implementation of recommendations accepted by Government. They therefore, expect Government to take expeditious steps in implementing such recommendations. In case it is not possible to implement the recommendation in letter and spirit for any reason the matter should be reported to the Committee in time with reasons for non implementation.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 1 and 2, Paras 1.16 and 1.17)

The Primary functions of the Indian Diplomatic Missions abroad are to implement Government policies, to protect and promote national interest, to strengthen ties of cooperation and mutual understanding with other countries in the light of our national and international policy objectives and to look after the interest of Indian nationals abroad. In addition to above objectives all Missions in general and target Missions in particular *have to promote economic cooperation and interest*, to boost exports, attract foreign investment and generate technology flows.

The Committee would like the Ministry to make a periodical review of overall objectives with a view to ensuring that concrete objectives reflect the changing national priorities and also to take suitable steps to achieve the same.

Reply of Government

The Ministry realises the need to fix objectives and priorities from the point of view of the country's interests in a changing world and to constantly review them as the need arises. The Missions monitor various developments in the country of accreditation as well as the region as a whole and report them to the Ministry. The Ministry, for its own part, seeks more comprehensive reports from missions on various issues which, it is felt, are of importance in the context of our larger interests. Thus, regular inter-action between the Ministry and the Missions abroad ensures that both remain aware of basic long term goals and priorities and fine tune them in an evolving world. Within the framework of the long term goals and objectives, each Mission also prepares an Annual Action Plan which is communicated to the Ministry. The Ministry keeps track of the implementation of the Plan in respect of the targets fixed by the Mission. At the end of the year, the Mission also informs the Ministry of the extent to which progress with regard to targets set forth in the Annual Action Plan have been achieved.

In view of the Committee's recommendation, a letter has been sent to all the Missions to send a list of their goals and priorities. The replies from the Missions will be examined by the Territorial Divisions concerned in the Ministry and the objectives of all the Missions will be finalized in a comprehensive manner.

Furthermore, the introduction to the latest MEA's Annual report does indicate clearly the MEA's concrete objectives and the assessment of how they have been implemented in 1994-95. It is expected that this practice will continue.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95, dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 3 and 4, Paras 2.16 and 2.17)

The fast changing geo-political conditions call for deft handling of the situation by the diplomats. The Committee are informed that besides the career diplomats public figures are also appointed and posted abroad as Heads of Missions/Posts by the Government at their discretion. Keeping in view their experience and knowledge in the relevant field. The Committee are informed that selection of non-career diplomats is the prerogative of the Prime Minister though in some cases the Ministry considered the qualification, experience and knowledge of the persons concerned but there are no hard and fast rules laid down for the selection of non-career Heads of Missions.

The Committee are of the view that Heads of Missions should be selected very carefully and only persons of eminence, stature should be so appointed.

Reply of Government

The decisions about the appointment of ambassadors are taken at the highest level of the Government, namely, the Prime Minister and the President. In most cases, the External Affairs Minister makes the recommendation of a name or names for each post on which the Prime Minister takes the decision. While selecting a candidate from the Service for the post of Ambassador, every aspect of the matter is taken into account with regard to his suitability for the high position. The experience of the nominee, his general standing and calibre, his knowledge of the country and area of posting, wherever possible his knowledge of the language of the country, his overall record and performance and acceptability to the host country are kept in view. Similar considerations are taken into account while appointing someone from the public life for ambassadorial position. The Prime Minister's powers to make ambassadorial appointments both within and outside the IFS are unfettered. His choice is submitted to the President for kind approval.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)/95, dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 6, Para 2.26)

The Committee feel that powers delegated to Heads of Missions/Posts abroad and to the Heads of Chancery should be commensurate with their responsibilities and adequate for efficient and timely discharge of their duties. They desire that the financial powers should be reviewed from time to time keeping in view the change in the international value of the rupee and the cost of living abroad.

Reply of Government

The basic scheme of delegation of financial powers to Heads of Missions/Posts as well as to Head of Chancery is time tested and is functioning well. It has been our endeavour to devolve powers on these authorities in order to ensure the efficient working of our Missions. These were last revised in June 1992. In the light of the Committee's recommendation an exercise will be undertaken in consultation with other concerned departments of the Government of India to review these powers keeping both the international value of the Rupee as well as cost of living abroad in mind. It is expected that the exercise will be completed in about a year's time. MEA accepts the recommendation of the Estimates Committee in this regard.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95, dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 2.36 to 2.38, Paras 7 to 9)

The Committee note that while the security of diplomatic Missions and its personnel is the responsibility of the host Government, it has become necessary to supplement these security measures through deployment of well trained Indian-based security guards and installation of security related aids both electronic and otherwise depending upon the security environment prevailing in the country concerned and also due to the intensification of terrorist activities and deterioration in law and order situation in a number of countries abroad.

The Committee are satisfied to learn that Ministry of Finance is responsive to the security needs of the Missions abroad. They, however, recommend that wherever security arrangements need to be enhanced, the requisites resources both in terms of equipment and personnel should be made available.

They also desire that high security risks Missions/Posts should be identified for taking effective measures and the overall security needs of all the Missions/Posts abroad should be kept under constant review.

Reply of Government

MEA accept this recommendation of the Estimates Committee.

MEA's Bureau of Security is engaged in consultation with the specialised agencies concerned in India and abroad, in constantly monitoring the security situation obtaining in various countries and its implication for our Mission and its personnel. Adequately trained security guards from various central police organisations are being inducted in the BOS and posted to the various Missions abroad to carry out security related functions. At times Missions are also permitted to hire the services and security guards from private agencies, should the situation warrant to supplement the security. Other physical

measures like boundary walls, fencing, technical and electronic gadgets are used to secure our Mission abroad depending on requirements.

High security risk Missions/Posts are identified periodically and security measures enhanced depending on the situation. Wherever necessary, personal visits are made by an expert officer for an on-the-spot study. In 1993-94 and 1994-95 17 visits were made by a Joint Secretary level and above officer of MEA to 19 countries where the primary or *inter alia* purpose, was security of our property and personnel.

(Forwarded with D.O. NO. 832/AS(AD)/95, dated 2.3.95)

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 10 and 11, Paras 2.52 and 2.53)

The Committee find that 61 Chanceries/Missions are housed in Government owned properties and 80 Chanceries are houses in rented properties. 66 Heads of missions are residing in Government owned property and 75 are living in leased properties. The Committee are informed that after taking into consideration prevailing rents and real estate prices, it has been decided that in certain countries it would be more economical to buy property now than to pay high rent. Missions were accordingly instructed to look out for suitable properties so that Government should consider their purchase. In this connection, Indian Mission Review Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Samar Sen in its Report submitted in 1984 had *inter alia* recommended that flats and houses, abroad should be bought at a more vigorous rate.

The Committee, however, feel that as far as possible the Chanceries and the Residences of the heads of Missions should be Government owned properties. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of External Affairs should draw up a list of countries in order of priority after taking into account relevant considerations and formulate a perspective plan in consultation with Ministry of Finance for acquisition of properties in those countries.

Reply of Government

MEA accept the recommendation of the Estimates Committee.

The Standing Committee of Parliament on External Affairs, in its Second Report, had also desired that this Ministry should draw up a time-bound programme for construction/acquisition of properties abroad. The above Committee had further instructed the Ministry to assess the total demand for official as well as residential buildings in and outside India with a view to drawing up a relevant plan in this regard. It had been stated that the priorities in the proposed plan could then be identified and the same could be executed in the coming years under a time-bound programme.

In keeping with the above instructions of the Standing Committee of Parliament, this Ministry had drawn up a comprehensive plan for purchase/construction of property, that would have covered all chanceries and the Residences of the Heads of Mission also and that was proposed to be

implemented in a period of 10 years beginning with the financial year 1995-96. A copy of this plan is enclosed herewith. (Appendix II)

From Appendix-III of the enclosed plan, it will be seen that large financial outlays would be required over a period of 10 years, starting with 1995-96, in case the enclosed plan is to be implemented (for the sake of comparison, it may be mentioned that BE 94-95 for purchase/construction of property is Rs. 33.95 crores only). In view of the above, comments of the concerned financial authorities had also been sought on the enclosed plan. These authorities have indicated that large allocations, envisaged in the plan, would require substantial improvement in the budgetary situation of the Government, which does not appear likely in the near future. The financial authorities have further stated that because of the current budgetary constraints, this Ministry's allocation for 1995-96, for purchase/construction of property, is likely to be Rs. 47 crores approximately only. This is far less than the requirement projected in Annexure-B of the Plan. In the absence of the requisite substantial increase in the budgetary outlay, this Ministry is not in a position to implement the enclosed plan. The matter will, however, continue to be pursued with the financial authorities over the coming financial years. As and when they are in a position to sanction the requisite substantial increase in the budget, a suitably modified time-bound plan, prepared in the light of the circumstances prevailing at that stage, shall be put into effect.

In the meanwhile the Ministry continues to give due and expeditious consideration to the proposals, received from Missions abroad with regard to purchase of property for Chanceries and residences of Heads of Mission, within the limits of the available budgetary resources.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)/95, dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 12 and 13, Paras 2.54 of 2.55)

The Committee find that the actual expenditure under the major head 421 which includes expenses on repairs/maintenance over the residential buildings is far less than the revised estimates in all the years during the period 1987-88 to 1991-92. The Committee are particularly astonished at the substantially high savings of over 70 per cent-during the years 1987-88 as against the revised estimates for the relevant years 1988-89 and over 40 per cent during the year 1989-90 and 1991-92. No expenditure was incurred on repairs and maintenance against the Budget Estimates of Rs. 15 crores and Revised Estimates of Rs. 8.30 crores during 1990-91. There are also vast variations in actual expenditure under the head 4059 on purchase of property including land, construction of buildings and repairs to office buildings during the year 1988-89 to 1991-92. There was 100 per cent excess in expenditure over the budget estimates in 1988-89

and more than 40 per cent over the revised estimates during 1989-90. There was about 30 per cent saving during 1991-92 over the revised estimates.

Keeping in view the fact that revised estimates are prepared in the 3rd quarter of the year when the Ministry have sufficient data about the progress of expenditure at least for the first six months of the particular year, the committee are in no doubt that the Ministry of External Affairs failed to correctly estimate their actual requirement of funds at the revised estimates stage. Obviously the Ministry have not exercised due farsightedness while forecasting their monetary requirements with the result that over estimation under this head continued to recur year after year. The Committee would like the Ministry of External Affairs to address themselves to this issue and take appropriate steps to make the budgetary exercise more realistic with a view to ensuring that the variations between the Budget Estimates and Revised Estimates and the actuals are minimised. The Committee trust that the Ministry would look into the matter seriously and take appropriate action.

Reply of Government

The observations of the Estimates Committee on huge gap between the Revised Estimates and the actual expenditure is based on the expenditure upto the year 1990-91. However, since then Ministry of external affairs has been making every effort to reduce the gap between the revised Estimates and the actual expenditure by constantly and continuously monitoring the progressive expenditure and relating it to the exercise of preparing revised Estimates for current year and Budget Estimates for forthcoming years. During the 1992-93, 1993-94 and 1994-95, various circulars as detailed below were issued, impressing upon the spending units to constantly monitor their expenditure *vis-a-vis* the allocated funds in Budget Estimates and Revised Estimates, have been sent to heads of Missions/Posts abroad and the Heads of Divisions in the Ministry (copies enclosed at Appendix-IV):—

- (i) AS (FA)'s circular dated 6.7.92 addressed to all Heads of Divisions & RPOs.
- (ii) Q/Budg/733/2/92 dated 19.1.93 on Review Progressive Expenditure to all Heads of Divisions.
- (iii) Q/Budg/731/7/89 dated 7.6.93 to all heads of Missions and Divisions.
- (iv) Q/Budg/742/1/94 dated 13.4.93 addressed to all Heads of divisions, ICCR.
- (v) Q/Bud/742/1/94 dated 21.4.94 addressed to All Heads of Divisions, ICCR.
- (vi) Q/Bud/742 1/94 dated 21.4.94 addressed to Passport Offices.
- (vii) Dir (Fin)'s circular dated 27.9.94 addressed to HOM/HOPs.

- (viii) Q/Bud/742/1/94 dated 19.12.94 addressed to all Heads of Missions/Posts.
 (ix) Q/Bud/731/2/94 dated 22.12.94 addressed to all Heads of Chanceries.

3. As a result of these efforts, the Ministry has been continuously exercising optimum utilisation of the funds under all budget heads except under 'Capital Outlay'. The reduction in the gap year after year can be seen in the graph (Appendix-V) on surrender of funds from 1990-91 to 1993-94, the data for which is given below:—

(Rs. in crores)

Year	Surrender of funds	Surrender of funds under Capital Outlay Budget
1987-88	55.07	13.31
1988-89	66.19	0.18
1989-90	65.71	25.27
1990-91	194.76*	23.6
1991-92	55.54	42.85
1992-93	10.96	10.94
1993-94	28.20	22.93

(* Various projects frozen due to Gulf War)

4. From the graph, it may be noted that major portions of the funds surrendered were meant for Capital Outlay (Major Heads "4059" & "4219") from 1991-92 onwards.

5. This gap between estimates and expenditure has occurred for various reasons as under:—

(i) RE figures for a financial year becomes available only in December when sufficient time is not available to utilise the additional funds for projects/construction of properties.

(ii) (a) During 1990-91 and large part of 1991-92 several projects were frozen following the Gulf War to limit deficit financing and thereby resulting in surrender of funds budgetted under Capital Outlay and other heads.

(b) During 1990-91, the large surrender was also caused on account of the fact that Rs. 300 crores budgetted for Gulf Evacuation task could not be spent in totality and a sum of Rs. 72.79 crores was surrendered on this account. The saving during 1990-91 was also due to non-finalisation of bills for want of complete details from various agencies involved in the task, mainly, Air India, Indian Air Force and Shipping Corporation of India. Considerable savings were also effected after Ministry's discussions with Air India which resulted in reduction of their claims.

(c) A sum of Rs. 13.3 crores on Aid to Bhutan, Rs. 8.51 crores on Aid to Nepal, Rs. 1.16 crores on ITEC Programme, Rs. 9.3 crores on Aid under Africa Fund, Rs. 1.00 crore on SAARC Programmes, Rs. 8 crores on Sri Lanka Rehabilitation Grant, Rs. 2.75 crores on Sri Lanka-Aid Programmes, Rs. 7.08 crores on Aid to Maldives and Rs. 15.37 crores on Aid to other developing countries were saved, because of non-finalisation of inter-governmental agreements in some cases while in other cases delay in implementation of schemes/programmes owing to political reasons beyond the control of this Ministry.

(d) A saving of Rs. 12 crores under Secretariat—Office Expenses was mainly due to delay in finalisation of the System for Computerisation and Emergency Telecom Link with Indian Missions/Posts abroad.

(iii) The booking of expenditure under Capital Outlay is not always up-to-date because the compilation of accounts from the Missions are always in arrears of 2-3 months, which creates problem of non-utilisation of the surrendered funds by other needy Missions/Posts abroad. The Capital Outlay in RE 94-95 for Rs. 45 crores and Rs. 47 crores in BE 95-96 are likely to be fully utilised in view of the vigorous efforts being put in by the Ministry.

(iv) Under the Aid programmes to other developing countries, the utilisation of funds is not always optimum because in many of these projects Government of India is not the monitoring agency. The reports/returns from foreign agencies in this regard are not received fast enough to utilise the left-over funds elsewhere.

It would thus be seen that considerable progress has been made in ensuring that variations between budget estimates and actuals are minimised.

[Forwarded with D.O. Nos. 832/AS(AD)95, dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 14, Para 2.58)

The Committee have been informed that due to paucity of staff it has not been made possible by the Indian Missions abroad to take follow-up action on the important decisions taken with regard to policy matters. The Committee desire that the Ministry must address themselves to this problem and devise personnel policy, working procedures and establish priorities so that important policy mandates are immediately followed up and such decisions are reflected in the working of Missions. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard.

Reply of Government

The Ministry realizes the need for follow up action on important decisions. Instructions have been sent to our Missions abroad to take follow up action on important policy mandates of the Ministry so that

such decisions are reflected in working of the Missions notwithstanding shortage of staff which some of the Missions may be experiencing.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 15, Para 2.70)

The constant dynamism of present day international diplomacy and statecraft requires an equally fast and efficient line of communication. Policies made and decisions taken in the nick of the time are required to be communicated at twice that speed. An efficient communication is, therefore, not only the key to augment human resources, but is in fact a "force-multiplier". The Committee, however, observe that the Ministry of External Affairs has not given due importance to the improvement of its communication network and also to the introduction of automation in its office procedures. In fact, the Committee are concerned to learn that the Ministry is far behind even some other developing countries like Egypt and Pakistan in introduction of the latest communication facilities in Missions abroad. The Committee are of the firm opinion that in view of the current spate of global changes, it has become imperative for the Ministry of External Affairs to go in for rapid adoption of modern communication systems.

Reply of Government

The Ministry is conscious of the need to keep up with the technological developments in the field of communications, especially, electronic data communication. For this purpose, apart from normal telex and fax connections, the Ministry has undertaken a high frequency radio communications project which will link the Headquarters with 27 Missions; a pilot E-Mail network with 11 missions has become operational since 1st February, 1995 and a study has commenced on the modernisation of its Telegraph Unit which means telex, fax and teleprinter links between the Ministry and Missions and, Posts abroad. The details of electronic communication set-up is in the attached Appendix VI.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 16, Para 2.71)

The Committee would, therefore, urge upon the Ministry of External Affairs that in case they are facing any constraint of resources in modernising the communication system both at Headquarters and in Missions abroad, they should persuade the Ministry of Finance for allocation of additional funds for the purpose.

Reply of Government

The Ministry of Finance has sanctioned the required amount for the ongoing HFRC project. Financial authorities will also be approached at the appropriate time for funds for the introduction of an E-Mail network and for upgradation of the teleprinter network. The response of the Ministry of Finance to such proposals has been generally positive.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 17, Para 2.72)

The Committee also recommend that in order to derive maximum benefits from the latest information technology the Ministry should introduce special training courses for imparting computer training to the foreign service officers and for making them familiar with advanced communication and information systems.

Reply of Government

The Foreign Service Institute is already imparting training in computers to officers and staff posted to Missions abroad. List of such courses is attached at Appendix VII. In addition, the National Informatics Centre (NIC) is also imparting training and guidance in computer matters to MEA personnel on demand and need basis.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 18, Para 2.73)

The Committee note that nearly 60 Missions have been given administrative and financial approval for purchase of computers. Proposals from other Missions are under different stages of processing. The Committee are of the view that no Indian Mission should lag behind in adopting modern technology and expect the Ministry to finalise the proposals expeditiously. The Committee would like to be apprised of the progress achieved in computerisation in Missions and introduction of Electronic Mail System within a period of six months.

Reply of Government

The Ministry processes expeditiously the proposals received from Missions/Posts abroad regarding introduction of computers in their functioning. As a result of this action, computers now stand introduced in 91 Indian Missions and posts abroad. The process of computerisation of all Missions/Posts will be continued.

The Ministry had separately initiated a project to set up pilot E-mail links with Indian Missions/Posts abroad through the National Informatics Centre. E-Mail link with 11 Indian missions abroad is already operational and links with 3 more missions is likely to be completed shortly. Depending upon the performance of these pilot links, further expansion would be undertaken.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 19, Para 3.16)

Recognising the importance of culture as a positive and significant medium for improving foreign relations and diplomacy, the Government have been making concerted efforts to utilise the vision, diversity and dynamism of Indian Culture for establishing meaningful and friendly relations with other foreign countries. All major cultural activities with other foreign countries are being channelised through Indian Council for Cultural Relations which is working under the operational control of the Ministry of External Affairs. The Committee have been informed that ICCR has cultural centres in Georgetown (Guyana), Paramaribo (Suriname), Moscow (Russia), Jakarta (Indonesia), Port Louis (Mauritius), Berlin (Germany), Cairo (A.R.E.), London (U.K.) and they are discharging the work of projecting India's image abroad successfully. The Committee are, however, dissatisfied to know that in many important countries like Iran, Uzbekistan, France, United States and Nigeria, etc., there are no cultural centres. In order to inculcate friendly relations with these countries there is a need to set up more cultural centres in such countries. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of External Affairs should seriously ponder over this issue and make concerted efforts in this regard.

Reply of Government

New cultural centres have been opened in Uzbekistan (Tashkent) and Kazakhstan (Almaty). These are already functional and directors of the cultural centres are in position. It has also been decided to open a cultural centre in Johannesburg, with a Branch Office in Durban, which is where the population of Indian origin largely resides.

Another Centre is proposed to be opened in Trinidad and Tobago (Port of Spain). Land has been made available, free of cost, by the local government. However, a proposal is being considered to start the cultural centre in rented premises even before our own building comes up.

MEA has carefully noted the Committee's recommendation regarding setting up of Cultural Centres in other important countries also. A concrete proposal is already being prepared for a Cultural Centre in France, and will be submitted for approval to the authorities concerned. This will be in the Maison de l'Inde, a building that already belongs to us in Paris and which is now being used as residential accommodation for students. Rental income from the students would be utilised for the maintenance of existing building as well as to help towards the budget of the Cultural Centre.

Our Mission in the United States has also made a recommendation for setting up a full-fledged Cultural Centre, which is now under examination.

In consultation with our Head of Missions, a careful assessment will be made as regards the opening of more Cultural Centres. Since these involve substantial financial outlay, our decisions would also require an assessment of the mileage that we would derive, in terms of national interest, from the investment in the Centre.

Only recently, a Committee under the ICCR headed by Shri P. Upendra MP was set up to examine all aspects of the functioning of ICCR's cultural centres abroad. The Committee's main recommendations dated 16th December, 1994 are summarised as under:

(i) Activities of the centres should be tailored to the needs of the country or countries they serve.

(ii) Activities should be also organised as to have a more permanent impact, without necessarily demanding huge financial outlays.

(iii) Each centre should publish and distribute a calendar of events.

(iv) Instead of deputing dance, music, yoga and Hindi teachers for a full three-year contract, teachers should be sent on an annual contract with a provision of renewal for an extra year. Accomplished teachers should be sent to shorter periods for intensive lecture-demonstration courses.

(v) Centres should strengthen contacts with reputed local organisations to reach a wider audience.

(vi) Cultural troupes as well as scholars sent abroad should be utilised not just for one country but for neighbouring countries also.

(vii) Centres should not confine their activities to the city where they are located but reach out to other population centres.

(viii) More cultural centres should be established where cultural diplomacy could make an impact and a priority list worked out.

(ix) The budget should be utilised to the maximum extent possible for activities rather than for administration/establishment costs.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos 21 & 22, Paras 3.18 & 3.19)

The Committee are informed that cultural wings attached to Indian Missions/Posts abroad arrange cultural programme which are aimed at consolidation of our relations of friendship and cooperation with other countries on the basis of equality, reciprocity and mutual benefit. Development of bilateral cultural relations is an important aspect of Missions functioning. The Ministry is by and large satisfied with the existing set up and performance of cultural wings in the Missions and efforts are always on to improve them further.

The Committee are of the view that since cultural activities play a significant role in projecting India's image abroad, concerted efforts are required to be made for improvement in the functioning of the cultural wings. The Committee are of the view that cultural functions should

invariably be chosen with an eye to the audience so that desired message are transmitted effectively. The Committee, therefore, expect the Indian Missions abroad to take note of the likes and preferences of audience in each region while organising cultural functions.

Reply of Government

MEA has accepted the extremely useful recommendation of the Estimates Committee in this regard. ICCR has issued instructions to all Missions that all suggestions that are sent by the Mission for organising cultural programmes and activities should include a careful evaluation of the likes, tastes, and preferences of the audience in that country. ICCR will try to the maximum extent possible, to send cultural troupes or exhibitions which take into account such recommendations on audience preferences. At the same time, Missions have been asked to assess the relative utility of all forms of projecting India such as exhibitions, visiting speakers, organising of seminars and symposia, publications, etc.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 23, Para 3.25)

The Committee also note that in every Indian Mission/Posts the Consular Section processes the applications for grant/renewal of passports and issue of visas, etc. The Committee have been informed that there has been a substantial increase in the workload without a commensurate increase in the staff strength. The Ministry has also stated that for the improvement of the functioning of the consular sections there is need for computerisation of all the Consular Sections with linkage to CPV Division and augmentation in the staff strength in Consular Sections in some Missions. The Committee are of the opinion that the Ministry has not given as adequate importance to the consular work of the Missions as it deserved taking into consideration the important task of issuing passport and visas involving public dealing with foreign nationals. The Committee, therefore, desire the ministry to make a review of staff requirement and to take suitable steps for augmenting staff strength and introducing modern aide wherever considered necessary.

Reply of Government

The workload in Consular Section of Missions abroad has been increasing steadily since 1984 due to the introduction of visa system for all countries, a Cabinet decision to make tourism a thrust area and the increase in consular services due to a larger number of Indians travelling abroad for employment, business and tourism.

As desired by the Estimates Committee, the ministry have reviewed the staff requirement for consular work in our Missions. Hitherto, *ad-hoc* arrangements had been made to cope with the additional workload by creating temporary local posts. As a part of the review, the Ministry examined also the possibility of regularisation of such temporary posts

filled by local recruitment. The final proposal prepared by the Ministry sought creation of 34 posts and regularisation of 135 posts, *i.e.* a total of 169 post. This proposal is now under examination with the Ministry of Finance. The details of the posts sought to be created/regularised are given in the Appendix VIII.

The Ministry wholly accepts the need for computerisation. It is being taken up in a phased manner. Nine Passport Offices in India have already been computerised and all the remaining Offices would be computerised by the end of 1995-96. Several of our Missions in the Gulf, Western Europe and North America are using computer systems. The National Informatics Centre is already working on a comprehensive scheme on connecting our Embassies/Consulates to MEA through E-Mail. In India the technical feasibility and cost of creating a data base in the Passport Offices and networking with the Central Data Base to be housed in CPV Division is being examined with a view to creating an All-India data storage and retrieval system. Complete networking of Missions with CPV Division can be taken up only after this internal networking proposal which is currently being studied for costs and feasibility is implemented, but it certainly is a part of MEA's long-term programme.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 24, Para 3.26)

The Committee find that mechanism available for redressal of public grievances has not been properly institutionalised. While the Committee are in agreement with the contention that the redressal of grievances of Missions/Posts abroad can better be dealt with by an active interest on the part of the Heads of Missions/Posts as also by adoption of a helpful attitude on their part and on the part of other officers, they, however, have a disconcerting feeling that at times the position about inefficient consular service has to be brought to the notice of the Ministry of External Affairs and individuals have to represent to the Government of India about the unsatisfactory treatment meted out to them by the Mission staff. The Committee feel that the Missions/Posts abroad should function as a place where visiting Indian nationals feel at home.

Reply of Government

MEA accept this recommendation. It is accepted that there is always scope for improvement, though on the whole our Missions compare well with most of their counterparts from other countries. Our Missions abroad are instructed to provide prompt, efficient and courteous services to Indians and foreign nationals visiting their offices, and to remain alert to their needs and problems. Responding to the estimates committee's observations regarding grievance machinery in Consular sections, our Missions have informed that the Consular Officers are to be accessible to the public at all times. If an individual is not satisfied, he/she may approach the DCM or the HOM. Our Missions have also stated that

HOMs take personal interest in the functioning of the Consular Section. Every attempt is made to provide urgent redressal of grievances within the framework of laid down rules. The Mission also maintains regular contact with the Indian community with a view to understanding their problems and grievances and to ensure that new rules and regulations are adequately brought to their notice.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 25 & 26, Paras 3.43 & 3.44)

The Committee note that main objectives of the Information Wings of the Indian Mission, abroad are to monitor coverage of India in local media, to promote suitable coverage on India by tapping whatever resources are at their disposal and to pre-empt counter negative or adverse publicity against India and that India based officers are primarily responsible for this task. The Committee have also been informed that officers posted to the Information Wing have the ability, experience and requisite training in information work and in bigger Missions they work under the able guidance of the Senior Diplomats. Their performance, according to the Ministry is reported to be quite satisfactory.

The Committee, however, feel that Indian diplomatic machinery entrusted with the responsibility of information work in Missions / Posts abroad needs to be restructured and revitalised with a view to enhancing positive coverage on India abroad and monitoring effectively, countering incorrect and distorted reportage and also misleading, false and disinformation campaign conducted by certain countries against India. The Committee are also of the considered opinion that there is need and scope to intensify publicity efforts and reorient our presentation so as to convincingly project a more positive image of India abroad. Our publicity material and efforts should also be addressed not only for foreign media but also for foreign institutions abroad and all people, including people of Indian origin. The Committee suggest that the Ministry should examine the feasibility of organising programmes, to sponsor exchange visits by eminent people who have achieved special distinction in the field of education, culture, trade and literature.

Reply of Government

Press and Information Wings of our Missions play an important role in the projection of our policies and in countering adverse publicity against us. It has been our constant endeavour to ensure that these wings are adequately staffed bearing in mind the importance of the Mission to our national interest. In accordance with the Standing Committees recommendations, the Ministry categorised all Missions on the basis of the following criteria:

(i) Missions/Posts in which HOMs/HOPs or the Political Officer is incharge of publicity; there are 68 such Missions/Posts.

(ii) Missions/Posts in which HOMs/HOPs or the Political Officer is assisted by an Information Attache; there are 16 such Missions/Posts.

(iii) Missions/Posts in which the First/Second Secretary (inf) heads the Information Cell; there are 42 such Missions/Posts.

(iv) Missions/Posts in which the Head of Information Section is assisted by an Information Attache; there are 3 such Missions/Posts.

(v) Missions/Posts in which a Minister/Counsellor is assisted by a First/Second Secretary or Attache, there are 16 such Missions/Posts.

(Missions/Posts in the above 5 categories are at Appendix)

In important Missions publicity wings are under the exclusive charge of an officer of Minister / Counsellor rank as can be seen from the material given above.

In the light of the recommendation of the Committee and other such views expressed, a group has been appointed in the Ministry led at Secretary level to examine the methodology for strengthening of our Information Wings both in terms of personnel as well as infrastructure. The group will also consider the support systems being provided by the Ministry to Mission for information work.

The Ministry prepares both print and audio-visual material for dissemination abroad to the media, think-tanks, decision and opinion makers as well as non-resident Indians and organisations of people of Indian origin. It is also the intention to increasingly use persons of distinction for promotion of our information efforts abroad and, already in the past one and a half years, the Ministry has assisted in organising visits of eminent persons from different walks of life to the USA, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Central Asia to project India's point of view on critical issues such as Kashmir and to acquaint opinion and decision makers in these countries with developments in India covering different facets such as secularism, democracy, economic liberalisation, the impact of foreign-inspired terrorism in India etc.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 27, Para 3.45)

The Committee are informed that the foreign service officers are expected to acquire a working knowledge of the language spoken in the countries of accreditation as and when such a language may not correspond to their compulsory foreign languages. For this proficiency in optional foreign languages is encouraged. At times it so happens that owing to exigencies of services especially in far flung Missions with limited staff or where the language spoken may be specific or unique to the region, officers may not be knowing the language of the place of their postings. In the considered opinion of the Committee for an efficient performance it is essential for an information Officer in the Mission to have the knowledge

of the local language where he is posted. The Committee, therefore, desire that as far as possible officers having familiarity with languages current in the country may be posted in these countries to enable them to discharge their duties effectively with regard to the information and publicity work. They also suggest that efforts should be made to post at least one diplomatic officer who is proficient in the local language.

Reply of Government

The suggestion that as far as possible each Mission should have at least one officer with knowledge of local language is a very valid and valuable one. It is the constant endeavour of the Ministry to ensure that each Mission has at least one officer with knowledge of local language and more than one, if necessary, in large and important missions. Constraints in achieving this goal fully arise from the need to rotate officers between different areas to diversify and enrich their experience as also to ensure that each officer does a reasonable share of both hard and comfortable stations.

However, keeping in view this important suggestion of the Committee, the Ministry will try to enhance the pool of linguistic talent so that despite various constraints, it is attempted to have at least one officer in each Mission with a knowledge of the local language. Suitable schemes for this purpose will also be formulated. To realise this target, long term endeavours would also be made to provide more incentives to officers to achieve versatility in two foreign languages so that the need to post officers to different regions does not come in the way of ensuring that each Mission has at least one local language knowing officer.

[Forwarded with D.O. No.832/AS/(AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 28, Para 3.46)

The Committee would also suggest that suitable attractive incentives in the form of special allowances may be given to officers who acquire adequate proficiency in the language unique to the region. Such an incentive, the Committee feel, will lessen the difficulty faced in this regard.

Reply of Government

The Ministry places due emphasis on the need for officers to be conversant with the language of the country of their posting. There is a scheme which offers some incentives to officers to learn foreign languages including the language of their country of posting. However, the Ministry accepts that the present incentives are inadequate. In pursuance of the recommendations of the Committee that adequate incentives should be offered to attract more officers to enhance their skills in foreign languages, the Ministry will try to work on a package of effective and substantial incentives in consultation with financial authorities.

[Forwarded with D.O. No.832/AS/(AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 29, Para 3.47)

The Committee also desire that proper steps should be taken to augment the physical and financial resources, to introduce modern technology for information and publicity. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken in this regard within a period of three months.

Reply of Government

Action Taken so far on augmenting physical and financial resources for upgrading communication network between XP Division and Missions Abroad:

1. Financial sanction for a computer communication system costing Rs.14.1 lakhs has been obtained. The equipment has already been delivered in XPT Section and will be installed next week. This system will facilitate rapid dissemination of information from XP Division, including Official Spokesman's Statements and Press Releases, to all our missions abroad. The system will allow simultaneous operation of two telex lines and four fax lines.

2. Cost Estimates for installation of Electronic-Mail (E-Mail) facility between XP Division and missions abroad have been obtained from NIC. NIC can provided the facility to 146 countries at an approximate cost of Rs.9 crores. Simultaneously, information on computer hardware already available with our missions abroad, is being obtained and will be compiled as soon as responses from the missions reach us. Thereafter, we will move papers for financial sanction. E-Mail will provide a reliable, cost effective and very swift two-way mode of communication between XP Division and the missions connected on E-Mail.

3. A test E-Mail facility is in the process of being installed in XP Division. Hardware for this has already been supplied by NIC. This will be connected to a limited number of missions, e.g., those in Singapore, Mauritius, Hong Kong, Moscow and Washington. This is a precursor to installation of the E-Mail facility in its final form.

[Forwarded with D.O. No.4743/AS/(AD) /94 dated 26.10.1994]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 30, Para 3.58)

Suitable mechanism needs to be evolved by the Ministry of External Affairs and Commerce for holding periodical consultation with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Export Promotion Councils and other organisations engaged in the development of International Trade so that the head of the Mission/Commercial Representatives abroad could meet the need and demands of Trade and Industry.

Reply of Government

The Committee's recommendation has been noted. In 1989, a Board of Trade was set up by the Ministry of Commerce to provide a forum for ensuring continuous dialogue with trade and industry in respect of major development in the field of international trade. The Chairman of the Board of Trade is the Commerce Minister and the membership of the Board includes the Governor or RBI; Secretaries of the Ministries of Commerce, Industry, Finance and Textiles; Presidents of FICCI, ASSOCHAMS, CII, FIEO, a few representatives of trade and industry and a few specialists.

Greater interaction between Government and Trade and Industry is being encouraged. Regular meetings are held in the External Affairs Ministry with various apex chambers of commerce and industry, export promotion councils and other organisations engaged in international trade.

Our Missions are kept up-to-date with developments on the economic front in India. Trade directories specially compiled for use by the Commercial Wings of our Missions and wherever available floppy diskettes, video cassettes etc. are supplied. A set of six brochures and a composite brochure giving all related information on the Indian economy and the opportunities available for investment in India are also specially produced for our Missions and for foreign trade bodies. A database has also been developed in the Ministry of Commerce for receiving monthly feedback from the commercial representatives in various Missions. The Manual of Instructions to Commercial Representatives Abroad was also revised recently and circulated among all our commercial representatives and it is expected to help them in the discharge of their duties.

Since MEA's Economic Division handles to a greater or lesser extent all the incoming foreign economic and commercial delegations, interaction with Chambers of Commerce, EPCs, Ministry of Commerce and other economic Ministries is a constant process throughout the year. Our Heads of Mission and Commercial Officers in the concerned Missions are asked to come to India during such visits, who also then get the benefit of such interactions. Economic Division of MEA handled over 22 incoming economic/commercial delegations in 1994-95.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 31, Para 3.59)

The Committee would also like the Ministry to organise regional meetings and all the Heads of Missions/Commercial Representatives abroad should have periodic meetings relating to matters concerning trade, industry and other economic interests in the region of their own jurisdiction in order to enable them to take stock of the situation, exchange experience and pool their assessment and judgement for export promotion and for attracting foreign investments.

Reply of Government

The success of the Indian economic reforms depends on our performance in the export front and here the commercial representatives in our Missions abroad play a crucial role. There are periodic conferences of commercial representatives of different regions to discuss strategies for increasing our exports. The CR's Conference gives an opportunity for the CRs to exchange with Commerce Minister and Commerce Secretary, their problems with regard to trade *vis-a-vis* those countries and India. Representatives of public sector organisations abroad are also present during the meetings and highlight the problems they face. Recently this year, there were Conferences of CRs in Hong Kong in January, 1994, with the CRs of East Asian countries, a conference of CRs of GCC countries in September, 1994 in Dubai, a conference of CRs of important EU countries in Bonn in September, 1994, and a Conference of CRs in Johannesburg in August 1994. HOMs and CRs in EU countries have been instructed to meet every few months. HOMs of other regions also meet for periodic conferences and discuss matters relating to trade, industry and other economic interest of the region. It is proposed to have a conference of our HOMs in economically important countries in Delhi in 1995-96.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 33, Para 3.61)

The Committee are satisfied to note that recently certain Missions have been identified as target Missions taking into account the potential for direct foreign investment, technology transfer and exports. The Committee desire that the Ministry of External Affairs and the economic Ministries concern should keep a constant watch over the performance of target Missions and their new role in furtherance of India's economic interest abroad and monitor regularly on half yearly basis the progress achieved in this regard. In this connection, the Committee would also like the Government to provide adequate infrastructure like manpower and other inputs necessary for achieving the desired objectives.

Reply of Government

MEA is in constant touch with economic and commercial wings of all missions, and especially of those in target countries. The territorial divisions as well as economic divisions in MEA keep a very close watch on efforts relating to promotion of investment, trade and technology transfers. The fact that economic restructuring in India has received an enthusiastic response abroad is at least partly the result of our Missions' activities. The performance of largest Missions is reviewed constantly in terms of trade and investment, often on a monthly basis.

Basically, the requirement of our Missions' economic and commercial wings' is on three fronts:—

1. Adequate manpower for trade and investment promotion.

2. Access to modern, state of the art, office equipment and hardware in order to improve productivity and efficiency.

3. Back-up support from Headquarters by way of swift responses to their queries, constant despatch of upto date information, assistance in coordinating meetings of visiting delegations etc.

Regarding manpower, it has been our experience that local recruits, employed in Missions as Marketing Officers/Commercial Assistants are extremely useful with their knowledge of local markets, languages and procedures. While it may not be feasible in the short run to increase the number of India based officers doing commercial and economic work, there is the possibility of having more local recruits in the economic and commercial wings and MEA is seriously examining this option *vis-a-vis* our more important Missions and posts.

Regarding computerisation, an increasing number of our Missions are being computerised, Several of our important Missions are using the electronic media to disseminate information and reach targeted audiences. Efforts are also being made for our Missions in important areas to network with each other.

Back-up support from Headquarters, is provided by the various divisions in MEA. Two divisions in MEA have been specially charged with responding speedily to requests and queries from Economic and Commercial Wings in Missions abroad—the Economic Coordination Unit and Economic Division. Missions abroad are given full support, *inter-alia*, by way of responses to queries, assistance in coordinating visits of foreign delegations and regular information on important developments in economic policies and procedures.

In the light of the Committee's recommendation the Ministry will examine ways and means to further strengthen the infrastructure in Missions for economic and commercial work.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 34, Para 3.75)

The Committee note that there have been complaints about discourteous behaviour shown and indifferent treatment meted out to Indians visiting abroad by the staff of Indian Missions/Posts. This is reported to be on account of apathetic attitude on the part of the staff as also on account of large number of visitors. In regard to action taken on such complaints. Foreign Secretary stated during evidence "we do send general circulars saying that these are the complaints we are receiving and so do the needful". The Committee are unhappy to find that there is no established mechanism for redressal of such complaints.

Reply of Government

A regular exercise of monitoring existing arrangements in the Consular Section is undertaken with a view to improving the services rendered and reducing the time taken for consular services. Every endeavour is made to provide visa services on the same day, within laid down rules and regulations.

Within the constraints of available resources, computerisation of consular services is being undertaken in a phased manner to reduce the time taken for providing consular services.

Heads of Mission normally investigate complaints received by them to establish their genuineness. When complaints are received by the Ministry of External Affairs they are invariably referred to the Missions for investigation and comments. Complaints with *prima facie* evidence are taken very seriously.

Pursuant to the Committee's recommendation instructions have been issued to the Missions to keep all complaints on a file and to send them, with details of the action taken thereon, every six months to the Ministry. This will help in establishing the total number of complaints received, their nature and validity and enable the Ministry to monitor the level of complaints and take corrective action. Having all complaints in one place will also put things in their perspective.

While explaining the above, the MEA would also like to add that considering the number of Indians abroad, those who travel abroad, those who call upon our Missions for assistance etc., the number of complaints may not be considered inordinate. On the contrary, the Ministry and Missions are in receipt of numerous letters of gratitude and commendation for the assistance rendered to the "common" Indian visitors. Cases of lost passports, robbery, deaths abroad account for thousands of cases a year, and these cases handled with compassion and despatch rarely attract any notice.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 35, Para 3.76)

Extending courtesies and facilities to Indian visitors by the Missions abroad is an essential function of the Missions which the Committee expect to be performed by the officers and staff to the satisfaction of the visitors. Greater emphasis need to be laid in this regard during training of IFS officers.

Reply of Government

As desired by the Committee the need for courtesies and helpful behaviour will be emphasised in the various training programme of FSI at all levels of the foreign service under training/retraining.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 37, Para 3.91)

As per the instructions laid down, officers belonging to various wings of Ministries functioning under or on behalf of the Ministry of External Affairs are required to keep Heads of Missions informed of their activities. The Committee are informed by the Ministry of External Affairs that in actual practice instructions are not often implemented properly and Heads of Missions are not often regularly kept informed. The Committee desire that for better coordination the Ministry/Departments concerned should suitably advise their officers functioning under their administrative control as part of the Missions or otherwise, for strict compliance with the extant instructions and that instructions issued to the officers should also be endorsed invariably to the Ministry of External Affairs.

Reply of Government

The rule position in this regard reinforced through circulars is very clear and requires all officers in a Mission abroad including those from other Ministries and Departments to keep HOM fully in the picture about their work so that the Mission's activities are conducted in accordance with agreed goals. Very exceptionally, there may be an instance of a junior officer functioning, on MEA's instructions, on 'need to know' basis. Wherever deviations from this principles are brought to the Ministry's notice by the Missions, appropriate action is taken to set things right. In general, things are on track. However, in view of the Committee's recommendation in the matter, appropriate action has been taken to ensure that in practice, instructions about keeping HOMs informed and coordinating all activities in accordance with the goals laid down by the Government are observed and that the Head of Mission is consulted wherever necessary. To begin with, detailed and clear instructions have been issued once again in this regard.

[Forwarded with D.O.No. 832/AS(AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 40 & 41, Paras 4.16 & 4.17)

The Committee are informed that a team of Foreign Service Inspectors consisting of a representative of Secretary (Expenditure) in the Ministry of Finance and a representative of the Foreign Secretary periodically conduct inspection on the functioning of Indian Missions / Posts abroad in the light of current foreign policy objectives. This team makes recommendations on staffing pattern, budgetary requirements and all other matters pertaining to functioning of Mission.

The Committee are also informed that the prescribed periodicity is 3 years but in effect it is 5 or 6 years or even more. However, the Committee are given to understand by a former career diplomat that much more is desired to be achieved in this regard. The visits of the inspectors are not only unsatisfactory but they also tend to focus their attention on purely administrative matters. Besides, in a two-days visit it is hardly

possible to arrive at an accurate assessment of the effectiveness of a Mission.

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 44 & 45, Paras 4.28 & 4.29)

At present performance of the Missions is evaluated by—(i) by the visits of senior officers to various Missions and (ii) by Foreign Service Inspectors team and (iii) by assessments arrived at by the Foreign Secretary and other Secretaries in Territorial Divisions in the course of watching the work of Missions concerned. Besides, the system of Annual Action Plans provides an effective mechanism for regular reporting and evaluation of the performance of Missions. In the opinion of the Foreign Secretary these visits are not adequate to cover all the Missions as frequently as is necessary to do so. The Ministry has admitted that 'the possibility of establishing a closer interaction between Foreign Service Inspectors and Territorial Division which has the responsibility of monitoring and evaluation could be considered'. However, from the views expressed by the former diplomats and the former Foreign Secretary, the Committee are advised that the following specific improvements are essential for better evaluation of the performance and proper monitoring of the Missions abroad. That much greater devolution of work to lower level in the Ministry so that Joint Secretary and Secretaries in the Territorial Divisions are able to concentrate for more time for careful thought and guidance to the Missions.

That Territorial Divisions should have adequate officer strength for effective liaison with other Ministries / Departments of the Government of India.

Inspecting Teams during visits to Missions abroad should focus more on overall evaluation and guidance apart from financial aspects and administrative problems.

Senior officer of sufficient higher level from Ministry of External Affairs make inspection visits to Missions and with greater frequency. Visits by Senior Officer should not remain confined to a few important Missions but other less important countries also.

Reports from Missions of unimportant countries should also receive due attention at senior levels in Ministry of External Affairs. A system is developed in MEA where senior officers could be deputed to small Missions where there had been no or few visits, enquire their problems and judge performance. Every Missions / Posts should submit an annual performance report on the work done by the Missions during the previous year for which a suitable proforma should be devised by the Ministry of External Affairs.

The Committee are of the considered view that the above suggestions need serious consideration, Besides, apart from having closer interaction between Foreign Service inspectors and Territorial Divisions, there is a

need to monitor and evaluate the performance of the Indian Mission abroad more closely, so that deficiency and problems observed could be removed in time. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken by them in this regard immediately.

Reply of the Government

Without any written instructions or procedural requirements to this effect interaction between Territorial Divisions and FSIs takes place frequently and administrative and territorial divisions consult each others and try to benefit from each others views and experience. There is no compartmentalisation between the functioning of FSIs and the Territorial Divisions.

The FSIs are expected to take a total view about the needs of a Mission in terms of staff and resources. To a large extent the allocation of personnel and other financial resources to a Mission is determined by its political, commercial, cultural, information and consular importance. A Mission submits to the FSIs various detailed briefs about the political, economic, cultural, information and consular importance of the country and the activities of the Mission in these spheres.

Whenever necessary, the FSIs consult the Territorial Divisions and have discussions with them. The Territorial Divisions can also give their views to FSIs and Administration on their own about the Mission and its priority. These discussions and consultations are mostly oral and across the table without formal agenda.

Frequently Missions endorse copies of their communications about administrative matters to the Territorial Divisions whose views are given due weight by administration while taking decision. Often Ministry's senior officials when returning from a tour abroad convey to the administration the problems that a Mission is facing. Such reports are looked-into by the administration carefully.

The Missions also submit an Annual Action Plan wherein they specify targets for the next year as well as give indications of what was achieved during the previous year.

In addition Missions also send to the Ministry Annual Political Report, Annual Economic and Commercial Report, Annual Consular Report, Annual Labour Report, Annual General Report and Quarterly Press Report. All these reports provide the Missions with adequate opportunity to keep the Ministry informed of their projected programmes and problems faced by them. The Ministry takes appropriate action wherever necessary.

Nevertheless, to put the interaction between FSIs and Territorial Divisions on a more formal basis, appropriate instructions have been issued.

[Forwarded with D.O.No. 4743 / AS(AD) / 94 dated 26.10.1994]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 50, Para 5.36)

The Committee have been informed that the Ministry has not fixed any time frame for the regularisation of the contingency paid locally recruited staff in Indian Missions abroad. The Committee desire that compilation of the data should be expedited and the eligible staff in Missions should be regularised.

Reply of Government

Missions, under delegated financial powers, are authorised to engage local staff for short periods for specified purposes and make payments to such staff out of contingencies. As such employment is, by its very nature, short term and under Mission's powers the Ministry (LC Section) does not keep is record of such employees.

Following the introduction of a visa scheme for all countries in 1984 there was a sudden and major requirement of staff for consular work in our Mission. The requirement of staff was assessed in the Ministry and Missions were authorised to employ staff and pay them out of the contingency pending a final assessment of requirements for consular work. The CPV Division of the Ministry is pursuing a proposal to our financial authorities for regularisation of contingency paid posts.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832 / AS(AD) / 95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 51 to 53, Paras 5.37—5.39)

The Committee find that there are 31 difficult stations which are called 'C' category stations. For these stations there is no period fixed for which an officer or staff has to serve. The Foreign Secretary during evidence has informed the Committee that "We do not have such system".

The Committee also find that the Sumer Sen Committee 1984 had recommended that for officials posted to hardship stations even if monetary compensation is ruled out some other form of relief should be attempted. The Ministry has informed that the officials posted in hardships stations are compensated to the extent possible through subsequent posting in better station. However, a proposal is under consideration to give a compensatory allowance to such officers. The Secretary during evidence informed the Committee "if a person is posted in a country like Lagos, Nigeria, Cambodia or Lebnon we must give him some incentives, extra amount or hardship allowance or additional allowance etc., to make him feel that he is being adequately compensated for doing hard postings."

The Committee, therefore, desire the Government to consider the suggestion made by the Foreign Secretary to compensate officers in the form of hardship allowance for postings at difficult/hard stations, so that the officers feel less disinclined to such postings.

Reply of Government

MEA accepts the Estimates Committee's recommendation.

A proposal, for sanctioning Hardship Allowance in the case of officials working at difficult stations, has been prepared and submitted to the financial authorities for consideration. In deciding whether a station should be placed in hardship category the following considerations have been taken into account:

- (i) Relations of the country with India.
- (ii) Personnel Security and law and order situation.
- (iii) Level of Medical facilities.
- (iv) Harsh climatic and living conditions.
- (v) Miscellaneous temporary factors, e.g., natural calamities, Radiation pollution, Civil war conditions etc.

[Forwarded with D.O. No 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 55 & 56, Paras 6.18 & 6.19)

The Committee note that there is a separate Policy Planning Division in the Ministry which is actively engaged in preparing and background papers on wide-ranging issues concerning India's foreign policy. The other important functions that are being performed by this Division are financing of seminars and conferences, processing of studies and research projects undertaken by the Universities, Institutions, Scholars etc. and analysis of special reports received from Missions on various subjects. The Committee are, however, surprised to note that the Joint Secretary incharge is reporting only at Additional Secretary level and the Division is ill-equipped in manpower as well as equipment. They fail to understand as to how this Division which previously was being headed by eminent personalities and at one stage by persons with the status of Minister of State/Cabinet Minister has been gradually down-graded to the present level.

The Committee are of the view that this Division needs to be strengthened suitably both in terms of manpower and equipment. Unless immediate effective steps are taken in this regard, it will not be able to play any meaningful role in the policy formulation or monitoring its implementation.

Reply of Government

The Ministry of External Affairs accorded high priority to work related to Policy Planning. The Policy Planning and Research Division accordingly was revitalised and strengthened in terms of manpower and equipment. The officer level strength of PP Division presently is 1 JS, 1 Dir. 2 USs. The Division is now headed by a full time Additional Secretary. Earlier AS (PP) looked after some other areas of work as well.

In terms of equipment like computers, faxes, etc. the Division's needs have been fully taken care of.

The Division prepared over fifty papers and notes on different subjects in 1994-95 relevant to the formulation of India's foreign policy. These consisted of immediate reaction to unfolding international events, as well as policy notes on issues of medium and long term interest. They contributed to discussion and decision-making on the issues concerned. The Division also extended partial financial assistance to institutions in different parts of India conducting seminars and conferences on international issues of relevance to India's foreign policy. It is considered that the Policy Planning Division of MEA has been fully and effectively re-vitalised in 1994-95.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 60 & 61, Paras 6.35 & 6.36)

The Committee have been informed that selection of IFS officers through combined examination conducted by UPSC is becoming very unsatisfactory as the requirements of the Service are not fulfilled. It has also been pointed out that almost in all other countries they have a separate system of selection in such Service. In this connection the Foreign Secretary admitted during evidence that the Foreign Service had lost much of its attraction. He suggested that recruitment of candidates to Foreign Service restricted to a certain position in the merit list would improve the quality. He has also suggested some other measures as relaxation of restrictions on spouse's employment, provision for recruitment on staff wives in place of local people etc.

The Committee feel that there is need for review of the existing recruitment system of selection for Indian Foreign Service. The Committee, therefore, desires the Ministry to constitute an Expert Committee to examine the existing recruitment system in the light of recruitment procedure/system in vogue for selection for diplomatic service in other countries and suggest modifications/improvements to be made in the present system and recommend other measures and incentives to attract talent to Foreign Service in order to meet the requirements adequately.

Reply of Government

The Foreign Service is important to our National interest. It is the only established instrument for the conduct of our diplomacy. Issues relating to its recruitment are, therefore, of vital importance. The Committee's views are valuable and the Ministry will appoint an Expert Committee to examine the existing recruitment system.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 64, Para 6.56)

The Committee are satisfied to note that a piece of land has been allotted for building a separate Foreign Service Training Institute on which the work has since started. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to take concrete steps in order to ensure that construction of building is completed within laid down schedule.

Reply of Government

The pre-construction planning, concerning Foreign Service Institute building, has reached an advanced stage. The construction is likely to begin in July/August, 1995 and is expected to be completed in a period of 20 months.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 65, Para 6.57)

A former diplomat has pointed out that no review has been done about the performance/working of the Foreign Service Training Institute since its inception about six years ago. The Committee, therefore, desire that a review of the working of Institute may be undertaken preferably by an independent team.

Reply of Government

The suggestion of the Committee about review of the performance and working of Foreign Service Training Institute at this stage of its growth to decide its future course is very valuable. Such a review will be undertaken by a team led by a retired Senior IFS Officer within a period of 2 years.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 66, Para 6.58)

A number of suggestions such as greater autonomy, association of outside experts, reorientation of training activities have also been made for efficient functioning of Foreign Service Training Institute. The Committee desire the Ministry to give due consideration to these.

Reply of Government

The Committee's observations have been noted. Since its establishment in 1986, the activities of Foreign Service Institute has expanded considerably, to include a variety of tasks for all round, development and efficiency of the Foreign Service and others concerned with implementation of foreign policy.

It may be mentioned that FSI draws upon an extensive guest faculty. This includes highly qualified and eminent persons from the academic and research community, the media, the cultural field, public life, industry and trade and experienced serving as well as retired officials from diverse disciplines.

With a view to imbibing new techniques and programmes and learning from the experience of others, the FSI endeavours to strengthen contacts with specialised institutions including academic bodies dealing with international relations and diplomacy and Foreign Service Training Institutions and other related Institutions abroad. FSI is a member of Associations of Directors of Diplomatic Academies and Institutes of International Relations (ADDAIR) and the Dean regularly participates in their annual meetings.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)95 dated 2.3.95]

CHAPTER III

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

Recommendation (Sl. No. 5, Para 2.22)

The Committee have persued the break-up of Budget Estimates Revised Estimates and actual expenditure under the various heads and sub-heads as also the total Demands for Grants of the Ministry of External Affairs during the last five years. They note that large variations in the actual expenditure over the Budget Estimates, sometimes exceeding 10%, have been a regular feature. There has always been substantial excess expenditure over the Budget Estimates and also over the Revised Estimates during the years 1987-88, 1988-89 and 1989-90. The Committee desire that the Budget Estimates should be realistically and carefully prepared so that the projections have a fair degree of accuracy.

Reply of Government

The specific thrust of the Estimates Committee's Report on the BE, RE and Actual expenditure is with reference to Embassies and Missions and not with regard to overall budget grant of the MEA. Various factors need to be taken cognisance of when a budget is prepared, proposals sent to the Ministry of Finance and final budget allocations received. Our Missions invariably go by the norms which are prescribed under the various sub-heads. For instance, with regard to office expenses, the life of different items of Government property such as cars, furniture etc. is prescribed. When its replacement is due, the Mission sends a proposal for the same. Similarly, in the case of medical expenditure, the norms are stipulated. Some degree of anticipation is naturally necessary and the Mission projects anticipated emergency travel, hospitalisation, etc. All Missions, therefore, tend to provide necessary cushion in their expenditure.

When the proposals are received at head quarters, these are scrutinised, first from the point of view of Mission's anticipated requirements and second on the basis of the guidelines stipulated by the Ministry of Finance. On account of prevailing economic austerity, the Ministry of Finance has instructed that all items of expenditure, apart from that which is inescapable, should be frozen. This, therefore, entails pruning the budget of the Mission in a broad manner so as to conform to MOF guidelines.

There are certain items of expenditure which a Mission may find it impossible to project in advance. One of these would be rent rates and taxes. We have seen that in almost all the countries of the former Soviet

bloc., rents have risen in a highly unpredictable manner. Where the lease of a building is being renewed, projecting the expenditure is not a problem. However, where a fresh lease needs to be signed, the likelihood of anticipating exactly how much the rental hike would be, is not necessarily an easy task. Moreover, Missions may face unexpected requirements both in terms of publicity as also under the travel head. This may be precipitated either on account of internal developments in India or organised propaganda by anti-Indian governments and forces, such as in the case of Pakistan. Fluctuations also take place under the sub-head 'Salaries' on account of two factors, first loss in exchange and second ad-hoc FA increase. Then there are sudden situations like anti-Indian activities by inimical countries which may require extra effort, travel, publicity and expenditure. There are also unforeseeable natural calamities, and strife, etc., which may require evacuations.

The Ministry makes a constant effort to project the budget of the Missions realistically. However, this is naturally constrained by the guidelines of the Ministry of Finance for economic austerity. The principle that the Ministry follows is that Missions should save where they can and spend where they must. Where items of expenditure can be deferred without affecting the functional efficiency of the Mission, this is recommended by the Ministry. Given the gap between proposals received and MOF guidelines, the budgetary exercise cannot naturally be done with the kind of fine precision that is warranted.

Efforts are being made to match MOF requirements (and hence budget allocations) as closely as possible with actual expenditure. However, it would be realistic to assume that a 10% variation is unavoidable, since these are determined by unpredictable factors completely beyond MEA's control.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 20, Para 3.17)

The Committee have also been apprised that ICCR is an autonomous organisation and its D.G. is an IFS Officer of the rank of Joint Secretary. The Ministry have contended that this arrangement is proposed to be continued since it has been found effective in terms of the co-ordination with the Ministry of External Affairs and the Missions/Posts abroad and for implementation of overall role envisaged for the Council. The Committee, however, do not agree with this argument and they are of the view that the Council's DG should be an eminent public figure who is proficient in the field of art and literature. The selection of a suitable candidate can be made in consultation with the Department of Culture.

Reply of Government

As the Committee is no doubt aware, the President of ICCR has always been a very eminent figure from public life, skilled in knowledge of arts, literature, music etc. While the President, by the virtue of his standing, provides the organisation with vision, sense of direction and larger goals, it is the task of the Director General as chief executive officer, to translate the vision, and ideals into concrete programmes of action. To do this, it is essential that the Director General should be someone who has the experience of administration and international diplomacy so that he can coordinate activities, with various organisations/departments and Ministries, and also with Governments, institutions and individuals abroad. Dealing with such day-to-day organisational matters, many of which while important for the running of the organisation, are also of a routine nature, can best be handled by a senior bureaucrat experienced in dealing with such matters. The present arrangement brings a harmonious balance between the need for vision and the need for tying up details. It provides an essential linkage between ICCR and MEA, which provides nearly the entire budget of the ICCR, and whose Financial adviser is also the Financial adviser of MEA. Breaching this link at JS level with MEA is not considered desirable and will neither serve the MEA nor the ICCR.

It may also be pointed that the governing body of the ICCR which meets in principle quarterly, has 17 members of which three are Members of Parliament, five are individuals of high cultural achievement, apart from a senior journalist, a senior academic and a senior businessman. ICCR is also supervised by a 64 member General Assembly on which the presence of intellectuals far out number the bureaucrats.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 32, Para 3.60)

The Committee are informed that organisational set up of Economic and Commercial Wings in various Missions are by and large adequate. The Committee of Secretaries had decided that office of commercial representatives abroad could be regrouped so as to function more effectively in pursuant of commercial interest. In this connection, they had directed that the Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of External Affairs should sit together and arrive at a broad consensus on deployment of staff and for opening of new offices, creation of additional posts and other changes. Accordingly, meetings were held and the matter was stated to be under consideration in the Ministry of Commerce. The Committee desires that such proposals should be accorded priority and expeditiously finalised.

Reply of Government

Commercial and Economic work are thrust areas for our Missions and there is a constant dialogue between Missions and Ministries of External Affairs and Commerce and the two Ministries among themselves to

promote our commercial and economic interests abroad. The location of commercial wings is decided upon through discussions between the two Ministries, the Commerce Secretary is Member of the Foreign Service Board and in that capacity he is aware of the officers who are posted for this work.

The Ministry of Commerce has undertaken a comprehensive exercise in respect of location of the staff of commercial wings in Missions abroad. Their proposal has been received recently and is receiving attention in MEA for our comments.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 38 & 39, Paras 4.11 & 4.12)

The Committee are concerned to note that the regional conferences of Heads of Missions are not held at regular intervals. During the last three years only five regional conferences were held in Germany, New Delhi, France, Paris and which indicates that there are no guidelines laid down for holding periodically regional conferences. The Committee are of the view that personal contacts among Heads of Missions should be encouraged through regional conferences to enable them to exchange ideas, discuss matters of common interest and promote trade and investments. Even the Ministry has admitted that conferences need to be organised very frequently to enable the Heads of Missions of that particular region to exchange ideas.

The Committee, therefore, desire that regional conferences of all Heads of Missions should be held in their region at regular interval. The Committee would like the Ministry to formulate guidelines for such regional conferences covering duration, agenda, list of participants and representatives of various Ministries as necessary.

Reply of Government

Before a Heads of Mission conference takes place, considerable preparatory work is done. All the concerned missions are invited to prepare briefs on subjects on which the conference will focus. The Missions, on their own, suggest subjects which, in their view, need to be discussed at the conference. Before the conference takes place, the senior officers of the Ministry of External Affairs as well as those from other ministries concerned and the Heads of Missions participating in the conference are well aware of the issues on which discussions and exchange of views will take place. Every opportunity is given to everyone concerned to bring up any subject for the conference's consideration as well as to express their opinions. In recent years, in keeping with the growing importance of economic relations, conferences of HOMs focussed much more on the subjects of promotion of trade, investment and expansion of economic relations.

It is true that in some regions HOMs conferences have not been at regular intervals. The Estimate Committee's recommendations that the

HOMs conferences should be at regular intervals, have been noted for compliance. The Ministry will plan a regular schedule of such conferences provided necessary fiscal resources are available for this purpose.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 46 to 49, Paras 5.32 to 5.35)

The Committee note that 68 Indian based posts and 32 local posts have been kept in abeyance or lying vacant for more than 6 months at headquarters and Missions posts abroad. The Ministry has stated that no operational India based post is vacant abroad at present while some posts have been kept in abeyance on functional ground on the basis of the recommendation of the Foreign Service Inspectors. There may be a temporary vacancy due to resignation/retirement of an employee.

The Committee are also informed that even at headquarter, the existing strength of the staff is inadequate. In view of the vast range of activities undertaken by the Ministry and also on account of number of new Missions/Posts which have been opened in response to major geo-political changes, there is a need for constant review.

The Committee are also informed that partial cadre review of IFS 'A' was carried out in 1990 and IFS Grade 'B' is under active consideration. They have further been informed that in IFS 'B' Cadre there are many Grades where the officers have to wait for many years for the next promotion even after completing qualifying service.

The Committee are surprised to note that cadre review of various grades has not been undertaken and wherever it has been done the recommendations of the Cadre Review Committee have not been implemented fully. In the light of the views expressed by the Ministry of External Affairs and former diplomats and the position obtaining in other countries the Committee are of the view that adequate staff strength in the Territorial Divisions and in the Missions/Posts abroad is necessary. (The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry must review, both structure and staffing of our Missions/Posts as well as the IFS A & B cadre without further loss of time and implement the recommendations of the Cadre Review Committee.) Besides, timely steps to fill up the vacancies must also be taken at least three months before the particular post falls vacant.

Reply of Government

A proposal for the Cadre Review of the IFS has been prepared in 1994 and after obtaining the approval of the External Affairs Minister has been referred to the Department of Personnel and Training for examination and obtaining the approval of concerned authorities in the Government.

It has been the Ministry's repeated endeavour to prepare a comprehensive Cadre Review of the IFS (B). The Administration Division has been in contact in 1994 again with the representatives of various Cadres/Sub-Cadres of the IFS(B) Associations. There has been a divergence of views

on some of the issues among different Associations, which has prevented the preparation of the comprehensive proposal. However, a few areas of convergence have been identified and the Ministry proposes to move proposals to give them a concrete shape.

Except where court cases come in the way, DPCs are held well in advance to ensure that posts do not remain vacant due to absence of promotions in time.

[Forwarded with D.O No. 832/AS (AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 57, Para 6.20)

The suggestion made in this regard by former Foreign Secretary that there is a need to establish a Policy Planning Board consisting of 12 to 15 experts drawn from outside the Government is worth consideration. The Division could benefit from the recommendation of the Board and process them for consideration at the Foreign Minister level. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry must take expeditious steps to strengthen the Division and apprise the Committee of the action taken in this regard at the earliest.

Reply of Government

Besides having access to all the reports, despatches and telegrams from the Ministry to the Missions and vice-versa, the Policy Planning Division, keeps in touch with academics and thinkers involved in studies on international relations and strategic analysis. In principle, PP Division finalizes its papers only after discussion with persons familiar with the subject outside Government. The Division also gets inputs from non-MEA sources of the GOI, relevant to their work. The Policy Planning Division thus gets inputs from diverse sources before coming to its conclusions and finalising its assessments and recommendations. The Ministry feels that the first priority should be further strengthening the Division, which as indicated in reply to para 6.19 is being done. The Policy Planning Division can benefit from the valuable inputs of such a Policy Planning Board fully, only after it has attained a certain level and capability. While the idea of such a Policy Planning Board is useful from a long-term perspective it may be deferred from the present.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 58 & 59, Paras 6.25 & 6.26)

The Committee note that the existing Foreign Service Board consists of all Secretaries in the Ministry of External Affairs, the Commerce Secretary and the Joint Secretary to Government of India in the Ministry of External Affairs in charge of Administration who is to be Member Secretary according to the provision 4 of the Indian Foreign Service (Recruitment, Cadre Seniority and Promotion) Rule, 1964. Regarding the constitution of the Board, Indian Missions Review Committee in 1984 had recommended that apart from the Secretaries of the

Ministry of External Affairs and Commerce, one Secretary from another Ministry should also be Member of the Foreign Service Board.

The Committee are also informed that the Ministry has partially implemented the recommendations by associating the Secretary of the Department of Personnel in the Departmental Promotion Committee. The Committee, however, recommended that constitution of the Foreign Service Board may be broad based with the addition of two more Secretaries from amongst the Defence Secretary, the Secretary of I & B or the Secretary Culture or a Secretary from the Cabinet Secretariat who have requisite experience and expertise in the affairs of Foreign Missions.

Reply of Government

The Foreign Service Board consists of:

- (i) All Secretaries to the Government in MEA
- (ii) The Commerce Secretary
- (iii) JS (Admn.) is Secretary of the Board.

The functions of the Board are given below:

- (i) Postings, transfers, and leave-cum-transfer other than those of Heads of Missions and Heads of Posts;
- (ii) All promotions in the Service upto Grade IV;
- (iii) Promotions to the Service from the Indian Foreign Service Branch 'B' (and the Indian Information Service), in consultation with the Commission;
- (iv) Grant of diplomatic status to officers posted in Indian Missions and posts abroad, whether members of the Service or not;
- (v) Appointment of Charge 'd' Affaires, acting High Commissioners and acting Commissioners.

The most significant function of the Board is to recommend transfers and postings of officers to Missions and Posts and from Missions and Posts to Headquarters. The officers of the IFS and the IFS (B) man posts in our Missions abroad. It is, therefore, necessary that Members of the Foreign Service Board have a knowledge of not only the requirements of each post abroad but a knowledge of the background, skill and indeed even the shortcomings of those officers who are recommended to our various Missions and posts. Only MEA Secretaries are equipped to perform this function. Secretaries of other Ministries who are not acquainted with officers of the IFS would be unable to contribute meaningfully in the decision making of the Board.

There are two reasons why the Commerce Secretary is a Member of the Board. these are:

(i) There are a large number of posts borne on the budget of the Ministry of Commerce. Hence, the views of the Commerce Secretary regarding the requirements of these posts are needed. As many IFS officers do commercial work, the Commerce Secretary is able to have an insight into the calibre of IFS Officers and hence he is in a position to contribute meaningfully to the deliberations of the Board.

(ii) Prior to the constitution of the IFS, posts in the Government of India officers abroad were either under the control of the then Department of Commerce or the then Department of External Affairs. It was decided that the IFS should be service responsible for all India's representational functions abroad and it was also decided that the IFS should be a unified service under one cadre control. At that stage it was felt that the Foreign Service Board could have the Commerce Secretary as a Member.

It is the view of this Ministry that the Membership of the Foreign Service Board needs to continue as it is presently constituted. A departure would lead to complications and delays without contributing to the efficiency of the present system.

[Forwarded with D.O.No.832/AS(AD)95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 62 & 63, Paras 6.54 & 6.55)

The Committee find that during the last 5 years only 8 refresher courses have been organised by the Ministry for officers of various levels. They feel this is not adequate keeping in view the rapid changes taking place in the global scenario. The Committee therefore, desire the Ministry to organise such courses at various levels more frequently so that officers are kept abreast with the latest developments in India and abroad of relevance to their work and function.

The Ministry has initiated action to establish a full-fledged Foreign Language Library, so that the officers instead of going to the school of Foreign Language are trained in this Institution with modern facilities and equipment. The Committee desire that this Foreign Language Library should be expeditiously set up perhaps as an adjunct of Foreign Service Training Institute (FSTI). The Committee also desire the Ministry to ensure that officers and staff who undertake the training in the foreign languages acquire adequate proficiency in that foreign language.

Reply of Government

The FSTI organises a number of refresher courses for officers and staff at various levels. The details of various refresher courses is as follows:

(a) Refersher Course for HOMs

This high level course which usually has a duration of ten days is designed to provide a conceptual and information update to the Heads of Mission, as also an opportunity to sharpen their perceptions on

national and international issues by interacting with officials, policy makers and non-official experts in India. Till date, two such courses have been organised. Another course was scheduled to be conducted in the second week of January, 1995, but was postponed due to financial limitations to the next financial year.

(b) Refresher Course for Commercial Officers in Missions Abroad

This course is designed for officers serving as Commercial representatives in our missions abroad. It provides an opportunity for interaction with officials of economic Ministries, commercial associations as also business representatives from public and private sector with a view to keep officers abreast with the fast changing scenario of economic, commercial and industrial policies with India and abroad. Till date five such courses have been organised.

(c) Basic Professional Course for MEA officials

This is a mandatory Refresher Course for administrative staff proceeding on postings abroad and consists of module on accounts, administration, consular work, behavioural skills, etc. This is supplemented by a short language course of 50 hours' duration. The course also caters to officials of other ministries going abroad to serve in Indian missions. Till date, 41 such Courses have been organised by the FSI.

A Language Laboratory was installed at the FSTI under UNDP Programme in the beginning of 1992. It is fitted with an audio-visual system and is fully computerised with the most modern technology. Language software for ten foreign languages including French, Russian, German, Spanish, Arabic, Japanese, Chinese, Persian, etc. are available in this Laboratory. The Language Laboratory conducts the following courses:-

(a) Course for IFS Probationers

IFS Probationers are required to do a mandatory French Language module for 120 hours whereby they are expected to complete the elementary level and acquire proficiency to carry on basic conversation.

(b) Course for Staff Members

As part of the Basic Professional Course, staff members proceeding on transfer abroad orders are required to do a 50 hours course.

(c) Course for Foreign Diplomats

Participants in the Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats spend a week learning and improving their English.

(d) Individual Courses

Individual officers (and their families) are offered the use of the Language Laboratory to refresh/update their knowledge of Foreign Languages.

In addition to the above courses, FSI organises Hindi typewriting courses. Till date six courses have been conducted.

[Forwarded with D.O.No. 832/AS(AD)95 dated 2.3.95]

CHAPTER IV

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

Recommendation (Sl. No 36, Para 3.77)

The Committee are also of the view that there is a need to monitor the existing arrangements so as to enable the Ministry to make improvements wherever it is considered necessary in view of increasing number of visitors. An assessment could be made of specific problems faced by the visitors and the assistance and services rendered to them. The Committee are of the view that in countries where large numbers of people of Indian origin are settled or there are large number of workers, there is a case for providing additional consular staff including Labour Attaches in adequate numbers commensurate with the size of the working population. The Committee, therefore, desire that adequate steps in this regard should also be taken by Ministry of External Affairs expeditiously.

Reply of Government

Missions receive complaints for issue of duplicate passports from Indians who have lost their original travel documents or have been detained in foreign jails for illegal stay. The procedure laid down for issue of duplicate document requires a check on genuine nationality and references to several agencies in India which, on occasion, delays the issue of duplicate passport. Complaints against delays in the Consular Sections on this account is not always well directed. The Mission is required to exercise care in such situations to safeguard against issue of Indian passports to unauthorised persons.

In Gulf countries where a large number of Indians are employed, Missions receive complaints about non-settlement of labour disputes, non-observation of contracts, ill-treatment to workers and delays in sending back the mortal remains of persons who have died abroad. The Missions, however, function at a disadvantage in this respect as some local Government's and sponsors are not forthcoming in sharing of information regarding compensation, illegal detainees and death of Indians. The Missions try to keep abreast of these developments and make every effort to intercede on behalf of the Indian national. The Ministry also follows up individual cases which are brought to its attention with the Missions the Government and the sponsors. Attention is given to the staff needs of Consular and labour sections of the Missions, wherever required especially in countries with a heavy concentration of Indian nationals. There are severe constraints in regard to staffing due to inability to create more

posts. Already MEA staff are spread too thin in Missions/posts abroad. Strengthening one Mission, therefore, means compensatory reduction elsewhere, which we can ill afford. Nevertheless MEA accept the essentiality of adequate consular and labour services staff in countries where there are more consular problems.

Some of our Missions in countries with a large Indian population, either holding Indian passports or of Indian origin have informed that regular emergency services are provided on holidays, through deployment of a skeleton staff on holiday duty. In smaller Missions, the consular staff is usually available to assist distressed persons needing services in a genuine emergency.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. Nos. 42 & 43, Paras 4.18 & 4.19)

In order to improve the quality of inspection, the Ministry of External Affairs has suggested setting up an Inspectorate separately headed by a Secretary/Additional Secretary to conduct inspections only.

The Committee expect that the suggested Inspectorate which could exclusively undertake inspection of all Missions at regular interval, would be set up early. The Committee desire that assessment of effectiveness of the Mission should be judged not only from its functioning in the light of current foreign policy objectives but also from its performance from economic bench mark in the field of exports, foreign investments and technology.

Reply of Government

It is essential for officials going on inspection of Mission abroad to have, among other things, intimate knowledge and experience of the working of administration and its inter-action with Finance. This ensures that the recommendations of the Foreign Service Inspectors are in keeping with the norms, the regulations and the budgetary provisions of the Ministry. Recommendations not in consonance with these considerations will create difficulties in implementation.

The Inspectors are fully briefed by Administration and Territorial Divisions in the Ministry as well as Missions abroad about the political, economic, strategic and consular importance of the country. Inspectors, therefore, do not confine their assessment of the Mission in terms of administrative matters only but also take an overall view keeping in mind the political and economic importance of the country. The other factors kept in view are the size of the Indian community, scope for cultural work, quantum of trade, exchange of scholars, intellectuals etc. There has been

some difficulty in maintaining regular and frequent inspections of Missions. One reason for this is that there are a large number of Missions abroad (about 109 Embassies/High Commissions and 38 Consulates/Assistant High Commissions/Commissions/Special Missions) that have to be inspected. Also, in some cases, due to very high inflation, exchange rate fluctuations etc., it becomes essential to have more frequent inspections. This results in delay in inspection of Missions where the problems are not pressing. Efforts will be made to increase the number of inspections. Moreover, whenever senior officers or property teams go to a Mission, their visits are utilised for looking into the various needs of the Mission. A separate inspectorate without experience of day-do-day matters and issues, may not be conducive to effective in-depth inspection of the Mission and coordination with various administrative departments. Rather than creating a separate inspectorate, working in isolation, effort will be made to enhance the number of inspections. This is not only possible but will also ensure correct perspective when inspections are carried out.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

Recommendation (Sl. No. 54, Para 5.40)

The Committee are really surprised to learn that the Ministry of External Affairs has not fixed any tenure where an officer/staff member has to serve at a hard station. According to a former Diplomat, one of the most important causes for demoralisation in the Service is the feeling that favouritism is prevalent in postings. The Committee feel that arbitrariness in posting and transfer creates heart-burning and bitterness among the officers and staff and the same should be ended. The Committee, therefore, recommended that Ministry of External Affairs should introduce a concept of fairness and objectivity in postings and evolve a definite transfer policy as well as fix a definite tenure for officers and staff required to serve at difficult stations.

Reply of Government

The Foreign Service Board which, is established under statute and consists of the Foreign Secretary and other Secretaries in MEA as well as Commerce Secretary, is responsible to make recommendations to EAM for posting and transfers of officers of the rank of Third Secretary and above. The recommendations of the Board have to be approved by EAM. For the purposes of postings and transfers of staff, two Boards have been set up on the basis of regulations which have been framed under statute. The Senior Establishment Board which consists of two Joint Secretaries in MEA, Director from Commerce Ministry and three Deputy Secretaries/Under Secretaries from MEA is responsible to make recommendations of postings and transfers of Section Officers and all officers of the Stenographers Cadre. These recommendations require the approval of the Minister of State. The Junior Establishment Board consists of a Director in MEA as well as Director from Commerce Ministry and three Deputy

Secretary/Under Secretary level officers from MEA makes recommendations for postings and transfers of Assistants, Clerks, Chauffeurs and Group 'D' Staff. These recommendations also require the approval of the Minister of State.

The objective of establishing an elaborate method of submitting recommendations for Ministerial approvals for postings and transfers through a system of Boards was to ensure that no personal preferences of senior officials, arbitrariness or injustice comes into postings and transfers. The composition of the Boards ensures that postings and transfers are made on the basis of objective and fair criteria. These criteria include the rotation of postings among more difficult and comfortable stations. All stations abroad are put in the following categories:

A*, A, B, C, C*

A* stations are the most comfortable offering the best facilities possible and C* stations are the hardship stations. It is ensured that during the career of an officer he serves in a mix of such stations. It is also ensured that no officer proceeds from a comfortable station to another comfortable station. The only departures are an account of exigency of service *i.e.* the requirements of a particular job which necessitate an exception to be made.

The normal term of postings is three years. This is in line with the view of the Standing Committee of Parliament. The exceptions are a few very hard stations where the term is two years. These are :

- (i) Algiers
- (ii) Baghdad
- (iii) Pyong Yang
- (iv) Vladivostok
- (v) Ulan Bator
- (vi) Kiev
- (vii) Luanda
- (viii) Kabul

It would, therefore, be seen that there is a normal term of posting for all stations, including hardship stations. It is submitted that the system of posting and transfer followed in the Ministry of External Affairs ensures equity and fairplay. The Ministry is happy to hote the Committee's emphasis on justice and fairplay in the matter of postings, which is so essential for the morale of officers and staff. The Committee's views will strengthen the resolve of the Ministry to resist extraneous pressures in this regard.

[Forwarded with D.O. No. 832/AS(AD)/95 dated 2.3.95]

CHAPTER V

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

—NIL—

NEW DELHI;
April 21, 1995

Vaisakha 1, 1917 (S)

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI
Chairman,
Estimates Committee.

APPENDIX I

MINUTES OF SITTING OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (1994-95)

16th Sitting

The Committee sat on Wednesday, the 19th April, 1995 from 1100 to 1200 hrs.

PRESENT

Shri Bhupinder Singh Hooda — *In the Chair*

MEMBERS

2. Shri B. Akber Pasha
3. Dr. Parshuram Gangwar
4. Shri Imchalemba
5. Shri Barelal Jatav
6. Shri Suraj Mandal
7. Shri Kabindra Purkayastha
8. Shri K.P. Reddaiah Yadav
9. Shri Rajnath Sonker Shastri
10. Shri K.D. Sultanpuri
11. Shri Laeta Umbrey

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri K.L. Narang — *Deputy Secretary*
2. Shri Raj Shekhar Sharma — *Under Secretary*
3. Shri R.C. Kakkar — *Committee Officer*
4. Shri S.B. Arora — *Committee Officer*

2. The Committee in the absence of the Chairman chose Shri Bhupinder Singh Hooda, to act as Chairman for that sitting under Rule 258(3) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha.

3. ** ** ** **

4. The Committee then took up for consideration the Draft Report on action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 45th Report of the Estimates Committee (10th Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of External Affairs—Foreign Missions and adopted it with the

Posting and Transfer Policy
(Sl. No. 54, Para No. 5.40)

1.27 With a view to introducing fairness and objectivity in posting in Missions abroad, the Committee recommended as follows:—

“The Committee are really surprised to learn that the Ministry of External Affairs has not fixed any tenure where an officer/staff member has to serve at a hard station. According to a former Diplomat, one of the most important causes for demoralisation in the Service is the feeling that favouritism is prevalent in postings. The Committee feel that arbitrariness in posting and transfer creates heart-burning and bitterness among the officers and staff and the same should be ended. The Committee, therefore, recommended that Ministry of External Affairs should introduce a concept of fairness and objectivity in postings and evolve a definite transfer policy as well as fix a definite tenure for officers and staff required to serve at difficult stations.”

1.28 The Ministry of External Affairs in their reply in the matter have stated as follows:—

“The Foreign Service Board which is established under statute and consists of the Foreign Secretary and other Secretaries in MEA as well as Commerce Secretary, is responsible to make recommendations to EAM for posting and transfers of officers of the rank of Third Secretary and above. The recommendations of the Board have to be approved by EAM. For the purposes of postings and transfers of staff, two Boards have been set up on the basis of regulations which have been framed under statute. The Senior Establishment Board which consists of two Joint Secretaries in MEA, Director from Commerce Ministry and three Deputy Secretaries/Under Secretaries from MEA is responsible to make recommendations of postings and transfers of Sections Officers and all officers of the Stenographers Cadre. These recommendations require the approval of the Minister of State. The Junior Establishment Board consists of a Director in MEA as well as Director from Commerce Ministry and three Deputy Secretaries/Under Secretaries level officers from MEA makes recommendations for postings and transfers of Assistants, Clerks, Chauffeurs and Group ‘D’ Staff. These recommendations also require the approval of the Minister of State.

The objective of establishing an elaborate method of submitting recommendations for Ministerial approvals for postings and transfers through a system of Boards was to ensure that no personal preferences of senior officials, arbitrariness or injustice comes into postings and transfers. The Composition of the Boards ensures that postings and transfers are made on the basis of objective and fair criteria. These criteria include the rotation of postings among more

difficult and comfortable stations. All stations abroad are put in the following categories:

A*, A, B, C, C*

A* Stations are the most comfortable offering the best facilities possible and C* stations are the hardship stations. It is ensured that during the career of an officer he serves in a mix of such stations. It is also ensured that no officer proceeds from a comfortable station to another comfortable station. The only departures are on account of exigency of service *i.e.* the requirements of a particular job which necessitate an exception to be made.

The normal term of postings is three years. This is in line with the view of the Standing Committee of Parliament. The exceptions are very few hard stations where the term is two years. These are:

- (i) Algiers
- (ii) Baghdad
- (iii) Pyong Yang
- (iv) Vladivostok
- (v) Ulan Bator
- (vi) Kiev
- (vii) Luanda
- (viii) Kabul

It would, therefore, be seen that there is a normal term of posting for all stations, including hardship stations. It is submitted that the system of posting and transfers followed in the Ministry of External Affairs ensures equity and fairplay. The Ministry is happy to note the Committee's emphasis on justice and fairplay in the matter of postings, which is so essential for the morale of officers and staff. The Committee's views will strengthen the resolve of the Ministry to resist extraneous pressures in this regard."

1.29 The Committee find that in existing system Foreign Service Board consisting of Foreign Secretary, other Secretaries of the Ministry and Commerce Secretary is responsible for making recommendations for postings and transfers of officers of the rank of third Secretary and above. These recommendations have to be approved by the External Affairs Minister. For posting and transfer of other staff, two other Boards have been set up on the basis of regulation framed under statute.

1.30 The Committee are unhappy to note that even after a lapse of more than seven months, the Ministry have not taken any concrete steps for evolving a definite transfer policy, as recommended by the Committee. It is highly regrettable that the Ministry of External Affairs have not given serious thought to the well considered recommendations made after a great

following categories:-

(A) Funds required for purchase/construction of property abroad: Rs.1268 crores. Out of the above amount, Rs. 223 crores (reference Annexure-A) are required for construction of buildings on plots already acquired abroad and in whose case, varying degree of planning has already taken place. Construction on these plots is proposed to be completed within a period of 4 years, beginning with 1995-96.

(B) Expenditure on the remaining purchases/construction projects abroad (Rs. 1268 crores - Rs. 223 crores = Rs. 1045 crores) is proposed to be spread over a period of 10 years beginning with 1995-96.

(C) The projects within India (aside from Passport Offices projects) are listed in Annexure-I. The total requirement of funds for these projects comes to Rs. 76 crores. Since the plots of land in the case of all these projects stand acquired and the need for the buildings in question is a pressing one, it is proposed to implement these projects too within a period of 4 years, beginning with 1995-96. (It may be mentioned that for the moment, we have included only two housing projects in India. However, depending upon the changes in the officials' strength at the Directorate of Estates, some more projects may have to be considered later on).

(D) In the case of the Passport Offices, it is proposed to concentrate on acquisition of plots of land, on which construction would be undertaken on the basis of funds from the budget of the Ministry of Urban Development. (This pattern has already been followed in the case of some offices). Purchase of built up property may become necessary in some cases, where such land/property is not already available, comes to Rs. 68 crores. This expenditure is also proposed to be spread over a period of 10 years.

5. On the basis of the above, the requirement of funds has been worked out as follows and is given in Annexure-B.

(i) The estimated expenditure, indicated in paras 4(B) and 4(D) above, to be spread over a period of 10 years. Divided into equal instalments, this comes to Rs. 111 crores approximately per annum (Rs. 1045 crores + Rs. 68 crores—10 years). However, after the first year (1995-96), an escalation factor of 5% will have to be provided for every year with a view to taking care of escalation in the global property prices.

(ii) The estimated expenditure, indicated at paras 4(A) and 4(C) above, will be spread over a period of 4 years (as indicated in Annexure-A).

It may be mentioned that the requirement of funds, given in Annexure-B, is only for purchase/construction of property. In addition, we would also need Rs. 5 to 7 crores per annum for maintenance/renovation of the government owned properties. The element will naturally go up as the number of government owned properties increases over the coming years.

6. As far as time-bound implementation of the purchase/construction plan is concerned, the following two approaches could be adopted:—

(i) To concentrate on acquisition of property in a selected number of countries during a given financial year. However, it may be noted that the success rate of property purchase proposals is around 50 to 60 per cent only. A number of proposals fall through because of the excessives of owners, structural problems, legal and ownership difficulties. Therefore, a rigid adherence to this approach, and consequent focus on a small number of countries during a given financial year, could lead to lapse of budgeted funds.

(ii) An alternative approach (and this is proposed to be adopted) is to assess the overall requirement of funds, that would ensure a shift to government owned property in all cases (except for those countries where acquisition of property is not possible because of local restriction etc.) over a given period of time. The focus would then be on ensuring that the funds, budgeted on the basis of such a plan, are spent during every financial year. For this purpose, proposals would be invited from all the Missions till the available funds are exhausted. Even while following this approach listed at sub-para (i) above can be brought in by giving preference to proposals from countries, where rents are extremely high.

7. The above plan has been prepared on the basis of the situation prevailing/information available as of today. Needless to say that an annual review of this plan will be conducted so as to adapt it to the changing realities.

S. No.	Station/Name of Project	Scope of the Project	Total Estimated Expenditure (Rs.)	94-95	95-96	96-97	97-98	98-99
13.	Minsk	To construct Chancery on 8 crs. 2200 sq. mts. plot	—	—	2.50 crs.	3.20 crs.	1.50 crs.	80 lakhs
14.	Warsaw	To construct Chancery and 20 crs. other residences on 9657 sq. mts. plot.	—	—	2.00 crs.	6.50 crs.	6.50 crs.	5 crs.
		Total	222.5 crs.					
PROJECTS IN INDIA								
1.	Chanakyapuri	To construct officers residences (60 units approx.) on 21574 sq. mts. plot.	—	—	1.26 crs.	5.04 crs.	5.04 crs.	1.26 crs.
2.	Foreign Service Training Institute Jaipur	To construct FSTI (Institute, Hostel, Administrative Block and residences) on 24282 sq. mts. plot in JNU complex.	—	—	4.5 crs.	4.5 crs.	1.35 crs.	1.15 crs.
3.		To construct office building for Ministry of External Affairs on 31303 sq. mts. plot at Maulana Azad-Janpath crossing.	—	—	2.8 crs.	8.4 crs.	8.4 crs.	8.4 crs.
4.	Papankalan	To construct staff residences (231 units) on a plot of 16311 sq. mts.	—	—	6.0 crs.	6.40 crs.	2.00 crs.	1.6 crs.
5.	ICCR Calcutta	To construct ICCR Regional Office and residence of Director on 3443 sq. mts. plot.	—	1 cr.	5.00 crs.	81 lakhs	75 lakhs	—
		Total (Projects Abroad & in India)	298.21 crs.	25.35 crs.	96.07 crs.	101.47 crs.	49.91 crs.	25.41 crs.

APPENDIX III

[Vide reply to the Government of the recommendations at Sl. Nos. 10 & 11 (Para 2.52 & 2.53) in Chapter II]

Requirement of Funds, for Purchase/Construction of Property in India and Abroad, over the next 10 years (Beginning 1995-96)

Financial Year	Requirement as per Para 5 (i) of the covering note	Requirement as per para 5 (ii) of the covering note & Annexure-I	Total
	(Escalation of 5% every year)	(Rupees in Crores)	
1995-96	111.00	96.07	207.07
1996-97	116.55	101.47	218.02
1997-98	122.37	49.91	172.28
1998-99	128.49	25.41	153.90
1999-2000	134.92	-	134.92
2000-2001	141.66	-	141.66
2001-2002	148.75	-	148.75
2002-2003	156.18	-	156.18
2003-2004	163.99	-	163.99
2004-2005	172.19	-	172.19