

45

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS—
FOREIGN MISSIONS

ESTIMATE COMMITTEE
1994-95

FORTY-FIFTH REPORT

TENTH LOK SABHA



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

FORTY-FIFTH REPORT

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (1994-95)

(TENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
FOREIGN MISSIONS



Presented to Lok Sabha on 26.08.1994

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

August, 1994 / Bhadra, 1916 (Saka)

E.C. No. 1325

Price: Rs. 52/- (Fifty two only)

© 1994 BY LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

Published under Rule 382 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha (Seventh Edition) and printed by the Manager, Photo Litho Unit, Government of India Press, Minto Road, New Delhi.

CORRIGENDA
TO

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)	5(i)	1	<u>Delete</u> 'in' after the word 'should be'	
(v)	5(i)	2	<u>Delete</u> 'be' before the word 'adequate'	
1	1.1	9	<u>Add</u> 'functions of' before the word 'special'	
1	1.1	10	<u>Add</u> 'are' after the word 'Paris' and <u>delete</u> the word 'function'	
3	1.9	9	Biyadh	Riyad
4	1.10	9	CGI VI Adivestock	CG Vladivestock
4	1.10	11	12.01.92	12.01.93
6	2.5	3	Puplic	public
12	-	23	86.80	86.60
15	2.20	1	came	come
34	-	4	landing	lending
38	-	2	formats	applicants
43	3.42	13	pre-ampt	pre-empt
43	3.42	15	newsagenices	news agencies
43	3.43	6	be	been
46	3.52	1	organisations	organisational
51	3.71	2	is	are
51	3.72	7	give	given
52	3.77	9	sine	size
58	4.8	2	<u>Delete</u> ' to ' after the word held in	
		3	region with	region. With
59	-	7	EAM	EAM

<u>Page</u>	<u>Part</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Lead</u>
60	4.13	2	fouctioning	functioning
64	-	14	revive	receive
70	5.7	12	<u>Delete</u> 'a' after the word 'functional	
71	Annexure	2	<u>head</u> 'is' after the word 'which	
74	5.16	4	staguation	stagnation
83	6.13	6	<u>Add</u> 'and nor to all relevent information' after the word informati	
88	6.22	7	action	acting
90	6.32	5	percention	perception
92	6.34(iii)	5	forsing	forcing
92	6.35	3	<u>Delete</u> 'of' after "requirements of	
93	..	1	Export	Expert
93	6.37	1	In	The
94	6.45	2	furnished	furnished
96	...	5	premised	premier
96	6.52	5	25.30	25-30
97	6.53	1	had	kind of
		7	to	and
			.The	,the
			syllabous	'syllabus
102	10(2.52)	3	houses	housed
104	18(2.73)	1	60	50
107	25(3.43)	7	far	for
111	39(4.12)	4	Minister	Ministry
115	54(5.40)	3	serce	serve
118	65(6.57)	6	preferable	preferably

CONTENTS

	PAGE
COMPOSITION OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE	(iii)
INTRODUCTION	(v)
CHAPTER I	
INTRODUCTORY	
(i) Primary Functions of Missions	1
(ii) Number of Indian Missions Abroad	2
(iii) Opening of New Missions	3
(iv) Closing of Missions	4
CHAPTER II	
INDIAN FOREIGN MISSIONS	
(i) Status of Mission	6
(ii) Selection / appointments of non-career diplomats	6
(iii) Budget & Finance	9
(iv) Delegation of Powers	16
(v) Security Arrangements	17
(vi) Accommodation	21
(vii) Visit of Delegations	26
(viii) Modernisation	27
CHAPTER III	
FUNCTIONS OF MISSIONS	
(i) Cultural Functions	31
(ii) Consular Functions	36
(iii) Publicity and Information Service	38
(iv) Economic and Commercial Functions	45
(v) Overseas Indians	49
(vi) Coordination	52
CHAPTER IV	
REVIEW MECHANISM	
(i) Management Information System	56
(ii) Annual Action Plan	57
(iii) Meetings of Heads of Missions in Delhi	58
(iv) Regional Conferences of Homs	58
(v) Inspections	60
CHAPTER V	
ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS	
(i) Organisational Structure	69
(ii) Staff Strength	70
(iii) Cadre Reviews	74
(iv) Local Staff	76
(v) Contingency Staff	76
(vi) Posting and Transfer	77
(vii) Posting in Difficult Stations	77
(viii) Hardship Allowance	78
CHAPTER VI	
HEAD QUARTERS	
(i) Policy Planning Division	81
(ii) Foreign Service Board	87
(iii) Recruitment	89
(iv) Foreign Service Training Institute	93
APPENDIX I	
Composition of the Estimates Committee (1992-93)	99
APPENDIX II	
Statement of Recommendations / Observations	100

**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 Imchalcmba
11. Shri Barclal 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 Dco Singh
25. Shri K.D. Sultanpuri
26. Shri P.C. Thomas
27. Shri Arvind Trivedi
28. Shri Lacta Umbrey
29. Shri Sobhanadreeswara Rao Vadde
30. Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav

SECRETARIAT

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Shri Murari Lal | — <i>Joint Secretary</i> |
| 2. Smt. P.K. Sandhu | — <i>Director</i> |
| 3. Shri K.L. Narang | — <i>Under Secretary</i> |
| 4. Shri R.C. Kakkar | — <i>Committee Officer</i> |

INTRODUCTION

1. The Chairman of the Estimates Committee having been authorised to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Forty-fifth Report on the Ministry of External Affairs—Foreign Missions.

2. The Committee considered the replies given by the Ministry of External Affairs to a detailed questionnaire issued on the subject whereafter the Committee took evidence of the representatives of the Ministry on 8th January and 22nd April, 1993. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the officers of the Ministry of External Affairs for placing before them the detailed written notes on the subject and for furnishing information desired in connection with the examination of the subject. The Committee also appreciate the frankness with which the officials/representatives shared their views, perceptions and constraints with the Committee.

3. The Committee also wish to express their thanks to Shri Muchkunda Dubey — Ex Foreign Secretary, Shri Eric Gonsalves and Shri A.N.D. Haksar—Former Diplomats for furnishing memoranda to the Committee and also for giving evidence and making valuable suggestions. The Committee also wish to express their thanks to Shri K.P.S. Menon, Former Diplomat for furnishing memoranda to the Committee.

4. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 23rd August, 1994.

5. The Report is divided into six chapters—each is devoted to specific aspects. The Committee have, *inter-alia* made the following important recommendations:

(i) Powers delegated to Heads of Missions/Posts abroad should be in commensurate with their responsibilities and be adequate for efficient and timely discharge of their duties. 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.

(ii) As far as possible the Chanceries and the Residences of the Heads of Missions should be Government owned properties. The Ministry of External Affairs should draw up a list of countries in order of priority and formulate a perspective plan in consultation with Ministry of Finance for acquisition of properties in those countries where Chanceries/Missions and Heads of Missions residences are housed in rented accommodation.

(iii) In view 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 system both at Headquarters and in Missions abroad.

(iv) No Indian Mission should lag behind in adopting modern technology and the Ministry should finalise the proposals regarding computerisation in Missions and introduction of Electronic Mail System.

(v) 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.

(vi) Heads of Missions / Commercial representatives abroad should have periodic meetings relating to matters concerning trade, industry and other economic interests in the regions 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.

(vii) The Government 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.

(viii) In countries where large number 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 and that adequate steps in this regard should be taken by the Ministry of External Affairs expeditiously.

(ix) That the suggested Inspectorate which could exclusively undertake inspections of all Missions at regular interval would be set up early and the 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.

(x) Policy Planning 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.

(xi) The Ministry should constitute an Expert Committee to examine the existing recruitment system in the light of recruitment procedure/system in vogue for selecting diplomats in other countries and suggest modification/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 requirements adequately.

6. The Committee would like to express their thanks to the Estimates Committee (1992-93) for taking evidence on the subject and obtaining valuable information thereupon. The composition of the Committee is given at Appendix I.

(vii)

7. For facility of reference the recommendations/conclusions of the Committee have been printed in bold type in the body of the Report and have also been reproduced in consolidated form in Appendix II of the Report.

NEW DELHI:
August 25, 1994
Bhadra 3, 1916 (S)

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI,
Chairman,
Estimates Committee.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

(i) Primary functions of Missions

1.1 The Main functions of our Missions abroad are to implement Government policies and to assist in their formulation to protect and promote India's interests, to strengthen ties with foreign countries in the light of national and international policy objectives and to look after the interests of Indian nationals. Generally these functions include political, economic, Commercial (including promotion of foreign trade), cultural information, consular and publicity activities. The Consulate Generals/ Assistant High Commission and Consulates are the sub-missions to look after mainly the consular commercial and information interests. The special missions at New York, Geneva and Paris function to look after our interests in the UN bodies. The Mission in Berlin has been retained consequent upon unification of Germany, main mission being in Bonn due to the proposed shifting of the capital from Bonn to Berlin.

1.2 While, in the smaller Missions all these functions are performed by one or more officers, in the larger Missions like in UK/USA, there are separate sections with their staff dealing with each of these subjects.

1.3 All missions pursue the broad objectives. Recently certain missions have been indentified as target mission taking into account the potential for direct foreign investment, technology transfer and exports. The OECD, Gulf countries as well as the Republic of Korea and Hong Kong are included in the target list.

1.4 All Missions in general and these target mission in particular have been asked to lay special emphasis on the following objectives:—

- (i) to increase our exports.
- (ii) to attract foreign investment and
- (iii) to Chanelized technology flows.

1.5 The Foreign Secretary of the Ministry during the evidence stated:

“The primary objective of Indian diplomatic missions abroad is to work in the countries abroad at two levels. The first level is to implement the policies or to work on the projects in that particular country which would serve India's political, economic, technological and cultural interest. It has two broad dimensions. One is overall national interest which is reflected in the foreign policy of India. So, the first task of Indian mission is to interpret that policy to the

Government of that country taking into account the sensitivities of the country in which the mission is located so that he will get the maximum possible response from the Government or country. Second dimension is the specific interest. In case of Pakistan, the mission has to ensure that Pakistan's policy does not impinge upon our territorial integrity and its acquisition of arms does not create a threat to US militarily and strategically and its policies with other countries do not create or generate public opinion in other countries of conflicting nature. The other spectrum may be like that of Japan. Apart from these things, there are specific interests in terms of investments, projects, programmes of economic or technological assistance and there, the smaller dimension comes in, in relation to each country. Now, the mission's task is to identify areas where there will be cooperation, what are the pre-conditions which can be made and how far can we make them adjust to our pre-conditions or requirements and financial areas on the basis of which we can proceed in bilateral relations. The other aspect is to interact with these Governments in that manner on issues like non-proliferation or transfer of technology from advanced to developing countries or the latest issue of environment. We have to balance their policies and activities in relation to environment and development. We should interact with individual Governments in a manner that when these issues come in a multilateral fora, we should ensure to the extent possible that they do not go against our interest."

1.6 With regard to review of objectives from time to time the Ministry has stated that:-

"On the one hand, Mission submit Annual action Plans stating their objectives and on the other hand Headquarters conducts a constant review to ensure that these objectives reflect the changing national priorities and that steps are taken to achieve these objectives. Where necessary, Heads of Missions are called for consultations to New Delhi. Further a high level orientation cum briefing programme is to be held regularly for Heads of Missions/HOPs of important missions. The last such programme was held in March-April, 1992 and the next one scheduled for December, 1992."

(ii) Number of Indian Missions Abroad

1.7 The total number of Indian Missions abroad is as follows:—

Missions	Numbers
Embassies	78
High Commissions (Diplomatic Mission in Commonwealth Countries)	27
Consulate General/Consulates (Located in important cities outside the capitals and generally performing consular and commercial functions)	28

Assistant High Commissions/Assistant Commissions—(Consulates located in Commonwealth countries)	04
Commissions	02
Special Missions	05
TOTAL:	144

(iii) Opening of New Missions

1.8 The decision to establish diplomatic relations with a country is taken on the basis *inter-alia* of the following factors:

- (i) Level of political and economic interaction between India and the country in question.
- (ii) Extent of our interests *vis-as-vis* the resident Indian community including those of Indian origin.
- (iii) Reciprocity regarding whether there is a mission of the country concerned in India.
- (iv) Factors such as political and security conditions in the country concerned which have a bearing on the effective functioning of our mission.
- (v) Other geo-strategic reasons including the importance of the country in multilateral fora.

1.9 The above factors and conditions necessitated opening of new missions as under:—

Sl. No.	Mission	Date of Opening
1.	HCI Harare	1982
2.	HCI Mahe	1982
3.	HCI Milan	1984
4.	Liaison Office of the EI Phunbsholling	1985
5.	EI Blyadh	1985
6.	EI Luanda	1987
7.	CGI Reunion Islands	1987
8.	PMI Paris	1987
		(Existed earlier as part of Embassy in Paris)
9.	CGI Tashkent	1989
10.	CGI Ho-Chi-Minh City	1989
11.	HCI Windhoek	1990
12.	HCI Malta	12.9.90

1.10 After 1990 the following additional Missions have been opened and have started functioning:—

Sl. No.	Mission	Date
1.	EI Tel Aviv (Israel)	15.05.92
2.	EI Almaty (Kazakhstan)	09.05.92
3.	EI Minsk (Belarus)	14.05.92
4.	EI Kiev (Ukraine)	08.05.92
5.	CGI VI Adivestock (Russia)	09.09.92
6.	CGI Shanghai (China)	11.11.92
7.	CGI St. Petersburg (Russia)	12.01.92
8.	HCI Bander Seri Begwan (Brunei)	18.05.93
9.	CGI Johannesburg (South Africa)	14.12.93
10.	EI Ashkhabad (Turkmenistan)	31.01.94
11.	EI Pretoria (South Africa)	04.05.94

1.11 It has been decided to open 3 more new Missions as under:—

Sl. No.	Mission	Date
1.	CGI Durban	South Africa
2.	EI Bishkek	Kyrgyzstan
3.	EI Dushanbe	Tajikistan

1.12 CGI Tashkent, in the former USSR has been upgraded as an Embassy in Uzbekistan and CGI odessa in the former USSR is now CGI in Ukraine.

(iv) Closing of Missions

1.13 Asked to furnish the list of Mission closed during the last 10 years, the Ministry has furnished the following list:—

Sl. No.	Mission	Year
1.	CGI Khaoramshahr	1982
2.	AHCI Glasgow	1985
3.	AHCI Liverpool	1985
4.	EI Conakary	1989
5.	HCI Suva	1990
6.	EI Mogadiscio	1991
7.	CGI Basrah (Iraq)	1991
8.	EI Bagota (Colombia)	1993
9.	HCI Lilongwe (Malawi)	1993
10.	EI Kinshasa (Zaire)	1993

- | | |
|-----------------------------|------|
| 11. *EI Kabul (Afghanistan) | 1994 |
| 12. CGI Aden (Yemen) | 1994 |

*Temporary Closure.

1.14 About the various circumstances/reasons for the closure of these Missions, the Ministry has furnished the reasons which were stated to be as under:

HCI Suva	With Fiji diplomatic relations were served in 1989, due to Fiji Governments discriminatory policies against Fijians of Indian origin.
EI Conakary	Political development in Guinea taken in conjunction with very limited economic/trade contracts with India and the minimal Indian community there, led to the decision for closure of the mission in 1985.
AHCI Glasgow AHCI Liverpool	The AHCI' were located basically to look-after interest of Sailors from India through Seamen's Welfare Offices there. As a result of Closure of these offices the AHCI's were also closed down.
CGI Khoramshahr	The Consulate General was closed due to the Iran-Iraq war.

1.15 The Estimates Committee examined this particular subject of the working of Indian Diplomatic Missions abroad during 1978-79 and presented their 29th Report to Lok Sabha. Thereafter, an Action Taken Report was presented to Seventh Lok Sabha during 1980-81. Since then momentous global changes have taken place. The opening up and liberalisation of economies of the world have thrown up new opportunities and challenges. The emerging new world order places additional responsibilities on our Missions/Posts abroad which can only be discharged by evolving suitable strategies and effective structure. Keeping this in view the Committee have made their recommendations in the Report in the succeeding paragraphs.

1.16 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.

1.17 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.

CHAPTER II

INDIAN FOREIGN MISSIONS

(i) Status of Missions

2.1 The Embassies/High Commissions are normally headed by a Head of Mission drawn from Grade I to Grade IV of the Indian Foreign Service. There are also a few non-career Heads of Missions appointed from outside the Indian Foreign Service cadre.

2.2 The Other categories of diplomatic officers are:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| (1) Minister | Corresponding to Gr. III of IFS. |
| (2) Counsellor | Corresponding to Gr. IV of IFS |
| (3) First Secretary | Corresponding to Senior Scale of IFS |
| (4) Second Secretary | Corresponding to Senior Scale of IFS/Junior scale of IFS or Gr. I of IFS (B). |
| (5) Third Secretary | Corresponding to Junior Scale of IFS |
| (6) Attache | Corresponding to Section Officers Private secretaries. |

2.3 In several Missions there are also officers from Ministries of Defence, Commerce and other Ministries.

Appointment of Head of Missions

2.4 The appointment of Ambassadors and High-Commissioners are made by the Government of India at its discretion from amongst the officers of Indian Foreign Service or eminent non-officials.

(ii) Selection/Appointment of Non-Career Diplomats

2.5 According to the Ministry appointments of non career Ambassadors and High Commissioners are made by the Government of India at its discretion from eminent non-officials, and public figures in the context of their experience, abilities and aptitude for diplomatic work.

2.6 Explaining the larger advantages accruing as a result of above policy, the Ministry stated:

“The non-career Heads of Missions (HOMs) come from diverse backgrounds and in the specific context of certain missions at a given time, their wider experience is considered as an asset.”

2.7 Asked whether the Government had earmarked any countries for posting of non career diplomats as Head of Missions, the Ministry in reply stated that “there is no such earmarking.”

2.8 Enquired whether the Government had fixed any maximum/minimum number of diplomatic assignments to be offered to non-career

diplomats the Ministry stated that "no such number has been fixed."

Briefing to Non-career HOMs

2.9 With regard to regular system of briefing of non-officials Heads of Missions at the time of their appointments the Ministry has stated that like the career diplomats, the non-career Heads of Mission are also briefed on the policy matters regarding the bilateral/Multilateral issues at the time of their appointment and have a period of wide-ranging consultations at Head-quarters.

2.10 In this regard a former career diplomat in a note furnished to the Committee stated:

"Selection for HOM's posts I consider as satisfactory on the whole. Selections are made mainly on the basis of the reputation gained by an officer and the impression of such reputation is often accurate. Selections become more than imperfect when they are made on the basis of pressure from outside the Ministry or on the basis of insufficient knowledge of an officer and his record.

Non-career HOMs should be persons of acknowledged eminence and preferably known to enjoy the confidence of the Prime Minister. They should not be discard from their erstwhile fields of activity.....

Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru had first considered appointing all HOMs from outside the service. But he soon changed his mind. Coming to the application that the majority should be from the career, with about 25 per cent from outside; but even this 25 per cent was never attained in his lifetime, to the best of my knowledge."

2.11 Another diplomat in a note furnished to the Committee stated that:

"The selection of Heads of Missions has been extremely arbitrary specially in case of non-career diplomats. There has been some improvement in the last year."

2.12 During the non official evidence, a former Foreign Secretary stated:

"On appointments as ambassadors, selection of persons for appointment as Head of Mission, this is the prerogative of the Prime Minister and the foreign Minister. The Foreign office can at best make suggestions. But ultimately the decision is theirs. I think, in most of the cases, we follow the usual practice of vetting the qualifications and performance of the officer, his knowledge of the language, his knowledge of that area. The selection, by and large, is quite appropriate. This applies to appointing Foreign Service officers

as Heads of Mission. But he also appoints people from public life as Heads of Mission. I have the feeling the Government never recruited public persons to these posts in the number for which Pandit Nehru had got the approval of the Parliament. I think, the percentage mentioned was never reached. In a sense, it has worked well. I think, there is scope at the margin to recruit more people from public life who can bring stature and lustre to some of the postings.

Then the selection has to be very careful. The problem arises when the selection is mainly for political purpose. It is very presumptuous on my part to suggest that political considerations can be completely separated from the diplomatic process. I think, on balance, there should be greater stress on the qualities of the person as an expert in that area, his having made distinguished contribution in that area, his enjoying a stature in the country in general, or his expertise in that area and not on the basis of political convenience. This is about the selection of Heads of Missions."

2.13 With regard to percentage fixed for appointing persons from public as H O Ms the Former-Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

"I am not quite sure; my memory is not as perfect. I do not remember whether it was really approved by Parliament. But the point is that he had noted somewhere on the file and has noted that the Prime Minister would have the discretion to fill 20% of the posts of the Head of Missions by appointment of public persons as Heads of Missions. But we never exceeded the 10-12 percent figure."

2.14 He further stated:

"I think, over a period of time, the experience that was gained indicated that it was neither necessary nor possible to reach the target. He was mentioning of recruiting people only from this source. The factual position is that as against the general understanding that the Prime Minister could have 20 per cent from outside, at no time the recruitment of public persons as heads of missions exceed 10-12 per cent."

2.15 Asked what was the percentage for appointing public persons as Head of the Missions and whether this percentage had been adhered to or not and if not what were the problems in this regard, the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

"As far as, there is no fixed percentage under the rules. The Prime Minister has the freedom to appoint a certain percentage in his discretion. It varies from time to time. At present, out of 107 Head of Missions, 11 are non-career officers from public life. It is little over 10 per cent. It is 10 to 15 per cent average since Pandit Jawaharlal's time."

2.16 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.

2.17 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.

(iii) Budget and Finance

2.18 The Budget Estimates of Indian Missions and Posts abroad are broadly covered by the following sub-heads under major Head "2061" of Demands for Grants of Ministry of External Affairs.

Salaries: This sub-head includes a number of items of expenditure of obligatory nature *viz.*

- (a) Salaries of India-based and locally recruited staff, Foreign Allowances of India-based officials and Representational Grant of Representational Officers. Budget Estimates in respect of these items are based on actual Pay and Allowances and are, therefore, projected with a fair degree of accuracy.
- (b) Reimbursement of Medical expenses to India-based officials in accordance with the Assisted Medical Attendance Scheme. For obvious reasons the amount budgeted for this item is only anticipated expenditure on the basis of actual expenditure during the previous year and the approved rates of fees of doctors and hospitals on the approved panel of Mission.
- (c) Children Education Allowance—Amount budgeted for this item is based on the number of school going children in a mission who are eligible to this facility under the rules and the fees of schools on the approved panel of schools of the Mission.
- (d) Other Miscellaneous Allowances—This covers items like washing allowance, bonus and honorarium etc. This item constitutes a minor part of total amount budgeted under the sub-head 'Salaries'.

Factors like revision of rate of exchange and Foreign Allowance of India based officials and Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) of locally recruited staff which have a direct and definite bearing on expenditure under this sub-head are duly taken into account while formulating the Budget Estimates.

(2) **Wages:** This sub head relates to provisions on account of anticipated expenditure on wages of the contingency paid staff as distinct from the locally-recruited staff borne on the regular sanctioned strength of the Mission. The estimates for this item are based on the prevalent rate of wages as fixed by the foreign government.

(3) **OTA:** This covers payment of overtime allowance to chauffeurs.

(4) **Travel Expenses:** The items of expenditure covered under this sub-head include Cost of Passages (*i.e.* Transfer Passages, Home Leave Passages to and from India, Children Holiday Passages and Emergency Passages) as admissible to India-based officials under the rules, Transfer Grant and TA advance payable to India-based officials on Transfer, expenditure on local tours of Head of Mission and other officers within the country of accreditation, if any. It also includes expenditure on Courier Services covered by specific sanction of the Ministry. The amount budgeted is based on the anticipated requirement of number of passages during the years. Savings or excess can result due to under-utilisation of various kinds of passages or unexpected transfers and hike in air fare.

(5) **Office Expenses:** This consists of a number of items which include *inter alia* the following:—

- (a) Postage, Telegram/Telex and Telephone Charges.
- (b) Air-freight on Diplomatic Bags.
- (c) Purchase and Repair and Maintenance- including cost of oil and lubricants of Staff Car (s) and Flag Car (wherever provided separately). Purchase and replacement of Cars is subject to rules enumerated in the Car Code.
- (d) Purchase and repair of furniture both for Chancery and residences of India-based officials in accordance with the prescribed scales.
- (e) Books and stationery.
- (f) Liveries for Security Guards, Chauffeurs and other entitled class IV staff.
- (g) Miscellaneous Office Expenses as specified in the Delegation of Financial Powers Rules.
- (h) **Publicity** — This represents expenditure on all publicity material including Books, Newspapers and Magazines from India for distribution among prominent foreign nationals and Indian Associations, Newspapers and Magazines purchased locally, publishing of News-letters etc. Most of the above mentioned items are of such nature that the budget estimates cannot be very precise and have, therefore, to be based on actual expenditure of the previous year taking into account the cost escalation as a result of revision of the relevant Rates and Tariffs in the country concerned. In the case of purchase/replacement of Government Cars, the actual cost of the Car as ascertained through the dealer/manufacturer is budgeted

and it is shown separate from provision for repairs and maintenance of Cars.

(6) Rent, Rates and Taxes: This sub-head comprises of rent of all the rented/leased buildings both Chancery as well as residential and expenditure on normal (other than major) repairs and maintenance of all such buildings. The amount projected on account of rental is based on actual rental liability in accordance with approved rates, a lumpsum provision is made for anticipated repairs and maintenance.

Expenditure on major repairs is budgeted for separately and shown in a consolidated form for the Ministry as a whole (including Missions/Posts abroad) under the Major Heads "4059" and "4216" in the Capital Section of Demands for Grants of the Ministry.

In reply to a question the Ministry has stated that the budget estimates of all the Missions and Posts are scrutinized and processed in the Finance Division of the Ministry. These are then consolidated and, after approval of Ministry of Finance included in the Demands for Grants of the Ministry.

2.19 Asked what was the system of maintaining control over budgetary expenditure the Ministry has informed that the following system is in existence for this purpose.

- “(i) On receipt of the budget proposals from Missions/Posts abroad, each of them is critically examined with reference to past actual and current workload and the budgetary minimum requirements, in the light of functional aspect of efficiency are recommended for approval.
- (ii) While communicating the budgetary allocations to various Missions/Posts, they are also intimated about the austerity measures to be enforced on expenditure under different heads, as enjoined by the Ministry of Finance.
- (iii) The financial arrangement for remitting funds to Missions/Posts are also worked out on the basis of actual budget allocations in respect of each Mission/Post.
- (iv) The Missions/Posts are required to furnish a monthly progressive expenditure statement to the Ministry. This serves as a tool of monitoring. The Chief Controller of Accounts of this Ministry keeps the Controller General of Accounts, Ministry of Finance also informed on a monthly basis of the progressive expenditure by the Missions/Posts.
- (v) Whenever economy instructions are subsequently received from Ministry of Finance, the same are also communicated immediately to all Missions/Posts for compliance.”

The Budgetary position under Major Head 2061 for grants of the Ministry of External Affairs showing the Budget Estimates, Revised Estimates and Actual Expenditure in respect of Missions/Posts abroad for the year 1987-88, 1988-89, 1989-90, 1990-91 and 1991-92 are as follows:

(Amount in Crores of Rupees)

Head of Appropriation	1987-88				
	BE + Suppl.	RE	Actuals (+)	Excess / (-) Savings over BE	(+) Excess / (-) Savings over RE
M.E. 2061 C. External Affairs, Embassies & Missions					
1. Salaries	29.15 1.23	31.20	36.87	(+) 6.49	(+) 5.67
2. Wages	0.66	0.76	1.40	(+) 0.74	(+) 0.64
3. OTA	—	—	—	—	—
4. Travel Expenses	11.20	12.00	11.56	(+) 0.36	(-) 0.44
5. Office Expenses	19.67 3.37	26.37	23.79	(+) 0.75	(-) 2.58
6. Rents, Rates & Taxes/Royalty	19.31 2.00	23.15	23.56	(+) 2.25	(+) 0.41
7. Other Charges	0.01	0.02	0.01	—	(-) 0.01
Total	86.80	93.50	97.19	(+) 10.59	(+) 3.69

Note: 1. The expenditure on Over Time Allowance upto 1990-91 forms part of Salary.

2. The excess expenditure over Budget Estimates plus Supplementary Grant was met by re-appropriation from savings available elsewhere in the Budget.

(Amount in Crores of Rupees)

Head of Appropriation	1988-89				
	BE + Suppl.	RE/+1	Actuals (-)	Excess / (-) Savings over BE	(+) Excess / (-) Savings over RE
M.H. 2061 C. External Affairs, Embassies & Missions					
1. Salaries	32.10 7.60	39.50	40.63	(+) 0.93	(+) 1.13
2. Wages	0.87	1.50	1.60	(+) 0.73	(+) 0.10
3. OTA	—	—	—	—	—
4. Travel Expenses	14.30	12.70	14.77	(+) 0.47	(+) 2.07
5. Office Expenses	27.80	25.20	26.01	(-) 1.79	(+) 0.81
6. Rents, Rates & Taxes/Royalty	24.41	26.58	27.60	(+) 3.19	(+) 1.02
7. Other Charges	0.02	0.02	0.05	(+) 0.03	(+) 0.03
Total	107.10	105.50	110.66	(+) 3.56	(+) 5.16

Note: 1. The expenditure on Over Time Allowance upto 1990-91 forms part of Salary.

2. The excess expenditure over Budget Estimates plus Supplementary Grant was met by re-appropriation from savings available elsewhere in the Budget.

(Amount in Crores of Rupees)

Head of Appropriation	1989-90				
	BE + Suppl.	RE	Actuals	(+) Excess/ (-) Savings over BE	(+) Excess/ (-) Savings over RE
M.H. 2061 C. External Affairs, Embassies & Missions					
1. Salaries	40.00	42.75	47.99	(+) 7.99	(+) 5.24
2. Wages	1.50	2.10	2.02	(+) 0.52	(-) 0.08
3. OTA	—	—	—	—	—
4. Travel Expenses	12.70	15.05	17.29	(+) 4.59	(+) 2.24
5. Office Expenses	26.00	34.25	31.14	(+) 5.14	(-) 3.11
6. Rents, Rates & Taxes/Royalty	27.78	30.18	41.36	(+) 13.58	(+) 11.18
7. Other Charges	0.02	0.02	0.17	(+) 0.15	(+) 0.15
Total	108.00	124.35	139.97	(+) 31.97	(+) 15.62

Note: 1. The expenditure on Over Time Allowance upto 1990-91 forms part of Salary.

2. The excess expenditure over Budget Estimates plus Supplementary Grant was met by re-appropriation.

(Amount in Crores of Rupees)

Head of Appropriation	1990-91				
	BE + Suppl.	RE	Actuals	(+) Excess/ (-) Savings over BE	(+) Excess/ (-) Savings over RE
1	2	3	4	5	6
M.H. 2061 C. External Affairs, Embassies & Missions					
1. Salaries	43.10	50.74	55.67	(+) 12.57	(+) 4.93
2. Wages	3.20	2.50	2.58	(-) 0.62	(+) 0.08
3. OTA	—	—	—	—	—
4. Travel Expenses	16.90	19.31	19.38	(+) 2.48	(+) 0.07
5. Office Expenses	35.00	33.10	31.89	(-) 3.11	(-) 1.21

1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Rents, Rates & Taxes/Royalty	29.78	44.36	39.57	(+)9.79	(-) 4.79
7. Other Charges	0.02	0.20	0.00	(-) 0.02	(-) 0.20
Total	128.00	150.21	149.09	(+) 21.09	(-) 1.12

Note: 1. The expenditure on Over Time Allowance upto 1990-91 forms part of Salary.

2. The excess expenditure over Budget Estimates plus Supplementary Grant was met by re-appropriation.

(Amount in Crores of Rupees)

Head of Appropriation	1991-92				
1	2	3	4	5	6
	BE + Suppl.	RE	Actuals	(+) Excess / (-) Savings over BE	(+) Excess / (-) Savings over RE
M.E. 2061 C. External Affairs, Embassies & Missions					
1. Salaries	52.77 15.00	72.69	72.12	(+) 4.35	(-) 0.57
2. Wages	2.50 0.18	3.38	3.23	(+) 0.55	(-) 0.15
3. OTA	0.97	1.30	0.94	(-) 0.03	(-) 0.36
4. Travel Expenses	21.48	27.94	27.19	(+) 5.71	(-) 0.75
5. Office Expenses	33.50 8.00	45.46	46.54	(+) 5.04	(-) 1.08
6. Rents, Rates & Taxes/Royalty	42.82 9.00	57.49	52.95	(+) 1.13	(-) 4.54
7. Other Charges	0.02	—	—	(-) 0.02	—
Total	186.24	208.26	202.97	(+) 16.73	(-) 5.29

Note: 1. The expenditure on Over Time Allowance upto 1990-91 forms part of Salary.

2. The excess expenditure over Budget Estimates plus Supplementary Grant was met by re-appropriation.

2.20 Asked to indicate the various factors responsible for variation in the Budget estimates and actual expenditure the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

“There are several factors which affect this variation. There are instructions from the Finance Ministry that budget projections, when we make it for the first time, should be based on the previous year’s actuals.

If we do not do that, it appears quite likely that it will come back saying that we have not followed the instructions. In spite of that, we do make a realistic assessment taking into account the inflation, additional Expenditure, increase in staff, increase in the cost of living, etc., etc. It invariably gets slashed.

Then, in the revised estimate, we have to go for more requests — for more money—based on actual expenditure during the existing financial year. So, sometimes under some heads of account, the Ministry of Finance just suddenly applies & cut. For them, perhaps it is necessary. They apply a uniform value system in all things. For instance, for 1992-93, they said, travel budget should be cut down by 30 per cent. How, at least one-third of the budget of Ministry of External Affairs is on travelling. We have to go to conferences. We have to attend meetings. Then, we pointed out this difference. Of course, these were increased.

There is one other factor—variation in the exchange rate.”

2.21 In reply to a query the Ministry has stated it may also be borne in mind in this context that the budget of this Ministry is comparatively small and is entirely non plan with a large part of it devoted to housekeeping functions like pay and allowances, office expenses, etc. which are inelastic in nature. The scope for zero base budgeting is thus limited.

2.22 The Committee have perused 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.

(iv) Delegation of Powers

2.23 Government of India has delegated several administrative and financial powers to India's representatives abroad, i.e., Heads of Missions/ Posts and specified categories of officers in Missions/Posts. The delegation of powers has been decided upon in consultation with others concerned,

particularly Ministry of Finance. These powers have been delegated so as to reduce paper work, expedite administrative and financial decisions and to reduce time-consuming correspondence between Missions abroad and headquarters. Details are contained in the IFS(PLCA) Rules 1961 and other related rules and the financial powers of Government of India's representatives abroad, as amended from time to time.

Delegation of Administrative and Financial Powers to Heads of Missions

(1) Delegation of Financial Powers

Financial powers have been delegated to India's Representatives abroad on various items. These are however subject to financial ceilings and conditions as laid down in the Booklet on Financial Powers to Government of India's Representatives abroad.

(2) Powers delegated under general Financial Rules of Government of India are also delegated to Heads of Mission.

(3) Powers under the Central Government Accounts (Receipts and Payments) Rules are also delegated to Heads of Mission.

(4) Powers to regulate appointments of local employees in the Mission, grant of increments etc., to them are also delegated to Heads of Mission.

(5) Powers under Supplementary Rules for regulating Travelling allowance are also delegated to Heads of Mission.

(ii) Delegation of Administrative Powers

2.24 Administrative powers delegated to Heads of Mission are as under:—

sanction of Home Leave fare, sanction of Emergency Home Leave fare, sanction leave. Medical Leave upto 120 days and Ex-India leave upto one month and to allow purchase/sale of motor car by officials posted in the Mission. Representational officers who intend to sell their car mid-term or purchase a second car have to obtain the permission of Ministry.

(a) Missions's satisfaction

Whenever Heads of Missions have expressed dissatisfaction with these powers on the ground that these are not adequate for efficient and timely discharge of their duties in the Missions abroad, palliative steps have been considered.

2.25 According to the Ministry of External Affairs these powers are commensurate with their responsibilities. However, there is a need to raise the financial ceilings in accordance with the rate of inflation.

(b) Extent of Delegation

Administration/Establishment division in the Ministry in consultation with Internal Finance and Ministry of Finance decides the specific powers and the extent to which they should be delegated. It also stipulates the conditions under which the powers can be exercised. The main consideration for delegation of powers is to enable efficient functioning of the Mission.

(c) Periodic Review

These are reviewed periodically. Last review was done in June' 92 when with the concurrence of Ministry of Finance, the financial powers fixed in Rupee terms were revised by 100% in selected items to offset the devaluation of India Rupee, the expenditure being incurred abroad in foreign currency.

2.26 The Committee note that powers delegated under General Financial Rules of Government of India, the Central Government Accounts (Receipts and Payments) Rules and Supplementary Rules have also been delegated to Heads of Missions. Financial powers delegated to India's Representatives abroad for various items of routine office functioning are subject to financial ceilings and conditions as laid down in the Booklet on Financial Powers to Government of India's representatives abroad.

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.

(v) Security Arrangements

2.27 In a note about security arrangements available in various Missions taking into consideration the present environment of terrorism, the Ministry has stated:

"The security of our Missions and personnel is primarily, the responsibility of the host Government. We, however, augment these security arrangements by posting India-based security guards and installation of various kinds of security equipment depending on the security environment in the country concerned and our threat perceptions. The Government of India, continuously monitors all threats to the security of Indian Missions and diplomats abroad and shares the information with the host Government so that the protective measures can be enhanced. All Missions are also immediately alerted to take precautions whenever any information of threat comes to our notice. The Ministry periodically reviews the security

arrangements in all our Missions abroad and takes suitable remedial steps in consultation with the host Government. All our diplomats are also briefed and guided regarding various precautions to be taken for their personal security. We have also undertaken a study of the existing security measures in all our Missions abroad to strengthen the arrangements wherever considered necessary. In accordance with the Vienna Convention the Government of India expects the host Governments to discharge their obligations to ensure the safety of our Missions and diplomats abroad."

2.28 With regard to the adequacy of security arrangement, the Ministry has stated that the security arrangements are considered adequate but are subjected to constant review.

2.29 One of the former diplomats in a Memorandum submitted to the Committee stated three years ago I felt that too many Missions have covered and it would have been better to concentrate on a few high risk Missions.

2.30 The Ministry in their reply has furnished the following comments:

"While security is basically the concern of the host Governments, it has become increasingly necessary to supplement the arrangement made by them because of the security environment prevailing internationally with intensification of terrorist activity and deteriorating law and order situation in a number of countries abroad. Security is an element for which a specialised officer of the rank of Joint Secretary is available on loan from the Ministry of Home Affairs on deputation. He monitors the security aspect on continuous basis and renders such advice as is felt necessary to respond to security threats abroad. Essential Security Cover given to the Indian Missions is a mixture of India-based Security Guard and assistance from local agencies, both Government and private. While other steps can be taken to make these arrangements more foolproof, by and large, within the financial constraints the resources are suitably utilised."

2.31 In this regard, the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

"We adjust the equipment and the personnel requirement to ensure the security abroad, according to the requirements in each Mission. For instance upto 1985, our Mission in Sri Lanka perhaps had only about five security guards. After the riots the number of security guards has been increased. We have to remember that the security of a diplomatic mission is the entire responsibility of the receiving country."

2.32 The Foreign Secretary further stated:—

"Of course, whenever a critical situation occurs, the Finance Ministry is responsive to our requirements."

2.33 Asked to furnish some incidents where Indian Diplomats were attached the Ministry has furnished the incidents of attacks on Indian Diplomats, which were as follows:

- (i) Shri Shyam Kumar, Second Secretary, Embassy of India, Brasillia was assaulted by three armed assailants on July 23, 1989 when they attempted to burgle his apartment. Shri Kumar sustained serious injuries which eventually led to his death. The Brasilian authorities arrested two of the persons involved and charged them with murder.
- (ii) The wife of an attache in the High Commission of India, Islamabad was abducted at a market near her house in Islamabad on November 25, 1990. She was returned to her house after about two hours. She could not identify the abductors.
- (iii) Shri J.F. Ribeiro, Indian Ambassador in Romania was shot and injured by Sikh terrorists in Bucharest on August 20, 1991 when he and his wife were out for a walk. The Romanian security personnel accompanying the Ambassador killed one of the assailants and captured two others. The two arrested assailants were later convicted by a military court and are undergoing imprisonment.
- (iv) Shri D.B. Mathur, an Assistant in the Embassy of India, Tehran was assaulted and detained by the Iranian authorities on December 3, 1991. He was released on December 5 after the case was taken up with the Iranian Foreign Office.
- (v) Shri S.K. Sharma, a personal Assistant in the High Commission of India, Lagos was assaulted by two armed robbers on December 18, 1991 when he tried to prevent them from burgling his house. The local authorities registered a case but have not been able to apprehend the robbers so far.
- (vi) Shri Sitaram, a Private Secretary in the Embassy of India, Tashkant was assaulted on the night of April 15, when armed intruders entered his house. Local Authorities have not been able to trace them so far.
- (vii) Shri Rajesh Mittal, a counsellor in the High Commission of India, Islamabad was abducted on May 24, 1992 morning when he was proceeding to the Embassy. He was released after about 7 hours detention. Shri Mittal suffered serious injuries due to the third degree inflicted on him by the Pakistan Intelligence Agencies, who were responsible for the abduction.
- (viii) On December 8, 1992 at 3.30 PM a mob of about 500 miscreants entered into the residence of Consul General,

Karachi, ransacked the house and set fire to it. All the personal effects of the Consul General were destroyed. One Indian Security Guard was injured in the mob attack.

- (ix) In the wake of the developments in Ayodhya, on 12th December, 1992 an explosive device placed under the rear wheel, completely destroyed the car of Shri Y.P. Kumar, Second Secretary, Embassy of India, Ankara.
- (x) A Zimbabwean labourer who entered the Indian High Commission building on 28th February, 1994, was shot dead by the local police staff on duty after he threw stones at them.
- (xi) The chauffeur of the car of the Indian High Commissioner attacked and stabbed by an armed assailant on 7th September, 1993. The car of the High Commissioner was later forcibly taken away by some armed miscreants. In view of the armed attacks on various diplomatic missions in Lagos, the Ministry has approved our Mission joining the 'Security Patrol and Communication Pool' for Diplomatic Missions organised by the UNDP in Lagos. The purpose of this pool is to enhance the protections of the participating Missions on a self financing basis.
- (xii) On 2.4.93, Air India Manager, Moscow was attacked by two locals at his residence. He sustained grievous head injuries. The miscreants escaped with some property. Again on 29.5.93, six miscreants (including 2 ladies entered into the flat occupied by some Indian businessmen and robbed them at knife point of some US dollars and valuable items. They even threatened to kill the inmates if they did not part with the money. Shri V. Rajagopal, Asstt. in the Embassy of India, Almaty was robbed of his belongings when he had hired a private car for coming to the Embassy.
- (xiii) On 19.3.1994, an armed robbery took place in the house of one of the staff members of CGI Vladivostok. The armed robbers tied and gagged the wife and daughter and then ransacked the house. Later when the staff members reached home, he was dragged in, tied up, blindfolded and stabbed at the back of the neck and beaten up. The robbers decamped with cash, jewellery and valuables. The local administration have intensified the security arrangements for the Mission.

2.34 Asked to furnish steps taken to prevent such occurrence, the Ministry has stated that whenever there is any case of assault on our diplomats or members of their families or attack on our premises the matter is taken up with the local foreign office and the law and order agency for appropriate action and to avoid recurrence of such incidents.

2.35 Asked whether such incidents had not hampered the on going dialogue with the host country. The Ministry has replied in negative.

2.36 The Committee note¹ 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 India-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.

2.37 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 requisite resources both in terms of equipment and personnel should be made available.

2.38 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.

(vi) Accommodation

2.39 61 Chanceries/Missions are housed in Government owned properties and 80 Chanceries/Missions are housed in rented properties. 66 Heads of Missions are living in Government owned property and 75 heads of Missions are living in leased properties.

2.40 Asked whether any study had been made of the comparative economies of rented buildings *vis-a-vis* own buildings, the Ministry stated that:

“The Ministry receives proposals for enhancement of rent from Missions abroad which enables it to keep itself abreast with the latest renting situation in each country. The Missions also keep a watch on real estate prices in the countries where they are located and make suggestions for their purchases if rents are escalating faster than the real estate prices. The Ministry constantly keeps in view the position of escalating rents and real estate, value prevailing in each country and then, depending on the economies of buying properties, takes appropriate decision. As a result of this exercise the Ministry found while rent in certain countries were escalating very fast, the property prices were either stagnant and depressed and hence it was decided that in certain countries it would be more economical to buy property now than continue to pay higher rents. As part of this exercise these Missions were specially instructed to look out for suitable properties so that the Government could consider their purchase.”

2.41 The Government have issued instructions in this regard in their Circular dated 3.09.1992.

“The position has changed slightly since evidence was given to the Estimates Committee. At the moment, 61 Chanceries are in Government owned buildings and 80 Chanceries are in rented properties. In the case of HOMs, 66 reside in Government owned properties and 75 in rented properties.”

Purchase of Properties

2.42 The information received from Ministry of External Affairs is as under:

1989-90

1. Mexico	— Emb. Residence	Rs. 1,47,80,000
*2. Geneva	— PR's Residence	Rs. 6,19,45,000

1990-91

1. Lima (Peru)	— Chancery Bldg.	: Rs. 45,10,000
2. Cairo	— Chancery Bldg.	: Rs. 4,59,20,000
3. Windhoek	— Chancery Bldg.	: Rs. 2, 25,37,547
	Emb. Residence Staff Residence (3)	

1991-92 : No property was purchased.

Scale of Accommodation

2.43 While fixing the norms of accommodation for members of the Missions abroad, area now prescribed under the general pool accommodation is kept in mind. However, it has been recognised by the Government that in prescribing the norms for residential accommodations abroad, it is necessary to take into account the functional and representational obligations. There is a fair relationship between the norms fixed in India and those applicable abroad.

Procedure for Acquisition of Properties

2.44 The procedure for acquisition of properties abroad is laid down in the Government of India, MEA letter No. O/Prop/551/9/86 dated 5th August, 1986.

*The Ministry at the time of factual verification of the Draft Report adds:

“It has been stated that in 1989-90, the Geneva property was purchased for PRs residence. However, the purpose of purchase of this property was to accommodate the office of Permanent Mission of India in Geneva.”

Construction Projects behind schedule

2.45 Asked whether the construction works were completed in a time frame and how many schemes were behind schedule, the Ministry stated:

“It is our endeavour to ensure that construction works are completed within a pre-determined time frame. However, as these projects are being executed in foreign lands with vastly differing local conditions and requirements, the projects, despite all round best efforts, tend to fall behind schedule.”

2.46 Three construction projects of Foreign Missions at New York, Kuwait and Kuala Lumpur were stated to be behind schedule.

Insurance of properties

2.47 It is not the policy of the Government of India to insure its properties unless it is mandatory under local laws.

Disposal of Properties

2.48 There are not many occasions when Government has to sell properties abroad. In the recent past there has been only one such sale of property. In Athens, an old Chancery building was sold after a new building was secured. The procedure followed in this case was that after the Mission had invited bids for sale, a property team from the Ministry besides considering these bids also had to enter into negotiations with the real estate agents and then decided on the sale to the best advantage to the Government.

Furnishing of Missions

2.49 Requirement of funds for furnishing of Missions is budgeted by the Missions and sent directly to Budget Section (Finance Division).

2.50 In order to give an Indian look to Missions abroad, as a matter of policy, carpets, curtains and Objctd' Art items etc. are supplied from India.

Budgetary Provisions

2.51 The budgetary position under the Major head '4059' Capital Outlay-Budget of the Ministry during the last five years is given below:

Capital Outlay Budget		(Rupees in Crores)		
Year	Budget Estimate	Revised Estimate	Actual Expenditure	
	Rs.	Rs.		Rs.
<u>1987-88</u>				
(Major Head)				
4059	14.00	14.00		15.45
4216	8.00	8.00		1.97
	<u>22.00</u>	<u>22.00</u>		<u>17.42</u>
<u>1988-89</u>				
(Major Head)				
4059	20.00	30.00		41.12
4216	12.00	13.00		3.83
	<u>32.00</u>	<u>43.00</u>		<u>44.95</u>
<u>1989-90</u>				
(Major Head)				
4059	36.00	34.20		49.87
4216	16.00	15.20		8.69
	<u>52.00</u>	<u>49.40</u>		<u>58.56</u>
<u>1990-91</u>				
(Major Head)				
4059	52.00	47.00		39.04
4216	15.00	8.30		
	<u>67.00</u>	<u>55.30</u>		<u>39.04</u>
<u>1991-92</u>				
(Major Head)				
4059	48.50	29.40		20.75
4216	7.00	5.00		2.88
	<u>55.50</u>	<u>34.40</u>		<u>23.63</u>

NOTE: MAJOR HEAD
 4059 —Includes expenses on purchase of property, including land, construction of buildings, and repairs to office buildings.
 4216 —Includes expenses on repairs/maintenance to the residential buildings.

2.52 The Committee find that 61 Chanceries/Missions are housed in Government owned properties and 80 Chanceries are housed 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.

2.53 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.

2.54 The Committee find that the actual expenditure under the major head 4216 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 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 years 1988-89 to 1991-92. There was 100 per cent excess in expenditure over the budget estimates in 1988-89. and more than 40 percent over the revised estimates during 1989-90. There was about 30 per cent saving during 1991-92 over the revised estimates.

2.55 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 requirements 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.

(vii) Visits of Delegations

2.56 In regard to the machinery for follow up of action on the proposals/suggestions/observations made during the course of visit of Indian Delegation to different countries, the Foreign Secretary stated as follows:—

“The machinery, according to our information exists today. In my judgement what happens is that when a Parliamentary Delegation or a Chamber of Commerce Delegation or a University Delegation of Academics goes abroad, at the end of the visit the Ambassador sends a report saying these were the members, these were the meetings held, these were the decisions taken, etc.

Usually the Ambassador says that these are the specific things on which follow up action has to be taken and usually what happens is the Ambassador's report not only come to my Ministry but if it involves economic matter or industrial matter or power sector matter a copy of that report goes to the concerned Ministry also.

Then what happens is that the concerned Territorial Division in our Ministry revises this report to action points on the report. We get in touch with the other Ministries and we tell them to take a meeting. So, either the Secretary, Industry or Secretary, Science and Technology or if it is a largest project involving foreign investment, the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister takes a meeting saying these are the suggestions. If full details are not available we get the full details and then the Foreign Investment Promotion Board of the concerned Ministry finalises the project.”

2.57 The Committee pointed out that certain suggestions were made during Parliamentary Delegation visit to Australia. A Member of the Delegation wrote a note to Prime Minister on some of the important suggestions. Reacting to it, the Foreign Secretary admitting the failures stated as follows:—

“If there are operational decisions; then the Heads of the Missions or the concerned specialised officers in the Missions follow up immediately in the Ministry. Suppose there should be transfer of technology and how it can be done. Then some officer from Australia should write immediately to our Ministry of External Affairs. Where you have taken general policy decisions, I must confess that there are failures. Due to shortage of manpower, the follow-up action is not as efficient as it should be. So, we have to strengthen our Missions abroad.....If we write letters to our Missions abroad saying that certain decisions are taken to orient programmes and policies in a particular manner, but, then, there is a feeling that follow up is not as efficient as it should be and more attention should be given.”

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.

(viii) Modernisation of Missions

2.59 Enquired whether organisational structure existing on date in the Ministry of External Affairs was efficient to look after 143 Missions abroad for the country to fulfil laid down objectives and whether it should be further strengthened not only by manpower but also with modernisation. To this, the Foreign Secretary stated as follows:—

“Now in my Ministry I still find, barring a few divisions, people still using old typewriters. I still find people using the ordinary telex instead of fax machines. I told my colleague that look I want to computerise, I want to introduce electronic mail, I want each division to have fax machines so that fax machine can receive and send messages.”

2.60 Giving comparison of structure and equipment of Indian Missions working abroad vis-a-vis of Foreign Missions working abroad of other developing countries, the Foreign Secretary stated as follows:—

“If we compare to Bangladesh, we are better. But if we compare with Malaysia, Indonesia, China we are worse. Pakistan is better than us. I do not want to compare with countries like France, Germany, etc. because these are very high-tec. countries. But Pakistan, certainly in the use of modern equipment and things like that it has more resources and more capacity.”

2.61 A former diplomat in a Memorandum with regard to modernisation furnished to the Committee has stated as follows:—

“Our failure to introduce the aids offered by modern technology widely is shortsighted for it means over-staffing at the non-diplomatic level and inefficiency in the form of inaccuracies and delay which cannot be tolerated at the fag-end of the twentieth century.”

2.62 In a post evidence note the Ministry has stated that for comparison of Indian Missions abroad with reference to models adopted by other developing countries, following aspects *inter alia* may be highlighted:

- (1) Modernisation of office equipment.
- (2) Modernisation of communication facilities.

Modernisation of office equipment

2.63 Indian Missions abroad by and large compare well with other developing countries as far as office equipment is concerned. Electronic typewriters, photocopying machines and other modern office equipment is being provided to missions, computers have been provided to 50 Missions

already. This compares quite well with the office equipment maintained by most developing countries in their Missions in India.

Modernisation of communication facilities

2.64 While the Missions abroad are linked satisfactorily through the traditional means of communication like telephone, telex and more recently fax, there are two areas where we are lagging behind some of the developing countries like Pakistan and Egypt. These are:

- (1) Radio and wire-less links have been established with very few Missions. Consequently there is no back up means of communication in case telex/fax links are disrupted due to a natural calamity or war or other disturbances. However, a project is nearing completion.
- (2) Computer-based communications have not been introduced at all in Indian Missions abroad. However, the possibility of introducing electronic Mail is being examined. This could revolutionise the communication system.

Computerisation

2.65 Regarding computerisation, the Foreign Secretary during evidence informed the Committee as follows:—

“Some of our Territorial Divisions are already computerised. We are hoping to introduce special courses for Foreign Services Officers for the use of this machinery at the Foreign Service Training Institute. Our passport organisation is in the process of getting computerised. Some of our Missions abroad specially in advance countries like Germany or France or England are getting the equipment and people are getting trained.”

2.66 In reply to a question whether any centralised computerisation was in operation at the Headquarter the Foreign Secretary stated “we are in process of establishing.”

2.67 In a post evidence note on computerisation of Missions abroad, the Ministry stated as follows:—

“Missions are now allowed to go in for local purchase of computer hardware/software as per the standardised specifications in order to ensure compatibility of hardware at the Headquarters and Missions. Missions are being asked to put up proposals for local purchase taking into account their immediate needs, manpower allocation, budgetary conditions, the local computer hardware and software availability, maintenance and servicing facilities scope for local training and other factors. Proposals are processed by computer Cell on case by case basis and sanctions are conveyed after administrative and financial approval. Nearly 50 Missions have been sanctioned purchase of computers. Proposals from other missions are under different stages of processing.”

Future Plans

It is the endeavour of the Ministry to fully computerise the various Divisions and Missions abroad by supplying necessary hardware/software and imparting requisite training to the officials in coordination with NIC/FSTI, in the near future.

MEA is working on a proposal for computer communication between various offices of the Ministry and selected Missions abroad in the initial phase through the Electronic Mail (E-Mail)."

Allowance & Perquisites

2.68 With regard to the allowances and other perquisites for officers posted abroad, the Ministry in a note furnished to the Committee has stated:

"The question of allowances and perquisites is important from the point of view of the morale of the officials. The Missions and the officers represent India abroad and for projecting a proper image, a minimum level of allowances is absolutely essential. However, by and large, compared to a number of developing countries like Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia and Egypt, our allowance structure is less favourable. This is illustrated by differences in allowances which exist *vis-a-vis* Pakistan, as ascertained from the Indian Missions in Kathmandu and Bucharest in January, 1992:

	Allowances paid to our Officers	Allowances paid by Pakistan Embassy
<i>Kathmandu</i>		
Amb.	US\$ 1405	US\$ 2149
Counsellor	793	1669
FS	663	1383
<i>Bucharest</i>		
Amb.	2423	2156
Counsellor	1222	N.A.
FS	1118	1163

2.69 Asked to furnish reasons for allowance structure being less favourable for officers of Indian Missions abroad *vis-a-vis* other countries in this regard, the Ministry has stated:

"Our allowance structure is less favourable compared to the allowance of a number of developing countries like Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia and Egypt, was made keeping in view reports sent by representatives abroad, based on their informal contacts with diplomats of the countries concerned. However, while on being informed about our allowance structure, these diplomats confirmed that they are drawing more allowances than ours. They are reluctant to give information regarding the amounts being drawn by them. We had been able to obtain the relevant figures in all cases (allowances

drawn by the Pakistan diplomats in Nepal and Romania)...Each country follows its system of computerisation of allowance payable to its diplomats. This system is kept confidential. It is, therefore, difficult for us to say as to why the allowances payable to our diplomats are less than those drawn by the diplomats of some other developing countries. However, the fact our allowances being less favourable than those countries like Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia and Egypt does call for a look at our allowance structure with a view to improving the same.”

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 time are required to be communicated at twice that speed. An efficient communication system 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.

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.

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 informatics systems.

2.73 The Committee note that nearly 50 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 Missions 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.

CHAPTER III

FUNCTIONS OF MISSIONS

3.1 The main function of our Missions abroad is to implement Government policies, to assist in their formulation as far as External Affairs are concerned, to protect and promote our interests, to strengthen ties with foreign countries in the light of national and international policy objectives and to look after the interests of Indian nationals. Generally, these functions include political, economic, commercial (including promotion of foreign trade), cultural, information, consular and publicity activities.

(i) Cultural Functions

3.2 Cultural wings attached to Indian Diplomatic Missions abroad arrange cultural programmes which are aimed at consolidation of our relations of friendship and cooperation with other countries, on the basis of equality reciprocity and mutual benefit.

3.3 As desired by the Committee, the Ministry of External Affairs furnished the following:

- “(a) Development of bilateral cultural links is an important aspect of Mission’s functioning. Not only the decorum of Indian Missions is maintained by display of object departs but they reflect various aspects of Indian culture too. The Missions do so also through the aegis of Friendship, Associations, Societies etc. set up to provide a medium for giving exposure to the people of particular country to different aspects of Indian cultural heritage. In this respect, Cultural Agreements exist between India and most of the countries under which Cultural Exchange Programmes are periodically drawn up for providing a framework for bilateral exchanges in the cultural field.
- (b) The Ministry is by and large satisfied with the existing set up and performance of cultural wings in the Missions and efforts are always there to improve further.”

3.4 Enquired whether any evaluation has been undertaken of the various Missions to determine the extent to which our Missions have been able to present India’s cultural image, the Ministry of External Affairs in its reply stated:

“Although separate mechanism of evaluation is not considered necessary, it is done constantly by the Ministry through periodical returns collected on this item of work. The Foreign Service Inspectors

team as well as other senior officials from the Ministry visiting the Mission from time to time make it a point to evaluate the performance of the Mission on this important aspect of functioning also.”

Indian Council for Cultural Relations

3.5 The Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) was set up in April, 1950 for giving and strengthening the ties of cultural cooperations and exchanges between India and other countries. Its objectives as defined in the Memorandum of Association are:

- (a) to participate in the formation and implementation of policies and programmes relating to India's External Cultural Relations;
- (b) to foster and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries;
- (c) to promote cultural exchange with other countries and people;
- (d) to establish and develop relations with national and international organisations in the field of culture;
- (e) to take such measures as may be required to further these objectives.

3.6 The Ministry of External Affairs assumed administrative operational control of the Council in 1970-71 with a view to making the Council an effective and non-controversial instrument of India's foreign policy. In 1978, in keeping with the recommendations of the Ashoka Mehta Committee, the Council took over from the Department of Culture all work pertaining to incoming and outgoing cultural delegations and delegated activities relating to implementation of cultural exchanges programmes.

3.7 On being asked to detail merits of putting ICCR under the Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry in a note stated *inter alia* as under:

“The Government is conscious of the importance of culture as a positive and significant instrument for foreign relations and diplomacy. Thus, it was necessary that a concerted effort be made to utilise the vision, dynamism and activity of our cultural traditions to establish more meaningful relations with other foreign countries. These objectives are better appreciated and executed by MEA, when officers have the experience of working abroad and in India, as well as sound knowledge of executing our foreign policy in the cultural field. Thus, greater and more result-oriented attention is being paid both to the administrative and policy aspects of improving our cultural relations with other countries.

That the activities of the Council have expended in all directions in the cultural domain is evident from the fact that the grant of the Council, which was approx. Rs. 13 lakhs in 1977, has risen to approx. Rs. 15 crores during the current financial year. As a measure of

recognition of the efficacy of the functioning of the Council under MEA, the Department of Culture decided in 1978, to transfer the entire work relating to incoming performing delegations under Cultural Exchange Programmes and other bilateral agreements to the Council. In 1990, the Ministry of Education decided to transfer the entire Government of India scholarship work pertaining to foreign students to the Council. Requisite modifications in Allocation Business Rules have also been carried out accordingly.

Further, Festivals of India abroad and the Festivals of foreign countries in India which come under the purview of the Department of Culture are being executed in so far as the performing arts component is concerned, by the Council as an agency work on behalf of the Department of Culture. Similarly, whenever a major cultural event is required to be executed on behalf of the Ministry of External Affairs, the same is entrusted to the Council.

All this would indicate that both the Ministry of Human Resource Development (Department of Education and Culture) and the Ministry of External Affairs have the requisite confidence in the functioning of the Council to the extent that all major cultural activities with foreign countries are being channelised through the Council. The Council, being an autonomous body under the MEA, is able to discharge its duties as an instrument of foreign policy more effectively because of its close association with MEA.

The ICCR, after coming under the operational control of MEA, has more than fulfilled its envisaged role as an effective and non-controversial instrument of Indian Foreign Policy.”

3.8 As desired by the Committee, the Ministry of External Affairs furnished the following information in respect of Indian Council for Cultural Relations:

ICCR Cultural Centres

The ICCR has Cultural Centres in Georgetown (Guyana), Paramaribe (Surinam), Moscow (Russia), Jakarta (Indonesia), Port Louis (Mauritius), Berlin (Germany), Cairo (ARE) and London (U.K.).

Role and Functions

The Centres develop and maintain contacts with wide cross-sections of the local citizens including students, teachers, scholars, cultural personalities, universities and allied institutions. They are equipped with books, audio-cassettes, video-tapes, musical instruments and staffed with professional teachers and artists. The Centres have played pivotal role in generating greater awareness and appreciation of India's Cultural heritage in the countries of their operation.

The main activities of these Centres include;—

- (a) A library of basic books on India in English, in the language of the country, in Hindi and in some of the other Indian language, combined with efficient lending system;
- (b) A reading room where chosen periodicals are made available to the public;
- (c) A library of films, slides, records and tapes with an efficient lending system;
- (d) Teaching of Indian Dance, Music, Fine Arts and Yoga;
- (e) Teachers of Hindi and / or other Indian languages for which there may be demand;
- (f) Arranging periodical lectures on India either by eminent citizens of the country well-versed with India or by visiting Indian dignitaries;
- (g) Arranging films shows in the Centre and in other interested institutions throughout the country;
- (h) Organising exhibitions of Indian books, photographs, posters and art objects either on its own initiative or through local bodies;
- (i) Organising cultural evenings of Indian dance, music and drama with encouragement of more and more participation by local bodies;
- (j) Organising the artical performances of Indian plays and on Indian themes at the Centre and other town as well as over the local Radio and Television; and
- (k) Distributing books and other material on India.

3.9 The Cultural Centres undertake any other activity for projection of Indian culture in the area of their location depending on the local conditions and requirements. The Centres function as part of our diplomatic Missions. While the Director and teachers are posted from India, secretarial and contingent staff is recruited locally. The entire expenditure on running the Centre is met by the ICCR.

Demand for Centres

Given the success of existing Cultural Centres abroad, there is tremendous demand from several Indian Missions abroad for opening new Centres. The countries where such demand exists are Uzbekistan (and other Central Asian countries), Trinidad and Tobago, France, Ghana etc.

Criteria for opening Cultural Centres

The determining factors in locating our Cultural Centres abroad are—
 (a) the importance for India of the country where a Centre is proposed to be set-up, the country's role in the region, and the extent to which it would welcome an Indian Culture Centre; (b) degree of cultural affinity between that country and India, with the priority being given to these

countries where there already exists a marked degree of cultural affinity; and (c) the purpose which cultural diplomacy can serve in advancing our overall diplomat in objectives in the country/region.

The decision on opening new Centres will be taken based on the above factors and on the availability of financial resources.

Review

The activities of the existing Centres are reviewed as part of the annual review by the Governing Body and the General Assembly.

Selection of DG of ICCR

3.10 Since the Council is an autonomous body under the administrative control of the Ministry of External Affairs, the post of DG, ICCR is headed by an IFS Officer of the rank of Joint Secretary.

3.11 It is proposed to continue this practice since it has been found effective in terms of the coordination with MEA and implementation of the role envisaged for the Council.

3.12 A former Diplomat in a note furnished to the Committee stated:

“I would only say that cultural functions should be chosen with an eye to the audience; for instance, one of our best Bharata Natyam dance’s made on impression at all in Cairo, for the dance was quite beyond the comprehension of the audience.”

3.13 Another Diplomat, in this regard stated:

“Cultural projection is also part of a nation’s image, considerable improvement is called for.”

3.14 For effective information, cultural and indeed most work of a Mission it is essential that at any given time it has at least one Indian diplomatic officer proficient in the locally current language of Government media and should be in position.

3.15 In response to the above, the Ministry has stated:

“It is Ministry’s constant endeavour to ensure the presence of at least one diplomatic officer proficient in the local language in every Mission.”

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 the foreign countries are being channelised through Indian Council of 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), Paramaribe (Surinam), Moscow (Russia), Jakarta (Indonesia), Port Louis (Mauritius), Berlin (Germany),

Cairo (ARE) and 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 Ministry of External Affairs should seriously ponder over this issue and make concerted efforts in this regard.

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 coordination 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.

3.18 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.

3.19 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 audiences in each region while organising cultural functions.

(ii) Consular Function

3.20 Every Indian diplomatic Mission abroad has a Consular Section which processes the applications for grant/renewal of Passport/Visa etc

3.21 In regard to present workload and improvement required in the functioning of Consular Sections in Mission abroad, the Ministry of External Affairs in a note furnished to the Committee stated as follows:—

“There has been a substantial increase in the workload of the Consular Sections in the Missions abroad without a commensurate increase in the staff strength. But, despite this handicap, by and

large, our Consular Officers are providing quick service both to the foreign nationals and to Indian citizens who approach the Consular Sections. All Heads of Missions have been given instructions that the Consular Officers must ensure that polite, courteous and efficient service is provided both to foreign nationals and to Indians visiting our Missions.

In order to further improve the functioning of the Consular Sections abroad, two requirements are essential;

- (i) That there must be a crash programme of computerisation of all Consular Sections with linkages to the CPV Division so that the CPV Division, as the nodal authority looking after the functioning of the Consular Sections, has immediate access to the data available with the Consular Sections abroad; and
- (ii) An increase in the staff strength in the Consular Sections particularly with regard to those countries where there is substantial Indian community resident or a substantial Indian expatriate community comprising workers, labourers businessmen, etc.”

3.22 Responding to a query during evidence, the Foreign Secretary informed:

“In different countries where there are Embassies but sufficient passport and visa work is there in parts of the country other than the Capital, General Consulate is opened depending on the workload. For instance now in USA apart from Embassy in Washington, we have 3 Consulated General—one in Chicago, another in San Francisco and another in New York.”

3.23 Asked whether any complaint about the unsatisfactory nature of services rendered by Consular Section in various Missions has been received, the Ministry stated:

“On occasion, some individuals have complained regarding their own specific cases where they have not been satisfied with the grant of consular service. In many such cases, the complaints result from delay caused either by procedure or the excessive pressure of work on the Consular Sections. Wherever a Specific officer is named by any complainant the comments of the officer and the circumstances of the case are ascertained and if the complaint is justified, the erring official is cautioned.”

3.24 In regard to complaints regarding delay in issue of passports in New York, the Foreign Secretary stated:

“This complaint is valid because the number of Indian nationals in the New York area has increased whereas our staff strength has remained static. The other reason why the specific issue of passports or visas to the people of Indian origin has been delayed is because of

trouble in Punjab and Kashmir. A little more back reference to the Home Ministry is done about various formats. So, that delays the process. Subject to these limitations we are doing our best. If there are any suggestions based on independent information which the Committee have got from our citizens. We would be appreciative to receive those recommendations and implement whatever we can.”

3.25 The Committee also note that in every Indian Mission/Posts the consular section processes the applications for grant/renewal of passport 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 aids wherever considered necessary.

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 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.

(iii) Publicity and Information Service

Role, Objectives and Functions

3.27 The role, objectives and functions of External Publicity Apparatus in various Missions is two fold:

(a) To monitor coverage of India, in the local media; and (b) contribute to the coverage on India, tapping whatever sources at its disposal, in particular the information supplied and channelised by the External Publicity Division, with a view to enhancing and providing a balanced coverage of India in the local media. The publicity apparatus is expected to be alert to adverse or negative publicity against India, assess its likely impact and counter it as effectively and quickly as possible. Often it has to

refer such coverage back to authorities in India and seek information and guidance on how it can be corrected.

3.28 Its functions are not limited to news coverage. The information wings of Indian Missions abroad, which are often combine with the cultural wings or work in close relationship with it, are expected to use the entire range of tools of information—documentary and feature films, photographs and the transparencies, video films, besides of course the print media, to project a wide coverage of India, highlighting positive aspects, and putting occasional adverse developments into perspective. These also include areas of our polity, our economy, history, culture and society. It is expected to liaise with the local media and develop useful contacts which can be called upon to feed information and correct disinformation and adverse propaganda when required. It is also expected to keep in touch with local cultural and educational institutions including schools, colleges, Indian and other associations, through which such information can be channelised at a more stable level.

System of carrying out publicity by Indian Missions abroad

3.29 Information Officers work under the overall supervision of the Head of Mission, and in close coordination with the other wings of the mission, notably the political, economic and commercial, and the cultural wings. They receive material and instructions from the External Publicity Division, MEA, and report back to them in turn. Different Missions have evolved different modalities of publicity taking into account local conditions, practices and advantages or limitations. Many missions have a system of bringing out news letters or magazines, besides channelising distribution of material sent by the Ministry. Where local conditions favour it some bring out supplements' in local newspaper on significant occasions like Republic/Independence Day. Missions also maintain libraries which the local public is encouraged to use to increase their knowledge and understanding of India. Missions also organize screening of popular and quality Indian films either in association with local sponsors or in their own premises, if they have such facilities. Most, if not all missions are provided with film projectors for the purpose. Missions are also kept supplied with other audio-visual material including documentaries and video films which are loaned out or taken up with local broadcasting authorities for mass dissemination.

Strategy/Plans for External Publicity

3.30 An annual action Plan relating to the Ministry/XP Division is formulated at the commencement of every year, and reviewed at the end of the year. A sample of Action Plans pertaining to External Publicity Division for the last two years is attached for information. Action Plans are drawn up bearing in mind considerations of strategic information, objectives the most efficacious media and channels for realising such objectives, as well as immediate publicity requirements. Broadly, at a

strategic level the objective of the XP Division is to enhance the *volume of positive coverage* of news about India through key contract of information reception and processing such as the mainstream international media (multinational print, radio and TV news agencies, major national and international broadcasting agencies and newspapers etc.), and other influential and vulnerable points such as educational institutions and ethnic information channels which exercise special influence in determining the image of the country abroad.

Formulation of Publicity Plans

3.31 Publicity plans are formulated taking into account the strategic objectives and the immediate information environment. Information work is conducted at various levels. At the first or topical level, the Annual Plans give priority to the Government's policy and other objectives as spelt out in statements in Parliament or elsewhere. Side by side, an analysis of issue on which we are susceptible to adverse publicity is made. High priority is also accorded to neutralising and countering such propaganda, and projecting our point of view on them. These may relate to a range of hard or topical issues including relations with neighbours, human rights, environmental issues, nuclear policies, poverty and development projects.

3.32 But publicity is not limited to topical issues. Publicity also concerns itself with publicity of enduring and deep features of Indian culture and ethos ranging from publicity of India's cultural heritage, her traditions of religious, ethnic and, political pluralism, India's secular fabric, her democratic political structure and its mixed economy. A judicious mixture between 'soft' or cultural publicity and 'hard' or political and economic publicity is aspired for.

3.33 Areas of priority are identified in line with governmental policies so that publicity strategies dovetail with political and economic strategies. The most appropriate channels and instruments are identified. These include cultivating journalists from priority areas, whether country or region specific, or subject specific. In line with the priority to economic activity, economic publicity has been emphasised in the current plan. Economic journalists have been invited to India; and film and printed publicity matter on the economy prepared and sent to Missions to publicize the economic reforms and new investment opportunities in India.

Training to Information Officers

3.34 Apart from a period of training and attachment during the period of probation, officers sent to information wings of missions are also routinely briefed on the work expected of them by the XP Division before they take up their assignments. HOM is also regularly advised on how to conduct external publicity work.

Association of Professionals for Publicity Work

3.35 Professionals are associated in external publicity in a number of ways though the large majority of Information Officers are drawn from the Indian Foreign Service who are themselves trained in information work both during their probationary period, and on the job. Professional agencies and journalists are routinely commissioned for articles and features on various aspects of India for use in magazines, newsletters and supplements brought out by both the Ministry and the missions. Professional agencies, including ad-agencies, printers, designers and publishers are similarly drawn upon in the various publications brought out or printed by the MEA. Professional photographers and film producers are also hired or commissioned in the sphere of audio-visual publicity such as photo-features, lecture-demonstrations and films, both on film and video. Officers from the Information Service of India are also co-opted in certain select tasks from time to time. Such officers have also, over the years, been posted both in missions abroad and at headquarters. The logic of this arrangement is to use the professionalism of specialists in various field under the guidance of officers who have experience of conducting international relations and diplomacy, familiarity with, and sensitivity to, the international media and with local conditions in widely disparate countries and parts of the world, as also an empirical understanding of forces and trends at work in international relations in general. The experience of working in core areas of policy making and implementation and familiarity with the culture, media and society in various parts of the world at large, combined with their own training in information work, is an important and necessary input in the formulation of publicity strategies.

Familiarity with Local Language

3.36 Postings of Representational Officers in the Information Wing of Indian Missions abroad is done on the recommendations of the Foreign Service Board which require the approval of the Minister of External Affairs. As is well known, the Ministry has a system whereby each officer is allotted a compulsory foreign language in which the officer has to acquire a high standard of proficiency. Subject to other criteria which are equally important, (such as considerations of specialization, fairness in postings, tenure considerations etc.) an effort is made to post Information Officers with familiarity with languages current in the country of their postings. The Information Wings are generally also provided with locally recruited staff and/or professional interpreters who are there to assist the India-based Information Officers in their work. Foreign Service Officers are also expected to acquire a working knowledge of the language spoken in their countries of accreditation, as and when such a language may not correspond to their compulsory foreign language. For this a system of optional foreign language is encouraged.

3.37 The Committee enquired whether there were cases where Information Officers did not know the local language and depended upon interpreter/translator. In reply, the Ministry stated as follows:

“This may happen from time to time owing to exigencies of service especially in far flung Missions with limited staff or where the language spoken may be specific or unique to the region. In general, given the spread of major UN languages, the problem is not at all acute.”

3.38 The Committee desired to know what arrangements had been made to ensure that the officer posted in Missions abroad developed the necessary expertise in the field of publicity. The Ministry in reply stated:

“The aptitude of an officer for information work is an important consideration in posting him against such a post. Over a period of time, IFS Officers can be expected to have served in this capacity both in Missions abroad as well as at headquarters. The experience of both has been found to mutually reinforce their expertise in the field of publicity and information work. The supervision of other officers with similar experience at higher levels, and that of the Head of Mission, are also important elements in developing the necessary expertise in such work amongst officers.”

3.39 Enquired whether publicity work in some Missions abroad had been entrusted to local Public Relation Agencies. To this the Ministry has stated as follows:

“Ministry does not, as a rule, follow the practice of entrusting publicity work to local public relations agencies. India-based officers of the Missions are primarily responsible for this task.”

Ministry's Satisfaction

3.40 Ministry is satisfied with the performance of officers entrusted with the responsibility of the Publicity Wing of Missions abroad. Many of them have shown great flair for the job.

Evaluation

3.41 The Foreign Service Inspection Team periodically visits Indian Missions abroad and evaluates the work of the entire Mission and its various wings. Reports of these visits are sent to the XP Division for follow-up and remedial action. Internally too, the XP Division monitors and evaluates the work of its Information Wings through a system of periodic reports. The work of individual officers is also evaluated through the system of Confidential Reports maintained by senior officers in the Mission.

Role of Ministry in Publicity Activities

3.42 Explaining its role in public efforts of Indian Mission abroad the Ministry of External Affairs stated as follows:

“Information Officers of Indian Missions abroad report to the External Publicity Division of the Ministry of External Affairs on a routine/daily basis. The Division/Ministry controls, directs, guides and assessed activities of the Mission/Information Wings in a variety of ways. In the area of policy, Missions are kept informed of developments on a regular basis by the Territorial Division and by the XP Division. Statements and Press Release issued by the spokesman on the entire range of issues impinging on our external relations are communicated promptly to our Missions so that they are kept informed and can channelise such information and pre-empt or counter incorrect, partial or distorted reportage. This is done through a system of twice-a-day news bulletins which are transmitted to Missions through tie-ups with PTI and local newsagenices in foreign countries, and/or by fax or telex. Select Missions are kept informed of the reportage on sensitive issues in the Indian press on a daily basis. Articles or reportage highlighting positive developments are also sent to Missions. Unofficial sources are also exploited, where possible, for independent reports which enhance the credibility of such stories. A system of inviting foreign journalists to visit India, in coordination with the Mission, with a view to providing them a balanced exposure to India has also been in force with good results. The Ministry also liaises with other media representatives visiting India from time to time, as also the foreign press corps resident in India.”

Views of a Former Diplomat

“XP Division functions effectively within its constraints. The constraints are mainly of facilities—modern technology is not sufficiently used—and of space. It should always be remembered that a country’s image is made more by its free media and the behaviour of its citizens than official presentations; and no amount of official publicity can counter the adverse effects, when they exist, of these.”

3.43 The Committee note that main objectives of the Information Wings of the Indian Missions, 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 or counter negative or adverse publicity against India and that India based officers are primarily responsible for this task. The Committee have also be 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.

3.44 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 earned special distinction in the field of education, culture, trade and literature.

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.

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

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.

*(iv) Economic and Commercial Functions**Role of Missions*

3.48 Indian Missions abroad assist the Government to formulate the economic and trade policies with foreign countries by way of providing information about the market, which could be of interest to our trade such as the volume of trade, the distribution of market, costs and price structure, pattern of import, factors affecting sourcing of imports, nature of activities of our competitors, major parties involved in imports, processing and manufacturing, distribution and retailing etc., and the opportunities that exist for us. Besides, they answer trade enquiries from local and Indian businessmen and the various commodity boards as also make mutual introductions, facilitate settlement of trade disputes, organise exhibitions, fairs, lectures, radio talks etc., to publicise India's export potential, prepare and issue periodic handouts/bulletins on trade information and also furnish monthly reports on the commercial and economic conditions in the countries where they are situated for the benefit of Government, Commodity Boards, Export Promotion Councils etc.

3.49 Apart from broad objectives the Committee desired to know whether some of the Missions have been given any specific objectives. The Ministry of External Affairs in its reply stated the position as follows:

“Recently certain Missions have been identified as target Missions taking into account the potential for direct foreign investment, technology transfer and exports. The OECD, Gulf, ASEAN countries as well as the Republic of Korea and Hong Kong are included in the target list.”

3.50 All Missions in general and these target Missions in particular have been asked to lay special emphasis on the following objectives:—

- (i) to increase our exports;
- (ii) to attract foreign investment; and
- (iii) to channelize technology flows.

Organisational Set up

3.51 The organisational set up of Economic and Commercial Wings of our Missions abroad are flexible and geared to meet the present level and future potential of our economic and commercial interests with the country concerned. In some of the important countries like France, Japan, Russia, United Kingdom and United States of America, our Economic and Commercial Wings are headed by officers of the level of Minister (corresponding to the level of Gr. III of IFS). The total number of

officers and staff in the various Missions as on 1st March, 1991 and 1992 is as follows respectively:

		1991	1992
(a) Officers of the rank of Attache and above	(India Based)	83	83
(b) Staff	(India Based)	100	100
	(local)	153	153

3.52 The organisations set up in various Missions is by and large found adequate. However, the Committee of Secretaries had decided that the office of Commercial Representatives abroad could be re-grouped so as to function more effectively in pursuance of commercial interests. In this connection, the Committee of Secretaries had directed that the Ministry of Commerce and the Ministry of External Affairs should sit together and reach at a broad consensus on deployment of staff and for opening of new officers, creation of additional posts and other changes. Accordingly, meetings were held and the matter is under the consideration of Ministry of Commerce.

3.53 Asked whether the officers dealing with this wing were adequately equipped, the Ministry stated:

“Officers posted to Indian Missions abroad for commercial work go through orientation programme which essentially consists of briefing in Commerce Ministry; discussions with Chambers of Commerce, Export Promotion Councils and other organisations concerned with foreign trade, besides visits to industrial and commercial centres in India. Moreover, IFS officers also undergo a training programme at the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi which also organises the Annual Refresher Course for Commercial Officers abroad. Depending upon the nature of posting, the officers sometimes undergo training in Ministry of Commerce/Textiles. These arrangements apply both to the officers going abroad on their first Commercial posting as also those who have previous experience in commercial work. Wherever necessary, overlaps are also occasionally permitted for short duration to expose the successors to specialised tasks in advance. Thus, officers dealing with commercial functions are adequately equipped to discharge their duties efficiently.”

3.54 As desired by the Committee, the Ministry of External Affairs furnished information on certain points as follows:

Functioning

Functioning of these wings is quite satisfactory as evidenced by the increase in our exports.

Usefulness

These wings are found quite useful by trade and industry both in our country and abroad.

Review

Efficiency and effectiveness of these wings is periodically reviewed, on the spot, by Foreign Service Inspectors. Moreover, periodic Conferences are also held regionally to review the work done by our Commercial Offices abroad to identify problems and arrive at suitable solutions, as also planning suitable strategies to be deployed in improving the trade relations of India with the countries of the region.

Commercial/Economic Intelligence

3.55 The Economic and Commercial Wings prepare and issue periodic handouts/bulletins on trade information and also furnish monthly reports on the commercial and economic conditions in the countries where they are situated. Besides, they also provide information about market such as the volume of trade, the distribution of market, costs and price structure, pattern of import, factors of affecting sourcing of imports nature of activities of our competitors major parties involved in imports, processing and manufacturing distribution and retailing etc. and the opportunities exists for us.

3.56 Asked how for the Heads of Missions helped in economic activities, increase business and trade and boost export, the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

“There has been a specific orientation to economic activities given by the Ministry of External Affairs. We have a separate Economic Relation Division headed by Additional Secretary and assisted by Joint Secretary. We have undertaken a specialised publicity programme promoting our economic reforms with modern methods. We have been instrumental through our Ambassadors in organising investment promotion and trade promotion. We have selected 45 countries where Ambassadors have been given specific charge to do certain things. We have ensured greater interaction at the senior level between Chamber of Commerce and our experts. We have organised visits abroad of business delegations. So, there is a greater amount of concentration on economic activities on the part of our Missions abroad. In the Foreign Service Training Institutes, we will organise specialised courses for promotion of economic interest in India.”

3.57 Asked whether the Ministry had found any improvement in trade, the Foreign Secretary during evidence Stated:*

“It could not be qualified but the statistics will inform about the targets for ASEAN countries. We have recently signed a preferential trade promotion agreement.”

3.58 The Committee note that in Indian Missions/Posts abroad economic and commercial wings also discharge important functions. They have been informed that these wings have been found useful by trade and industry in our country. The Committee are of the view that in the present environment of economic liberalisation much more is required to be achieved. The Committee, therefore, suggest that suitable mechanism needs to be evolved by the Ministries of External Affairs and Commerce for holding periodic consultations with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Export Promotion Councils and other organisations engaged in development of international trade so that the Heads of Missions/commercial representatives abroad could meet the needs and demands of trade and industry, both in our country and abroad and improve the functioning of the economic and commercial wings in the light of the suggestions.

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 regions 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.

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 has 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 desire that such

* The Ministry at the time of factual verification has replaced the version of Foreign Secretary which he had placed before the Committee during official evidence:

“Exports have shown an increase of 20.9% and all indications are that this growth will be sustained. MEA through its different divisions and its Missions abroad have contributed in this export effort. We hope to redouble our efforts in increasing our exports. Our strategy is driven by the need to focus on specific regions, countries and sectors. An important development in this regard has been the substantive commencement of a sectoral dialogue partnership with ASEAN in the four designated areas of trade, technology, tourism and investment.”

proposals should be accorded priority and expeditiously finalised.

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 Ministeries concerned 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.

(v) Overseas Indians

Institutional Arrangements

3.62 A unit dealing with overseas Indians is attached to the Passport and Visa Division for maintaining contacts with people of India origin settled abroad and to deal with their problems and complaints. In addition, every Indian Mission functions as a nodal point for contacts with people of Indian origin. The officers dealing with consular matters are normally responsible for maintaining such contacts. While there is always scope for improvement, the present arrangement is considered adequate keeping in view that contact with overseas Indian is one of the various duties that this Ministry performs.

Accessibility of Senior Officers

3.63 Senior officers of a Mission are expected to be accessible and responsive to visiting and local persons of Indian origin in their respective countries of deployment. In fact this aspect of an officer's work is also assessed by his immediate senior annually.

3.64 Enquired whether cases had come to the notice of the Ministry where visitors were not shown the due regard towards these visitors. In reply, the Ministry informed as follows:

“Whenever any such case has been brought to the notice of the Ministry, the matter has been duly examined and suitable action taken.”

3.65 Enquired whether the Ministry took cognisance of newspaper reports/letters to editors in regard to unhelpful or discourteous behaviour by Indian Mission staff, the Ministry replied in the positive. They further stated that they took cognisance of such complaints *suo moto* or only after a written complaint was filed.

3.66 With regard to guidelines issued to Heads of Mission for showing greater courtesy, decent behaviour and prompt service towards visitors and

the mechanism available to watch implementation of these guidelines the Ministry has stated as follows:

“From the time a young officer joins the Ministry, emphasis is laid on courtesy towards visitors and prompt disposal of work. Such guidelines are also periodically mentioned at formal and informal gatherings.

The Foreign services Inspectors have been inspecting Missions, as well as Senior Officials when making Official visits take note on this aspect of Mission’s functions.”

3.67 Review Committee 1984 had also recommended that the missions need to be more alert in their treatment of all visitors.

3.68 The Ministry was asked about the steps taken for the implementation of the recommendations, the Ministry in their reply has stated that the advice is accepted. Foreign Secretary has once again addressed to all Heads of Missions reiterating the need for utmost courtesies to be shown towards all visitors.

3.69 The attention of the Foreign Secretary was drawn towards complaints received from visitors who were not courteously received in various Foreign Missions and was asked to furnish his suggestions for improvement in this regard, the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

“I can only submit that we are very conscious of this recurrent shortcoming. We have made an analysis where this happens more. We have come to the conclusion that the frequency of discourteous behaviour is proportionate to the number of Indian visitors who arrive at a particular place, for instance, London, Geneva, Frankfurt, Bangkok, Hong Kong. You have a number of people coming. The officers and the staff should really be dedicated and have a sense of tact and courtesy.”

3.70 The Foreign Secretary added:

“I will give you an example. Somebody who is an important person comes on a private visit comes to the Mission and asks for a car. If the ambassador is wise enough, he will do something and give the man a car. He will have to tackle such a situation at his own level. On the contrary, if person goes to a country like Chile, he will be received with open arms. It all depends on the temperament of the person but our Missions handle such cases tactfully. We do send general circulars saying that these are the complaints we are receiving and so, do the needful.”

3.71 In this regard, a former Diplomat in a note furnished to the Committee stated:

“Under this head (courtesies to the visitors) should be considered not only Indian citizens in foreign countries, but also people of Indian

origin settled abroad. Though legally they may be different the cultural, social and political contacts is generally similar. The requirements from Missions in dealing with these people vary from country to country the extent of which they are made or not depends upon the approach of the Head of the Mission and his staff in each cases....”.

3.72 Relations with Indian and Indian origin communities should be an important priority in the work of MEA and the Missions. This need inculcation in reasons where it may be neglected due to attention being concentrated on local authorities and people exclusively. For promoting and monitoring these relations, suitable organisational changes are needed, including creating of a special cell in MEA, and designation of officers specifically for this work in give Missions. In selecting such officers relevant Indian language proficiency should also be taken into account. Countries like Greece, Portugal, Isreal, South Korea and China have developed system for relations with their communities abroad for deriving economic and other benefits from their presences. A study of these would help MEA in evolving its own policies and methods, and it should undertaken if not done already.

3.73 Another Diplomat in this regard has in a non-official memorandum stated:

“The quality of these services depends very much on the tone set by the Head of Mission. But even with the best will in the world there is often a wide gap between the expectation of visitors and the facilities, in the provision of transport and bookings of hotels, for instance, that a Mission can provide. The Mission also is limited in its staff. In staff norms, provision is seldom made for the fact that a staff-member posses practically half the day or more in attendance at airports or in helping a visitor to do his shopping. The relationship with resident Indians also depends largely on the examples set by the Head of Mission. A good HOM will go out of his way to seek their advice and to make them feel part of the family of the Mission. They then willingly help with visitors from Indian whether dignitaries of cultural troupes.”

3.74 The Ministry was asked to furnish their comments on these issues. The Ministry in this regard has stated that in selecting officers for consular work, specially in countries with large Indian communities, the knowledge of the relevant Indian language is already being taken into account. The suggestion of the former Diplomat regarding a study of the techniques/policies adopted by countries like Greece, Portugal, Isreal, South Korea and China could be considered for implementation.

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.

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.

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 sine of the working population. The Committee, therefore, desire that adequate steps in this regard should also be taken by Ministry of External Affairs expeditiously.

(vi) Coordination

3.78 In several Indian Missions officers are also posted from Cabinet Secretariat and Ministries of Defence, Commerce and other Ministries.

3.79 Asked to furnish the criteria of selection of officers and terms of their posting abroad and the functions and role of such officers in the Missions abroad, the Ministry has stated that officers from Cabinet Secretariat and Ministries of Defence, Commerce and other Ministries are selected for postings in Indian Missions abroad by the concerned Ministries through a process devised by them and for discharging duties and responsibilities as assigned by them.

3.80 Asked about the role of the MEA in selection of officers from other Ministry the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

"The officers from the various departments which has been mentioned in the memorandum they go through a process of selection through their own internal selection boards etc. The names come to us along with their CRs. That is examined in detail by our administrative division etc. Then it comes to me and it is submitted to the Foreign Minister. We have a role to play. Of course, the detailed selection process is done by the concerned Department. We cannot say anything. As far as the authority of the Head of the Mission is concerned, he has full authority. There is some authority. He is

watching the work of the officer belonging to another department. There is a relationship between the two. The authority can recommend the officer's recall subject to certain disciplinary procedures".

3.81 Asked when the officers were posted abroad whether their background were examined through some method, the Secretary during evidence stated:

"The Defence Ministry, the Cabinet Secretariat, the Research and Analysis Wing have all got their own processes of clearance for their officers. For the other officers, the process is that the Department of Personnel and Training does process the panel. Suppose, a commercial counsellor is being posted. The Commerce Ministry draws up a panel of two or three officers. It goes to the Department of Personnel. They then select the officer. After that, the CR comes to us. If it is a sensitive job, then, the officers background is cross-checked with the IB also."

3.82 Asked whether the antecedents of IFS officers are examined before they are posted abroad, the Secretary of the Ministry stated not everytime, unless something adverse has come to the notice in the course of their career. Before, recruitment fairly through the IB enquiry is made.

3.83. Asked if a person was related to some foreign interest, it had come to notice after the selection of panel what was the alternative before the Ministry, the Secretary during evidence stated:

"In that case also, posting stands cancelled. We have one or two officers in our service who are known to have business interest. We have not given them the posting."

3.84 The Secretary added that:

"Even unofficially. If there is a press report, we investigate it, whether it is a genuine one or not."

3.85 As regards coordination of Wings of Ministries with MEA/HOM, a former Diplomat has observed as follows:

"There are two fundamental shortcomings of the far reaching significance. The first is the functioning of the Wings of Ministries other than the MEA in our Missions. These often function on their own, reporting to and receiving orders directly from their parent Ministries, with MEA, completely in the dark and the Head of Mission often not kept fully informed, let alone consulted. This can be dangerous for India, with different Ministries pursuing different, even contradictory objectives, where the right hand does not know what the left is doing. Sometimes the parent Ministry does not even keep its Wing informed. I know of more than one instance where a foreign settler has told the economic officer of a Mission, you are telling us this but we will get our way in Delhi—and they have. This is to undervalue the advice of a Mission, to which great attention

should be paid since it is on the spot, and it allows foreigners to play off one group against another, which can very gravely compromise India's best interest."

3.86 In regard to the coordination among officers of other Departments and the Missions, the Foreign Secretary stated:

"It depends very much on the competence of the Head of the Mission concerned. If he inspires confidence, if he nurtures a team spirit, he can coordinate the work. I have been the Head of a Mission in five countries."

3.87 Asked whether any staff in a Mission could have direct correspondence and not through the Head of the Mission the Foreign Secretary of the Ministry Stated:

"I will be absolutely open about it. Our Missions have staff from the Commerce Ministry, occasionally from the Finance Ministry, RAW External, Intelligence Organisation; we have officers from the Railway Board. So these are the categories of officers from outside. The instructions are that all the officers belonging to other organisations should keep the Head of the Mission fully informed of their general trend of activities and contacts. If the Head of the Mission is a sober team leader, he manages".

3.88 The Secretary added:

"The officers belonging to the intelligence organisations at times are involved in certain activities, which are at times not better to be known to the Head of the Mission. If he knows and condones that, he will be violating the diplomatic behaviour. What is normally expected to these officers is that they need not give the full details but they should inform generally."

3.89 Asked whether Head of Mission some time did not know about certain Reports, the Secretary stated:

"that situation arises only because the officer of the other Department is not following the stipulations. The notes are there."

3.90 Asked how this situation could be improved, the Secretary stated:

"More categorical instructions from their parent Department are necessary. The procedure is important. He should get a copy of those instructions so that we can enclose that copy to the concerned Ambassador. If he violates any of those instructions, we can show that to him and by this way we can ensure that he behaves in a disciplined manner."

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.

CHAPTER IV

REVIEW MECHANISM

4.1. The review mechanism for functional aspects of the work of our Missions consists of the following:—

- (1) Regular monitoring by the Ministry, both in the Territorial Divisions concerned and the Administrative/Establishment and other Divisions.
- (2) Conferences, from time to time, of Heads of Mission/Commercial representatives in a particular region.
- (3) Calling Heads of Missions and other concerned officials to Delhi, whenever necessary, for consultations.
- (4) Periodical inspections by Foreign Service Inspectors.
- (5) Review of functioning of Mission during visits by VVIPs External Affairs Minister, other Ministers, Foreign Secretary and senior officials of the Ministry from time to time.
- (6) Preparation, Implementation and review of Action Plan.

(i) *Management Information System*

4.2 The Committee desired to know whether there was a formal reporting system, periodicity of such Reports, their timely receipt and follow up action. In response, the Ministry informed as follow:

- (a) "There is a formal reporting system by the Indian Missions abroad in the form of periodical reports and returns. The periodicity of important reports and returns are as follows:

S.No.	Name of the Return	Periodicity
1.	Publicity Report	Fortnightly/ Monthly
2.	Monthly Record of Events	Monthly
3.	Monthly Commercial/Economic Report	Monthly
4.	Consular Report	Quarterly
5.	Annual Political Report	Annual
6.	Annual Economic and Commercial Report	Annual
7.	Annual General Report	Annual
8.	Annual Action Plan	Annual
9.	Special Despatches	Depeding on the exigencies.

- (b) Generally these reports are received in time from Indian Missions abroad.

Follow up action on Despatches

- (c) These reports are duly studied and help to formulate policy responses. In addition input received is utilised to answer Parliament Questions, queries from other Ministries/Departments, non-Governmental Enterprises/Organisations and individuals.
- (d) The existing system is found to be satisfactory.”

(ii) Annual Action Plans

4.3 The concept of Action Plan was introduced from 1986-87. An Action Plan is drawn up before the beginning of each year indicating programmes to be undertaken.

Objectives

4.4 Annual Action Plans are prepared by various Ministries and Departments of the Government of India in response to instructions from the Cabinet Secretary who coordinates and monitors these plans as a system of reviewing the organised functioning of various Ministries and Departments. The objective of the Annual Action Plans are described by the Cabinet Secretary as follows:—

- (i) to reflect the manner and time-frame of action in respect of activities and functions to be performed during the course of the year;
- (ii) to indicate the milestones and targets to be achieved in a particular month; and
- (iii) to serve as an instrument for timely and efficient implementation of all programmes and activities.

4.5 The Cabinet Secretary also advises that the perspective for the year needs to be clearly defined alongwith the new policy initiatives that are to be introduced and that the statement of objectives need not merely be a break-up of various activities.

MEA Annual Action Plan

4.6 In response to these instructions from the Cabinet Secretary, the Ministry of External Affairs also draws up detailed Annual Action Plans, while at the same time pointing out that Action Plans formulated for External Affairs will necessarily have to depend on innumerable external factors in view of the pace of developments involving transformation in inter-state relations and emergence of new political, economic and social configurations as have been especially manifested in the international scene during the last few years. It has been also noted that in the field of foreign

relations, we can outline anticipated concerns evolving patterns of interests and policy options which are available at specific points of time. Action Plans, time-bound targets and specific time schedules are dependent upon international developments which are outside the scope of domestic control and influence in the unpredictable sphere of inter-State activity.

Nonetheless, as may be seen from MEA's Annual Action Plan for 1992-93, the fundamental objectives of India's foreign policy and formulation of necessary policy initiatives and foreign policy activity programmes are clearly expressed. These are detailed in broad perspective relating to India's role in the international multilateral spheres involving activity in the United Nations framework and other international organisations, and detailed in territorial area activity involving relations with neighbours, South-East Asia, Central Asia and Russia, West Asia, Africa and with the industrialised West, in the present day world following the ending of the Cold War and the emergence of multiple centres of political and economic power.

While these Action Plans also serve the objectives of internal review of programmes and activity for the purpose of implementation of goals and targets.

(iii) Meetings of Heads of Missions in Delhi

4.7 Enquired what specific matters were discussed with Heads of Missions and other concerned officials called for consultation in Delhi, the Ministry in note stated as follows:—

- (a) "The Heads of Missions discuss the internal political situation in the country/countries of their accreditation with Senior Officers/Ministers in the Ministry; India's bilateral political relations with the country concerned and ways of improving such relationship: administrative and establishment matters pertaining to their Missions as well as other aspects of bilateral relationship such as economic, commercial, scientific, technical and cultural cooperation. There are occasions when the Heads of Missions are called by the Ministry at the time of the visit of Heads of State/Heads of Government/Foreign Ministers of the countries of their accreditation. In such cases the Heads of Missions brief the Ministry on all relevant aspects and assist in the formulation of our position on various matters to be discussed with the visiting dignity. They are also present at the meetings of the visiting dignity with the Indian side. The existing arrangements are satisfactory."

(iv) Regional Conferences of Heads of Missions (HOM)

4.8 The Committee have been informed that Conferences from time to time of Heads of Mission/commercial representative were held in to particular region with regard to the periodicity of the Conference of Heads

of Missions/Commercial Representatives at a particular region and number of Conferences took place during the last three years, the Ministry has stated that:

“There is no specific periodicity for conference of Heads of Missions or Commercial Representatives.

- (i) A Conference of HOMs of EEC countries was held in Baden (Germany) in June, 1990 during the visit of the then EAH Shri I.K. Gujaral.
- (ii) There was a Regional Conference of HOMs in January, 1991 in Delhi to discuss Gulf crisis.
- (iii) A Conference of HOMs of EEC countries was held in Paris during the transit visit to France by present PM in November, 1991.
- (iv) A Conference of HOMs of the non-EEC West-European countries was held in Paris in September, 1992, during the visit of present PM.
- (v) A Conference of HOMs of Sub-Sahara Africa was held in Nairobi in July, 1990.

4.9 The Committee desired to know their views whether such Conferences should be more frequent to enable the Heads of Missions of that particular region to exchange ideas and discuss matters of common interest in the larger interest of conduct of diplomacy abroad. Replying in the affirmative the Ministry further stated as follows:

“Such conferences needed to be organised more frequently to enable the Heads of Missions of that particular region to exchange ideas and discuss matters of common interest and also to promote trade and investments. The periodicity need not be fixed and it could be kept flexible depending upon the needs and changes occurring in each region.”

4.10 About specific matters being discussed during these Conferences the Ministry has stated that the need for organising such Regional Conferences changes from one to another; however the purpose is to get the collective use of all the Heads of Missions in that region to understand the implications of changes or events happening in that area. Thus it will be difficult to identify in general the specific matters that are discussed. However; a few items normally discussed are:

- (a) Political developments in the region;
- (b) Action to be taken to promote our interests;
- (c) Trade investments; and
- (d) Technological developments, etc.

4.11 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 Africa which indicates that there are no guidelines laid down for holding periodically regional conferences. The Committee are of the view that personal contact 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.

4.12 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 Minister, to formulate guidelines for such regional conferences covering duration, agenda list of participants and representatives of various Ministries as necessary.

(iv) *Inspections*

4.13 There is a regular system of inspections conducted on the functioning of Indian Missions/Posts abroad. A team of Foreign Service Inspectors which periodically visits our Missions and Posts abroad is entrusted with the responsibility of examining the effectiveness of functioning of our Missions in the light of current foreign policy objectives. This team makes recommendations on staffing pattern requirements of Missions, budgetary requirements of the Missions and all other matters pertaining to the running of the Mission. The Foreign Service Inspectors include a representative of Secretary (Expenditure) in the Ministry of Finance and a representative of the Foreign Secretary.

Foreign Service Inspectorate

4.14 As desired by the Committee, the Ministry of External Affairs furnished the following:

(i) *Organisational structure of Foreign Service Inspectorate*

- (1) Additional Secretary & Financial Adviser, MEA/Director (Finance), MEA or representative of Ministry of Finance (Department of Expenditure).
- (2) Senior Officers either from Establishment or Administration Division (JS or AS level) and DS/US level-officers—1 each from Establishment and Finance Division to assist the Inspectors at S.Nos. 1 & 2 above.

(ii) *Criteria and procedure of selection of Inspectors*

Generally the officers manning the above mentioned posts are those who are well served and competent in dealing with various matters covered by the Foreign Service Inspectors during their visit.

(iii) *Term of appointment*

No fixed term. Composition of team varies with the set of officers mentioned at (a) (i) subject to the availability of the officers for the

inspection from their regular duty at Hqrs. Term generally lasts till the end of an individual inspection.

(iv) *Role and Function*

- (a) General appreciation of political, economic, commercial, cultural conditions—to comment, evaluate critically the functioning/performance of the Missions—under these heads.
- (b) Evaluation of controls in the financial, Accounts and Administrative fields—to check Account, administration, security aspects, etc.
- (c) Review of perquisites of the functionaries (FA, RG, Local pay scales, furniture, accommodation and other entitlements, etc.)
- (d) Appreciation of representational activities.
- (e) Review of Publicity arrangements.
- (f) Review of Consular Activities.
- (g) Comment on Public Relations set up.

(v) *Type of Recommendations*

- (1) Abolition/readjustments of posts after studying the sanctioned strength and the optimum utilisation vis-a-vis the volume of work.
- (2) Remedial measures for toning up administration and increase efficiency of Missions on all fronts.
- (3) Cuts on spending under various heads to effect utmost economy and avoid infructuous/wasteful expenditure.
- (4) Change in Foreign Allowance/RG, pay scales of local staff etc.

(vi) *Major recommendations made during the last three years*

- (1) Assessment of Missions from the Political, Commercial, Economic, Cultural and Consular angles.
- (2) Abolition of Posts recommendation in a substantial measure in Kathmandu reduction/readjustment recommended in Daka, Accra, Windboek.
- (3) Adjustment of allowances with the rise in cost of living, also in local staff pay scales.

(vii) *Acceptance of Recommendations*

All recommendations are generally accepted.

(viii) *Periodicity of Inspections*

Periodicity is supposed to be every 3 years but in effect it is 5-6 years or even more.

(ix) Ministry's satisfaction.

No. While it is desirable to have frequent visits, it has not been possible to undertake more frequent inspections.

(x) Suggestion for improvement

To set up an Inspectorate separately headed by a Secretary/Additional Secretary to conduct Inspections only.

4.15 A former Diplomat in his memorandum to this Committee has stated as follows:—

“Visits by Inspectors, is unsatisfactory. They tend to focus almost entirely upon a administrative problems. Besides, in a two-day visit it is hardly possible to arrive at an accurate assessment of the effectiveness of a Mission.”

4.16 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 Mission/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 the Mission.

4.17 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.

4.18 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.

4.19 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.

(vi) Evaluation and Monitoring of Missions

4.20 Enquired whether there were enough arrangements for evaluation and monitoring of Missions and how frequent were the visits of inspection team to the Missions abroad. In reply, the Foreign Secretary stated:

“It is done through three mechanisms. Their performance is constantly under review in terms of telegrams and despatches they send to us. We also evaluate their performance on the availability of some

information from varied sources on the same situation. Secondly, we have Foreign Service Inspectors to examine the administration and accounting procedure¹ in the Missions. These inspectors have the additional task of seeing whether the policy tasks, functional tasks including political and other tasks are performed for monitoring the performance of a Mission is where you have a lot of multilateral activities, we usually get reports from MPs, journalists and other cultural groups after their visits. They come back to us and tell us as to how the Missions dealt with them to solve their problems and how effective they were in establishing correct contacts, etc. So, through all these means we do have the capacity to judge how effectively a mission is working.”

4.21 Expressing their views and suggestions in their Memoranda submitted to the Committee as well as during evidence, the former Diplomat stated as follows:

“Evaluation is presently done by visits of the Inspectors of the Ministry and secondly, by assessments arrived at by the Foreign Secretary and other Secretaries in the course of watching the work of the Mission concerned.

The first, visits by Inspectors, is unsatisfactory. They tend to focus almost entirely upon administrative problems. Besides, in a two-day visit it is hardly possible to arrive at an accurate assessment of the effectiveness of a Mission.

The second is satisfactory but can be intensified. For instance, at present impressions which turn out to be generally accurate, can be reduced to writing and discussed annually by the Foreign Secretary and Secretaries”.

Monitoring and Guidance

This depends very much on the Secretary and Joint Secretary concerned and so no blanket pronouncement is possible.

Several Missions now have **Wings of other Ministries**. On their monitoring and guidance MEA has **little say**. But MEA should not be kept in ignorance.

Two specific improvements are suggested: Firstly, much greater devolution of work to lower levels so that Joint Secretaries and Secretaries have far more time for careful thought and guidance to Missions. (It will be found that the proportion of strength at Headquarters to strength-abroad is much lower in MEA than in corresponding Ministries of several other countries and most Missions themselves are low in officer-strength by foreign standards). Secondly, territorial Divisions to have the **officer-strength availability to liase effectively with other Ministries of the Government of India**.

Evaluation, monitoring and guidance of Missions

At present general guidance is provided through circular letters, telegrams and ISI telexes from MEA. It is occasionally supplemented by HOM conferences. Individual communications or consultation visits are also used for specific guidance. There is no mechanism for general evaluation and monitoring, apart from infrequent visits by Foreign Service Inspectors whose main concern, however, is usually concentrated on judging the adequacy or otherwise of emoluments in relation to the local cost of living. Also there are periodic visits by financial audit parties. The only other method is to study a Mission's reports.

The above means may be adequate in the case of few important Missions, frequently visited by senior people from Delhi in other work, where evaluation, monitoring and guidance is incidentally facilitated by such visits. But some Missions receive no or few such visits. Because of the comparative unimportance of the countries of their location, their reports may receive little attention at senior levels in MEA. In such cases of isolation the present system needs strengthening.

The best method would be to have a senior officer from MEA make inspection visits to such Missions with greater frequency. The visits should be for overall evaluation and guidance, rather than financial aspects which may be dealt with separately. The visiting officer should be sufficiently senior to the visited HOM to carry due credibility."

4.22 Elaborating further the former diplomat during evidence stated that:

"At the same time there are other Missions, which are not experiencing that monitoring. I think in these places monitoring and evaluation need to be geared up to have effective functioning. I think it will be useful if a system is developed within the Ministry of External Affairs where senior officers could be deputed to small Missions to find out whether they are facing any problems or whether they are working properly. So far as the big Missions are concerned, they are, in any case, being evaluated as the Ministries, Secretaries and others go there regularly."

Former Foreign Secretary added:

4.23 *Evaluation*

"On the evaluation point, I agree that the existing mechanism of evaluating the performance of the Mission is not satisfactory. At present the evaluation is carried out by two methods; one is the more substantive evaluation which is done by visiting senior officers to the mission and the other is by what we call foreign Service Inspection Team. The difference between the two kinds of visits is that whereas the former is really to evaluate the substantive functioning of the mission, the latter is to see whether their daily allowance and other facilities are adequate. Though they are not barred from commenting

on the substantive functioning of the Mission, sometimes one wonders whether they are qualified to do so because of the kind of people who are sent, though an officer of the Indian Foreign Service is always sent there. The problem is that, if you take these two visits together, even then they are not adequate enough to cover all the Missions as frequently as it is necessary to do. The turn of a particular Mission in so far as visit of Foreign Service Inspector is concerned comes once in two to three years' time. A Secretary in charge of a particular area during his tenure in the Ministry is hardly able to visit 15 to 20 of the posts for which he has the jurisdiction. So I think that this is a very difficult problem. One way out is that we have the posts of more Secretaries at Headquarters."

Monitoring and Guidance by the Ministry

"The present arrangement leaves much to be desired. I think a large number of letters from the Missions go unanswered, quite often, they go even unacknowledged. This creates a great deal of frustration among the officers serving abroad. The only way out is that the proportion of officers serving at Headquarters and those serving abroad should be increased sizeably.

The other is that the devaluation of authority at the junior level in the Ministry should be much more than what it is, for example, if the responsibility of responding to the letters can be left to the Under Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries and Directors, as it used to be the case ten or fifteen years ago, when I was serving as Under Secretary in the Ministry."

4.24 In their comments on the views expressed by the former diplomats the Ministry stated that:

"While the overall assessment of the performance of the Missions in political, economic, cultural and consular spheres is primarily the responsibility of the Territorial Division, the Secretary incharge monitors the overall performance continuously all through the year. In addition, the Foreign Service Inspectors when visiting the Missions examine not only the administrative, consular and financial issues but also evaluate the functional effectiveness and overall performance of the Mission and its officers. However, the possibility of establishing a closer interaction between Foreign Service Inspectors and the Territorial Division could be considered. Besides, the system of Annual Action Plans which Ministry has been following since 1986 has provided an effective mechanism for a regular reporting and evaluation of the performance of Missions."

4.25 Asked about the mechanism for monitoring the changing global political alignment, the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

“Since independence the issues with which our Foreign Department has to deal with have undergone qualitative change. When we are discussing qualitative change, it is a legitimate question to ask as to how one monitors it and structures the responsibility to the new development process. In this, I welcome your suggestions for improvement also because firstly you look at it in a broader political canvass and secondly you meet a larger number of people who talk to you more frankly than to a diplomat.”

4.26 Regarding the existing mechanism for monitoring, the Foreign Secretary stated:

“As for the mechanism, there is the process of regular periodic reporting once a fortnight or monthly, depending on the importance of the Mission and intensity of political activities which affect India. For instance our Missions in Santiago and Kuala Lumpur would send a monthly report whereas our Missions in Japan, United States, Nepal, etc. would send us a fortnightly report. Apart from these, if there is something which is urgent, which is of immediate importance, which requires an immediate reaction or which requires an immediate readjustment of our policies, there is the method of fax messages and telegrams with different classifications and different priorities, which are graded.

The Foreign Secretary takes a meeting every morning at 9.30 with two other Secretaries. We review the previous day's telegrams and reports which are of immediate nature. Reports which involve greater analysis or long term development are also brought up and we three jointly decide whether we should make any specific recommendations to the Minister of State or recommend that it should be taken to the Prime Minister who is in charge of External Affairs. We also prepare policy papers which go through the normal channels to the Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister or the Cabinet Secretary or to the CCPA.

Every Thursday, I alongwith the two Secretaries, meet all the Additional Secretaries in the Ministry. We review the previous week's developments and each one of the officers is obliged to bring any matter which requires attention or decision on recommendation of further analysis. To the extent possible, we also have a meeting with Joint Secretaries once every month or six weeks, where general review is undertaken on what is to be done in the changing world situation.

Apart from this interaction with missions abroad, another important input which we get is the reports from the Intelligence Department of

Government of India, Research and Analysis Wing. etc. There is the mechanism of coordination with these agencies. Country-Reports and Situation-Reports from them, come to us once every week. These comprise five to eight pages summary on important political, economic and defence developments. These are addressed to me or to the concerned Secretary. We send them down to our colleagues in the Territorial Division and they are supposed to bring out more important points on which the Ministry of External Affairs is to act or prepare policy options or instruct Missions abroad.

4.27 Regarding coordination with other Ministries, the Foreign Secretary added:

“We also have the coordination mechanism with other Ministries of Government of India including Defence and Home. We also have a Core Group of Secretaries, presided over by the Cabinet Secretary. The Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister also take coordination meetings. If I cannot go, my senior colleagues go to this meeting. This core group meets once in a week. Importance matters of higher policy come up for discussion to be submitted to the political leadership.”

4.28 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.

4.29 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.

CHAPTER V
ORGANISATIONAL ASPECTS

(i) Organisational structure

5.1 The organisational structure in Missions/Posts abroad is based on the need to ensure that there are designated officers/sections for each aspect of the Mission's work so that all Indian Nationals and organisations and all foreigners etc. dealing with the Mission are facilitated in their contacts.

5.2 Asked whether the existing organisational structure was adequate, the Ministry stated:

“The functioning of each Mission is examined by the Inspectors. On the basis of these inspections, it is felt that the existing organisational structure of the Missions is adequate. The manpower requirement changes from time to time depending upon the work load of the Mission. The exact organisational structure of a new Mission is decided on the basis of the projected work load in different fields of activity. The manpower requirement for each field is assessed individually to determine the exact structure and manpower requirement.”

5.3 Asked about the norms for deciding the organisational structure, the Ministry has stated that these decisions are based on a combination of an objective assessment by the Ministry and application of prescribed norms.

5.4 With regard to receipt of complaints about the organisational structure the Ministry has stated that there are no major complaints about the organisational structure in Missions. At times there are complaints about the staff. The complaints are examined in accordance with the prescribed norms and action taken to redress them.

5.5 The Ministry is satisfied with the existing organisational structure.

5.6 With regard to organisational structure in the Mission the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

“We have a basic pattern, that is, head of the Missions, his personal staff, attached officers and their supporting staff, a Communication Officer, an administrative Officer, an Assistant and an Accounting Officer. This is the basic pattern. If there are commercial relations, there is a Commercial Officer and his supporting staff. If more staff is there in any Mission, that is in addition to this.”

(ii) Staff Strength

5.7 The Ministry of External Affairs in a note on position of posts in Indian Missions abroad has stated as follows:

“The sanctioned strength of MEA category-wise in the Indian Missions is at Annexure ‘A’. The existing manning matches the authorised strength in general. However, at times there may be a time gap between departure of an officer and arrival of his substitute and in certain other cases the orders of a formal sanction for transfer of posts may be underway.

As far as the vacancy Position both Mission-wise and category-wise is concerned, no operational India based post is vacant abroad at present. However, some posts numbering 68 have been kept in abeyance or lying vacant for more than six months on functional grounds on the basis of recommendations of FSIs, etc. As for local posts, though there may be a temporary vacancy due to resignation/retirement of an employee, most of the posts are manned excepting 32 held in abeyance or lying vacant for more than six months in Missions/Posts abroad.

5.8 A former Diplomat in this connection has expressed his views as follows:

“Missions vary very widely in organisation and strength and therefore, again, no blanket pronouncement is possible. On the whole, it may be hazarded, always bearing in mind the risks of generalisation, that most Indian Missions are understaffed in officer strength and overstaffed in non-diplomatic strength compared to those of other countries.”

ANNEXURE

The Ministry at the time of factual verification has furnished the updated staff position which as follows:

Sl. No.	Cadre/Post	Posts at Head-quarters	Posts at Missions abroad	Total
IFS (A)				
1.	Grade—I	3	19	22
2.	Grade—II	3	25	28
3.	Grade—III	24	102	126
4.	Grade—IV	31	80	111
5.	Jr. Administrative Grade/Sr. Scale	47	187	234
6.	Jr. Scale	5	28	33
7.	Training Reserve (Prob) Jr. Scale	27	—	27
8.	Training Reserve for all Grades	10	—	10
9.	Leave Reserve	19	—	19
10.	Deputation Reserve	20	—	20
IFS (B)				
1.	Grade—I	62	84	146
2.	Grade—II/III	171	164	335
3.	Grade—IV	367	387	754
4.	Grade—V/VI	459	184	643
5.	Grade—II of Cypher Sub Cadre	81	134	215
6.	Principal Private Secretary Grade of Stenographers Cadre	3	18	21
7.	Grade—I of Stenographers Cadre (including the erstwhile selection Grade)	32	179	211
8.	Grade—II of Stenographers Cadre	212	163	375
9.	Grade—III of Stenographers Cadre	42	75	117
	Combined Research Cadre	7	1	8
	Interpreters' Cadre	14	21	35
	L & T Cadre	17	—	17
	Ex-Cadre HOMs	—	10	10
TOTAL		1656	1861	3517

ANNEXURE

Sl. No.	Cadre/Post	Posts at Head-quarters	Posts at Missions abroad	Total
IFS (A)				
1.	Grade—I	3	18	21
2.	Grade—II	3	25	28
3.	Grade—III	30	86	116
4.	Grade—IV	31	78	109
5.	Jr. Administrative Grade/Sr. Scale	47	187	234
6.	Jr. Scale	5	28	33
7.	Training Reserve (Prob) Jr. Scale	27	—	27
8.	Training Reserve for all Grades	10	—	10
9.	Leave Reserve	19	—	19
10.	Deputation Reserve	20	—	20
IFS (B)				
1.	Grade—I	62	63	125
2.	Grade—II/III	171	153	324
3.	Grade—IV	367	355	722
4.	Grade—V/VI	459	134	593
5.	Grade—II of Cypher Sub Cadre	81	123	204
6.	Principal Private Secretary Grade of Stenographers Cadre	3	18	21
7.	Grade—I of Stenographers Cadre (including the erstwhile selection Grade)	32	176	208
8.	Grade—II of Stenographers Cadre	212	177	389
9.	Grade—III of Stenographers Cadre	42	77	119
	Combined Research Cadre	22	2	24
	Interpreters' Cadre	14	21	35
	L & T Cadre	17	—	17
	Ex-Cadre HOMs	—	10	10
TOTAL		1678	1731	3409

*The above excludes posts kept in abeyance, other excadred posts and Group 'D' posts.

Staff Strength in the Ministry

5.9 Asked whether the existing strength of Ministry was adequate to enable it to process the various reports sent by the Missions and to establish proper communication with them, the Ministry has stated that the existing strength of the Ministry is inadequate particularly at medium and lower levels and not only the range of activities undertaken by the Ministry has expanded but also a number of new Missions have been opened in response to major geo-political changes resulting in formation of new countries.

5.10 Asked whether the structure in the Ministry as on date was efficient to look after these 143 Missions working abroad to fulfil the objectives or it was required to be strengthened either by manpower or by modernisation, the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:—

“Yes, at the middle levels, operation levels, there is need for some enhancement to deal with various aspects of the functioning of our Ministry.”

5.11 Keeping in view the inadequate strength at medium and lower levels the Secretary of the Ministry when asked during evidence about the steps taken in this regard, stated:—

“There should be a cadre review so that we can recruit more people. In this way, the total strength of the service will be increased. That is the basic thing. Once, we have more officers, it will be good for us. If I may inform the Committee, as compared to my generation which is dependent on stenographic assistance etc., the younger generation officers are given training in computers and word processors so that they do not have to depend on these assistance. Now, with the passage of time, the demand of stenographers and clerks etc, is going to diminish. With the present strength and the required pattern of recruitment we will be able to meet the requirements.”

5.12 A former Diplomat in this regard has made the following suggestions:—

“Two specific improvements are suggested. Firstly, much greater devolution of work to lower levels so that Joint Secretaries and Secretaries have far more time for careful thought and guidance to Missions. (It will be found that the proportion of strength at Headquarters to strength abroad is much lower in MEA than in corresponding Ministries of several other countries and most Missions themselves are low in officer-strength by foreign standards).

Secondly, territorial Divisions to have the officer-strength availability to deal effectively with other Ministries of the Government of India.”

(iii) *Cadre Reviews*

5.13 Enquired when the last cadre review was carried out, the outcome of that Cadre review and whether recommendations of the Cadre Review Committee were implemented, the Ministry stated:—

“Last partial cadre review of IFS (A) was carried out in 1990 and as a result, promotion upto Grade IV could be affected on time. Whereas 2 of the recommendations of the CRC were implemented, it has not been possible to depute 20-25 officers at Grade III and Grade IV level to other Ministries/Departments under the Central Staffing Scheme even though certain officers have been placed on offer. The IFS (B) Cadre has not been reviewed so far but is under active consideration.”

5.14 Asked about the cases of stagnation in different grades and how to remove them without compromising efficiency at various levels, the Ministry stated as follows:—

“In IFS (B) while there is no stagnation due to the long running scales, there are many grades where officers have to wait for many years even after completing the qualifying service. These grades and the action proposed to be taken to remove stagnation are as follows:—

Grade I and II of Stenographers Cadre

It is proposed to upgrade 45 posts from Grade II to Grade I of the Cadre on functional grounds.

Cypher Assistants Cadre

It is proposed to create some supernumerary posts to ensure that the officials get at least one promotion in their career.

Assistants, S.Cs and Under Secretaries Grade in General Cadre

It is proposed that a minimum number of posts may be created which are required on a functional basis, which would have the beneficial side effect of alleviating stagnation.

In IFS (A), there is at present stagnation at Grade III level.

5.15 In this regard, Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:—

“We had sent the proposal to the Department of Personnel and to the Ministry of Finance for cadre review and cadre extension. But we got the response saying that in the near future this cannot be done. It has been stated that if there is a stagnation in the mainstream service, they can go to the PSUs, other organisations, etc. But the Indian Foreign Service does not have that elbow room. So, we have a problem here. If the Committee compare the total strength of the

Indian Foreign Service with the other countries, our strength is very less. Even a small country like Indonesia or Thailand has a number of senior officers.”

5.16 Subsequently, the Ministry of External Affairs furnished a comparative statement of foreign services of India and Thailand as follows:—

Sl. No.	Category	India	Thailand
1.	Total number of officials of the rank of Attache & above (Excluding Stenographic Cadre)	1064	1376
2.	Total number of Missions	144	76
3.	Mission to Officer Ratio	1:7.39	1:18.11
4.	Total number of Officers at Headquarters	383	735
5.	Total number of posts in Missions	681	641
6.	Ratio of Officers at Hqrs to Officers in Mission	0.56:1	1.15:1
7.	Number of Officers of rank of Secretary	21	71
8.	Ratio of Secretary Posts to the total officer posts	1:50.67	1:19.38

5.17 A former Diplomat in a Memorandum stated:—

“One of the most important causes of demoralisation in the service is the feeling that some are favoured in postings and promotions. These must be shown to be based, therefore, on as objective criteria as is humanly possible. The Ministry’s hands should also be strengthened in resisting the immense pressure that comes from outside the Ministry on these matters.”

5.18 The Ministry was asked to furnish their comments which were as follows:—

“Regarding postings, an objective criteria has been evolved and implemented in this area, leading to greater transparency and objectivity. Promotions are also being done in strict accordance with rules.”

5.19 Asked how many peoples were still stagnating even after doing excellent work, the Secretary during evidence stated:—

“There is no stagnation but there are no accelerated promotions also.”

(iv) Local Staff

5.20 In regard to the appointment of local staff in various Missions, the category of posts they were appointed, the method of their recruitment and their security clearance etc., the Ministry in a note stated as follows:—

The local employees are recruited by the Heads of Mission, under powers delegated to them against regularly sanctioned posts and also against contingency paid posts. The basic purpose behind maintaining local staff in Missions abroad is economy and the necessity of recruiting people knowing local language and geography against posts like that of Chauffeur, Interpreter, Marketing Assistant, Receptionist, Messenger, Gardener etc. Employment of local staff results in a lot of saving to the Government with respect to air passage, accommodation etc. of the India based employees. Advertisements are given in local newspapers etc. for the vacancies available. Applications thus received are screened in the Mission and suitable candidates are called for tests and interviews. As far as the security clearance is concerned antecedents of persons of Indian origin are checked in India. For local nationals Missions are supposed to get the antecedents checked locally. The following are the common categories of local staff in our Missions abroad:—

- (1) Interpreter/Translator/Marketing Assistant/Librarian.
- (2) Clerk/Typist/Receptionist/Telephone Operator.
- (3) Chauffeur.
- (4) Messenger/Gardener/Cleaner/Watchman/Boilerman.
- (5) Security Guards: For employing local Security Guards in the Missions the clearance of Bureau of security in the Ministry is necessary."

5.21 The total strength of local staff in various categories in Mission abroad was 1787.

5.22 Enquired how their emoluments were determined, the Ministry informed as follows:—

"Pay scales of local staff in Indian Missions abroad are fixed by the Ministry keeping in view the cost of living in each country, emoluments offered by the local Government to similar employees and salary paid by the diplomatic Missions of other third world countries at the station. The pay scales are revised in accordance with rise in cost of living. Payment of salary is made either in the local currency or in a hard currency in accordance with the local rules, stability of the local currency, needs of economy, etc."

(v) Contingency Staff

5.23 With regard to problem to tackle contingency staff, the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:—

“We have not fixed any time frame for completing the process of regularising of the contingency paid staff employed in the Indian Missions abroad. The issue is in its initial stage of collecting information from all missions. The data being collected will be compiled and then it would be taken up with the Integrated Finance for regularisation of the staff.”

(vi) Posting and Transfer Policy

5.24 While regarding Staff, Ministry follows a policy of rotation among different categories of stations in deciding posting, in case of officers, their language/area of specialisation and functional experience are also taken into account.

5.25 Posting of Heads of Missions is done keeping in mind the relative importance of Missions as also the work experience and area specialisation of the officer concerned. Officers in some important missions may not be replaced by another Grade I Officer.

5.26 The considerations governing postings/transfers of diplomats to different countries include language and functional specialisation as well as rotation among different categories of stations.

Career Profile

5.27 Ministry's standard career profile of IFS(A) officers consists of provision of maximum opportunity for working in all the different branches of Ministerial work as they would be expected to oversee the working of the entire Mission as heads of Mission. Within this broad framework, officers are encouraged to specialise in specific geographical region based on their knowledge of foreign languages. Due to the size of the service being relatively small in comparison to the numbers of Missions abroad, it has not been possible to always keep an officer within his/her area of specialisation.

(vii) Posting in difficult Stations

5.28 Asked to indicate the categories of countries marked by the Ministry as difficult stations where officers/staff, have to serve before getting posting in countries which were considered relatively attractive/comfortable, the Ministry has stated:—

The stations considered specially difficult are the C asterisk stations which at presents include:—

1. Almaty
2. Antananarivo
3. Baghdad
4. Beirut
5. Chittagong
6. Colombo
7. Dhaka

8. Hanoi
9. Ho-Chi-Minh City
10. Kabul
11. Kampala
12. Kandy
13. Karachi
14. Khartoum
15. Luanda
16. Male
17. Maputo
18. Phnom Penh
19. Pyong Yang
20. Rajshahi
21. Sana'a
22. Tashkent
23. Tripoli
24. Ulan Bator
25. Vientiane
26. Vladivostok
27. Yangon
28. Zanzibar
29. Islamabad
30. Kiev
31. Algiers

Close C Missions

1. Aden
2. Kinshasha
3. Basrah

5.29 Asked whether the Ministry has fixed any tenure where an officer/ staff member has to serve at hard station, the Secretary during evidence stated:

“We do not have such systems, I would request you to recommend it.”

(viii) Hardship Allowance

5.30 The Committee were informed that Samar Sen's Committee during 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 Committee has desired to know the views of the Ministry. The Ministry in its reply has stated that officials posted in hardship stations are compensated to the extent possible through subsequent postings in better stations. With regard to above recommendation, the Ministry in its Status Report as on December, 1992 has stated that the Ministry continues to endeavour to give more attractive postings to compensate officers who have served in hardship stations. In addition, a proposal is under consideration to give a Compensatory Allowance to such officers.

5.31 The Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

“If a person is posted in a country like Lagos or Cambodia or Lebanon, we must give him some incentive, extra amount or as hardship allowance or additional allowance, etc. to make him feel that he is being adequately compensated for doing a hard postings.”

5.32 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.

5.33 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.

5.34 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.

5.35 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 views 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.

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.

5.37 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.”

5.38 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 station 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."

5.39 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.

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, recommend 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.

CHAPTER VI HEADQUARTERS

(i) Policy Planning Division

6.1 The Policy Planning Division is actively engaged in preparing briefs and background papers on wide-ranging issues concerning India's Foreign Policy and her role in the rapidly evolving international situation.

6.2 The Division is also the nodal point for interaction with the Joint Intelligence Committee, the University Grants Commission and its affiliated Area Study Centres attached to various Universities.

6.3 With regard to functions of the Policy Planning Division the Ministry has enumerated the following functions of the Policy Planning Division:

- (i) Preparation of briefs on policy matters.
- (ii) Financing of seminars and conferences.
- (iii) Processing of studies and research projects undertaken by the Universities, Institutions and Scholars.
- (iv) Study and analysis of reports received from Missions on various subjects.
- (v) Issue of guidelines for the preparation of reports and briefs.
- (vi) Provide necessary assistance to the visitors in consultation with Indian Missions when the study tours financed by this Division involves visits abroad.

6.4 The Committee were informed that at present the Policy Planning Division is being headed by Additional Secretary who also deals with the passports and visas and there is a Joint Secretary separately incharge of policy planning under him.

6.5 On being asked as to whether there should not be an independent Policy Planning Division in the Ministry, the Foreign Secretary stated:

“We did establish what is called a current research cell in 1962 with a separate Director. Then in 1965 the cell was converted into a full division and we had Mr. Jagat Mehtra, Joint Secretary, Policy Planning as its Head who later on became the Foreign Secretary. During Mrs. Gandhi's time, especially after 1970 Bangladesh crisis, there was a Policy Planning Committee which had Mr. D.P. Dhar as its Chairman and in later years Mr. G. Parthasarthy became its Chairman. These were the persons of the rank of Minister of State. After Mr. Parthasarthy's departure, during Shri Rajiv Gandhi's time this highpowered establishment went away and we came back to the

original scheme which was there in 1964-65 and that was the Policy Planning Division of the Ministry which is charged with the tasks which you have mentioned.”

6.6 He further stated:

“If we have the resources, certainly we will have a separate division or organisation totally devoted to Research and Analysis.”

6.7 With regard to the strengthening of Policy Planning Division the Foreign Secretary further stated:

“If we really want to strengthen that cell by creating it, the officer who will control that Division or Cell, of course, should be a professional diplomat or a professional diplomat added with an analytical and academic bent of mind, who will be capable of taking a longer view of things. But, I think, the staff should consist of experts in different fields.”

6.8 On being asked if the Foreign Secretary was satisfied with the present working, he informed that it required to be further strengthened.

6.9 He further observed:

“The basic thing is that the Policy Planning Division becomes important or unimportant depending on the attitude of the Foreign Secretary, at a given point of time, and the senior officials. If all these three who preside over the operational details of the Ministry are interested and if they devise methods by which information is shared, material goes, suggestions are made, the policy planning division becomes a very active sector in managing foreign policy. If it is not so, then the policy planning division becomes a part of the Ministry which is not active. I have been the Head of the Ministry since the end of 1991. We have made a conscious efforts to strengthen the policy planning division. One of my intellectual colleagues, Mr. Deb Mukerjee is the head of that Division. It is his thought which had generated new ideas. Having said this, if the finances and resources allow, we would like to strengthen the policy planning division in terms of personnel if we could modify the rules of recruitment or move out of it on short term contract. We could draw upon special categories to form the policy planning division. But, people who come in demand to become permanent.

Second factor is the requirement of modern equipments and access to sources of information which are very important, but, subject to certain financial constraints. If we could remove them, we could see the policy planning division has an informatic centre autonomous in itself apart from telegrams etc. For instance, there are certain telegrams of a certain classification which come only to the Minister or only to me and which can also be used by policy planning division. I would say that if it is well equipped with

modern informatic centre facilities like Fax machines and things like that to get feedback that will certainly improve its efficiency.”

6.10 The Committee invited the views of the former diplomat on the working of the Policy Planning Division. In a Memorandum submitted to the Committee, he stated:

“MEA has perhaps yet to find a meaningful role for the Policy Planning Division, judging from its repeated merger and separation from other Divisions over the years.”

6.11 He further suggested:

“The Policy Planning Division’s proper role is to be a group within the Ministry which is not involved in the day-to-day decision making process, but which is enabled to follow that process closely with a view to:

- (a) studying the long-term and wider implications of possible policy decisions, as against the immediate reasons for taking them;
- (b) monitoring the implementation of given policies to see if they are yielding the results desired; and
- (c) preparing policy options for decision as required.”

6.12 The role of policy planning is advisory, not executive. It must be subordinate to those incharge of taking and executing decisions. But it is an important complementary activity, specially in external affairs where decisions may have long term bearings on national interests which may not be immediately apparent to busy decision makers.

6.13 Elaborating his ideas further the former diplomat during evidence stated:

“My experience of this is that the people who are at present entrusted with the work of policy planning, that is to say, the officials who are manning the policy planning division of Ministry of External Affairs, have access neither to timely information in foreign affairs, developments are taking place almost on a day-to-day basis. Information regarding these developments and recommendations with regard to how India should react to these developments, it coming to the Ministry of External Affairs almost on a daily basis through confidential telegrams or open telexes being received from our Missions abroad. This information which is coming into the Ministry is being circulated within the Ministry. But to the best of my knowledge it is not being circulated immediately, on receipt, to the officials who are manning the Policy Planning Division.

Secondly, when parts of this information are circulated to them they are receiving it much after the even by which time, because of the rapid development of events, some of this information may

already be obsolete. So, it is not possible for people entrusted with doing the paper work on policy planning to do such work if they simply do not have papers at their disposal. This is what I mean by that. One important pre-requisite is that timely and relevant information should be provided to such people."

6.14 Regarding the constitution of the Division, a former diplomat during evidence stated:

"People who are entrusted with the work of policy planning should be experienced, that is to say, people of relevant years in service, people of relevant capacities and competence should be posted."

6.15 The diplomat added:

"Policy planning work should be entrusted to the official who is holding the rank of a Secretary to the Government. He should be of the level of Secretary or at least Additional Secretary. He should work in close contact with the Foreign Secretary who is officially the head of the Ministry of External Affairs. He should have direct access to the Ministers. He should be enabled to sit in all important negotiations. From time to time, we are receiving important delegations from abroad; we are sending from time to time important delegations to foreign countries to engage in negotiations on various things. Most of the people who are going in such delegations are the people who are involved in the executive work of actually trying to negotiate and come to an agreement or to put some point of view forward. But in such a body it is useful to have someone included who sits only with a watching brief, not directly involved but watching what is going on. Then he should be able to judge it in terms of long term policy because when we are involved in the negotiations, we think, more of immediate results of negotiations than the long term aspects which we may not be apparent immediately but apparent only after a few years. There should be someone who should be one watching brief, who has access to the papers. But such a person would be subordinate to the Foreign Secretary and the Minister of External Affairs because policy planning cannot take over the role of deciding and implementing the policy. It has got an advisory role."

6.16 A former Secretary during evidence stated:

"I must confess that the Policy-making unit in the Ministry of External Affairs has never functioned effectively. For most of the time, it has been a kind of fifth wheel in the Ministry of External Affairs to accommodate some eminent persons whose advice the Prime Minister or the Foreign Minister would like to seek and who needs to be accommodated at a suitable position in the Government. That is the reason why quite frequently the post has been manned by

personalities holding the rank of a Minister of State and at times by the Cabinet Ministers. The function that the unit has discharged during this time is really to enable that personality to give advice to the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister as and when necessary. At no time an attempt was made to select policy issues and analyse them systematically, prepare policy papers, elicit the views of the people concerned and present a range of choice, before the Government.

Whenever the unit has not been headed by a public personality and has been headed by only an officer of the Joint Secretary rank reporting to the Foreign Secretary, the unit has mainly served the function of being the dumping ground for officers who cannot be accommodated elsewhere in the Ministry. And these officers generally have not been of very high calibre.

During my time, I had made a suggestion for reorganising the policy Planning function in the Ministry of External Affairs and had pursued it through three Governments, but, could not get that approved. And I would let the Members know the outline of my proposals before I conclude by presentation of this subject.

What I had suggested is that the Ministry should set up a Policy Planning Advisory Board consisting of some 12-15 eminent experts drawn from outside the Government, from academic institutions, from research institutions, political personalities who have been taking interest in foreign affairs, retired senior Army officers, who have been working on this subject. And this Board should be helped by two Vice-Chairmen. The Chairman of the Board should be the Foreign Minister himself. One Vice-Chairman would be the Foreign Secretary and the other Vice-Chairman would be somebody from outside, preferably, a very eminent academic. The Foreign Secretary will be responsible for mobilising the internal inputs for the Board. The inputs will be based on notings in the Ministry, telegrams received from Missions abroad and the acquaintance of the Ministry with current developments, whereas the other Vice-Chairman would mobilise inputs from outside. He would have some funds at his disposal to set in motion studies on selected subjects. He would set up think-tanks in the Universities, in the research institutions and keep in touch with them and then, he will bring the output of these groups to the Advisory Board as input.

The Advisory Board then outlines the alternative choices before the Government with regard to major issues. This was the suggestion that I had made on the basis of discussions in an expert group meeting. But, it could not be approved. I think there were two main obstacles. One was the creation of the post of Secretary's rank. My

idea was that the person who will come from outside should have the rank of a Secretary though he need not be designated as such. He should only be designated as Vice-Chairman and he should be a full time Vice-Chairman.

There was a freeze on the creation of additional posts because of the economic difficulties faced at that time. It would have been possible to transfer one of the posts of a head of Mission of Grade-I from abroad to Headquarters and give it to this gentleman who could be recruited from outside. But that met with opposition from the service because they did not want to lose a Grade-I post. After, I left, once the Prime Minister called some of us informally and asked for our suggestions for revamping the policy planning division and I repeated my suggestion. And nothing has been done on this until now. I presume that the view of the present Foreign Secretary will be very important in this regard. By saying so, I am not, in any way, intending to attribute motive to the present Foreign Secretary.

This can happen with any Foreign Secretary. The Foreign Secretary would like to appear to be functioning autonomously and rendering advice on his own to Advisory Board. I for one thought that so long as his activities were confined to mobilising inputs from academic institutions, the other Vice-Chairman need not come in the way of the functioning of the Foreign Secretary and both the functions could complement ideally in tendering the right kind of advice to the Parliament.”

6.17 Summarising the rôle and functions of the Policy Planning Division, the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

“I have informed the Estimates Committee that after a gap of time, we had raised the level of the Supervising Officer to the post of and Additional Secretary. This Division takes a long term view in terms of Pakistan’s long term policies, in the field of defence, political affairs, economic collaboration, impact of its domestic policies, whether it is Pakistan, whether it is United States, whether it is Japan, whether it is the collective identity of the Europe, what is happening in Eastern Europe, what is happening in Central Asia. In these things a long term analysis is made and that is discerned and possible options are then given that in those cases those are the options available, out of which option ‘a’ or ‘b’ or ‘c’ should be exercised, for which preparation should be made. This covers the publicity, diplomacy, what kind of political meetings should be held at higher political levels, what should be done to meet there kinds of contingencies and long term developments etc.

So, there are two dimensions, one is the short term analysis, that is, the discerning of threats and reacting to them or determining policy to meet situations in the short term period within a year or

two. The rest is five to ten years period. So, the Policy Planning Division does the long term conceptual analysis and the Territorial Division does the short term action oriented analysis and Policy Planning.”

6.18 The Committee note that there is a separate Policy Planning Division in the Ministry which is actively engaged in preparing briefs 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.

6.19 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.

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 eminent 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.

(ii) Foreign Service Board

Constitution

6.21 The Constitution of Foreign Service Board has been provided for in provision 4 of the Indian Foreign Service (Recruitment, Cadre, Seniority and Promotion) Rules 1961. It is to consist of:—

- (i) All Secretaries to the Government of India in the Ministry of External Affairs;
- (ii) The Secretary to the Government of India in the Ministry of Commerce; and

(iii) The Joint Secretary to the Government of India in the Ministry of External Affairs in charge of Administration who shall be member Secretary.

(3) Any three members of the Board shall constitute the quorum.

Functions

6.22 The functions of the Foreign Service Board with regard to foreign Mission is to advise the Central Government on:—

- (i) Postings, transfers, other than those of Heads of Missions and Heads of Posts;
- (ii) Grant of diplomatic status to officers posted in Indian Missions and posts abroad, whether members of the Service or not; and
- (iii) Appointment of charged 'd' Affairs, action High Commissioners and acting Commissioners.

6.23 The attention of the Foreign Secretary was drawn to one of the recommendations made by Review Committee in 1984 with regard to the Constitution of Foreign Service Board which had stated that apart from the Secretaries to Ministry of External Affairs and Commerce, one should be Secretary of another Ministry of Government of India. Asked whether this recommendation was implemented, the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

“We have only partially implemented this recommendation by associating the Secretary of the Department of Personnel in our Departmental Promotion Committees. Secretary, Department of Personnel also sits on the Board or is involved when non-IFS officers' postings abroad are discussed. But the Foreign Service Board still consists of two or three Secretaries and the Secretary, Ministry of Commerce. The reason why we have not implemented is that basically the pressure about posting people increases. The present Board consists of the Commerce Secretary because majority of non-cadre posts of the Foreign Service are Commerce Ministry posts.

The other reason why we have not expanded the Board is that for most specialised jobs, namely, the Military, the RAW, the Intelligence Bureau, officers who are posted, are primarily selected by the respective Secretaries and the respective chiefs of organisations. So, we did not see any special reason to include them.”

6.24 Asked whether it was not relevant, the Foreign Secretary stated:

“In my assessment, not relevant.”

6.25 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, 1961. Regarding the constitution of the Board Indian Missions Review Committee 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.

6.26 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, recommend 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.

(iii) Recruitment

6.27 Commenting upon the recruitment procedure, a former career diplomat in a note furnished to the Committee stated:—

“On recruitment, I am not convinced that recruitment through the present competitive examination is the best method of selection to the Foreign Service. A method which, I feel, could produce better results for a lifetime of Foreign Service work would be campus selection, for which appropriate criteria could be laid down. But I fear that in our conditions in India this will lead to much favouritism and nepotism.

Another alternative to the present competitive examination could be an Academy for Foreign Service recruits after the 12th class Exam. Entrance to the Academy would be governed by a special examination based on history, international relations, including specialised aspects of international relations, as in the economic and commercial fields, environmental questions and disarmament. (The list is not comprehensive). These would be followed by a personality test.

A further alternative would be modification of the present competitive Exam. whereby Foreign Service Probationers would be recruited only from those taking the above subjects.

Either of these alternatives would probably ensure that only those genuinely interested in the Foreign Service are considered for it. Also, India would not lose a wealth of technical and medical talent which now seeks entrance into the Foreign Service.”

6.28 In this regard another former diplomat in a note Stated, “The selection of IPS Officers through the UPSC combined examination is becoming very unsatisfactory as the requirement of the Service are totally ignored”.

6.29 Elaborating further the former diplomat during evidence added, “A separate recruitment for the Foreign Service is very necessary in our country.”

6.30 The attention of the former Foreign Secretary was drawn to the fact that in the changing situation the salary and other amenities were not up to the mark and how it could be compared with other foreign services in other countries, the former Foreign Secretary during the course of evidence stated:

“I think it compares reasonably well with the foreign services in other countries. We follow the British practice in salaries and allowances. We cannot say it is inadequate. It is not the question of how much salary that you get, but it is the question of how much money you make otherwise. I have read a short story of Prem Chand. There somebody did Matriculation and he had ultimately decided to become ‘Namak Ka Daroga’ because the short story says

ऊपरी आमदनी बहता हुआ झरना है जब चाहो डुबकी लगा लो, लेकिन मुनासिब आमदनी पूर्णिमा का चांद है जो घटते-घटते गायब हो जाती है।”

6.31 That is the reason why he had joined as “Namak Ka Daroga.” Now, increasingly a large number of officers are getting attracted towards that, but the foreign service does not provide much scope for that thing.

6.32 Commenting upon the recruitment procedure the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

“How do I comment on a sad situation? I would only analyse the reasons. First of all, compared to the generation of officers who are sitting here, who joined IFS in 50s and 60s now the perception has changed. Why did a person join the Foreign Service? First of all it gave one an opportunity to travel abroad, exposed him to a new way of life, to various cultures and widened his horizon. Secondly, he joined because of the additional emoluments that he got. He used to be economically better off than other members of IAS. Here I have left out all the idealistic factors which might have promoted people to join IFS. But today joining any other service provides you with equal opportunities to travel abroad. One can go on Fellowships, Specialised UN assignment and so on. They can even join the foreign service Missions abroad as deputationists or as Specialised officers in our Embassies. So, that factor of travel abroad does not necessarily mean that one should join the Foreign Service.

Secondly in terms of money and emoluments I think after the first pay Commission’s recommendations, the economic attraction of the Foreign Service has gone down. For example if one joins Indian Customs Service or the Indian Revenue Service—I am leaving aside the funnier aspects—when you capture some smuggled goods, a percentage of the value assessed becomes his share as reward over

and above his salary. Even if an IFS officer who normally issues 15 passports a day State issuing 200 passports a day he is not going to get anything more. So, monetary attraction is not there.”

6.33 Asked to furnish suggestion to improve the situation the Secretary during evidence stated:

“Constitutionally and in terms of the UPSC rules, some recommendation can be implemented that in the competitive examination, people go the foreign service cannot be recruited below a certain position, say the first 25 or 20 like that. On an average we take about ten or twelve. We call five candidates for a post from the list and in that case not below the 45th position. It will improve the quality.

Secondly, I think the restrictions on the spouse’s employment should be liberalised if not removed. In the Modern world, in the American Foreign Service or in the British Foreign Service, the spouse is allowed the freedom to practice whatever profession he or she has. Even if some one is a very good journalist, he can place India’s relations with that country in a better way because he or she can do it effectively. He or she of course, should improve conditions by himself or herself; and one must have the freedom to take up the job.

In the case of wives of clerks and assistants who come from a slightly different special background, in case of a vacancy in the Embassy, it is better, instead of recruiting local people whose loyalty is much less than that of our own people, we can recruit those wives. There is no such rule by any Government that a certain percentage of staff has to be recruited from that country. In fact, I will give the example of US. At least half of the local recruits are Indians—Indian Passport holders or Indian Green Card Holders. They get a job in the Embassy. They are illegal immigrants who find this way to get into it.

The third thing is that with all said and done the foreign service life is an unstable one. Once every three years or six years at the most an officer has to move to a different place. His children have to adjust to a new pattern of education and to new environment.

The fourth aspect which is very important is that unlike on all others maximum restriction is placed on lucrative employment of the wives of IFS employees. This is a socio-logical aspect which needs to be seriously looked into. This is my opinion goes against the Constitution. The freedom of vocation, the right to choose one’s profession is enshrined in our Constitution. This should be ensured here too.

I must tell you something interacting. I have just met the last batch, the 1992 batch of the IFS people. Out of 12 who were selected I was told that six had not even opted for it. They came into the Foreign Service because they were not considered high enough to get into the other services.

6.34 With regard to the suggestions made by the Foreign Secretary during evidence, the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (Department of Personnel and Training) (DOPT) has stated:

- (i) "Liberalisation of restrictions on spouses employed in the country where the Mission is located MEA have issued a series of instructions regarding the employment of spouse in the various countries where the Missions are located. Though these instructions have not been issued with the approval of DOPT, but it is felt that they are exhaustive enough and do not warrant any further liberalisation.
- (ii) As regards the recruitment of wives of the Embassy Staff in the Indian Missions instead of local Staff instructions issued by MEA in November, 1988 normally do not permit such employment. It is allowed only in exceptional cases where it is in public interest to do so for short periods of about three months and clearance for this has to be obtained from MEA. These instructions are also adequate and do not call for any further liberalisation.
- (iii) According to the Civil Service Examination Rules, candidates are allotted to various services keeping in view their ranks in the Examination and the preferences expressed by them for the various services/posts. As IAS happen to be the more sought after service, the suggestions, if accepted would lead to forcing meritorious candidates to accept the Indian Foreign Service contrary to their wishes. This step may not be legally tenable as candidates with ranks below the 45th rank in the Merit List, will opt a choice of thier service, while those above then will not be getting their choices/preferences accounted. Further, the suggestion would lead to exclusion of SC/ST candidates being allotted to the IFS as in almost all candidates figure at the fag end of the merit list. This would discriminate against SC/ST candidates and would not stand judicial scrutiny".

6.35 The Committee have been informed that selection of IFS officers through combined examination conducted by UPSC is becoming very unsatisfactory as the requirements of 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 of staff wives in place of local people, etc.

6.36 The Committee feel that there is need for review of the existing recruitment system for selection to Indian Foreign Service. The Committee,

therefore, desire the Ministry to constitute an Export 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 its requirements adequately.

(iv) Foreign Service Training Institute

6.37 In Foreign Service Institute (FSI) consists of standing faculty headed by the Dean of the rank of Secretary to the Government of India and comprising 5 other officers of the rank of Joint Secretary/Director/Deputy Secretary/Under Secretary of the Government of India. The Sanctioned staff strength of the FSI (excluding the standing faculty) is 39 which includes 1 officer in-charge of Language Laboratory.

6.38 There are other following institutes where officers of MEA are also getting training.

1. National Defence College, New Delhi.
2. Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi.
3. Institute of Secretariat Training & Management Old JNU Campus, New Delhi.
4. Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, Mussoorie (UP).
5. Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta.
6. Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore
7. Sardar Patel Institute of Public Administration, Ahmedabad.
8. Staff College for Officers, Wellington.

6.39 A total of 2402 officers/staff have been trained in the Institute in the last 5 years till date.

6.40 The courses in FSI are designed to impart multilevel training in International Law, International Relations, Diplomacy, World Economy Cultural Diplomacy, Diplomatic Practices & Protocol Representational Skills, Commercial work and Language familiarization & Computer appreciation, etc. The training also covers Consular work, Establishment & Accounts work & Administration work.

Refresher Courses

6.41 Eight Refresher courses have so far been organised during the last five years for officers of various levels.

6.42 Trainees are inducted in various courses on the basis of recommendations of the Administrative Division of the MEA.

6.43 Foreign trainees are invited to participate in special courses on basis of criteria laid down by FSI. FSTI is not connected with selection of trainees in other Institute.

6.44 With regard to the existing training arrangement, the Ministry has stated that the Foreign Service Institute is a growing organisation and that also the only one of its kind in India and therefore, a large scope exists for innovations and specialisation.

Need for Mid-Career Training

6.45 Highlighting the importance of mid career training a former diplomat in a note furnished to the Committee stated as follows:

“Long spells of service abroad makes IFS officials more vulnerable to alienation from the realities and requirements of a changing India which they are called upon to represent. Mid-career training is essential for preventing this, as also for ensuring the needed resharpening of skills in respect of foreign languages, understanding of evolving global issues etc. No systematic mid-career training has yet been started, in sharp contrast to the elaborate arrangements for it already existing in the IAS and other home-based services, both civil and defence.”

One explanation for not starting mid-career training has been that the IFS cadre of under 700 persons is too small and officers too busy to be spared for training. Another is that normal work itself provides sufficient training. The latter is now considered an obsolete concept in HRD circles. The former difficulty should be capable of administrative solution by increasing the cadre's training reserve, and by using at least the existing reserve for mid-career training rather than the manning of new posts. After six years of existence FSTI now deserves a full review to identify new measures for its further improvement. One would be to associate it with MEA's decision making set up, particularly for personnel administration. Underlying this is the need for integrating training with career development and planning, without this training may take place in a vacuum and fail to be purposeful. Thus, as in the defence forces, the training input should suitably be taken into account for posting or promotion, as also for the periodic evaluation of the trainee's skill and potential. A practical method for this would be to include the Dean FSTI in the Foreign Service Board.

FSTI should also be kept abreast of MEA's general policy making so that relevant changes and priorities are borne in focus in the planning and conduct of training. Suitable outside expertise can also be utilized for the latter purpose, particularly for devising specific training packages and curricula designs, including for specialised functions like commercially, information, and consular work in Missions abroad.

The effective functioning of FSTI also needs greater autonomy, specially Financial, instead of being treated simply as another division of MEA.

It would also be better to bring the training and research activities of MEA within a single organisation in view of the academic dimension and complementary nature of both activities. The research wing could then also be developed as a think tank for MEA, providing *inter alia* sabbatical study opportunities for suitable officers, who could also be utilised as instructors in the training wing. Such patterns already prevail in several Foreign Ministries abroad. In MEA a practical beginning would be to combine FSTI with the Historical Division and the MEA Library whose potential is under utilised at present. Contact with other scholarly institutions specialized in foreign affairs, both in India and abroad arrangement of and participation in seminars and symposium, etc. could also be done through this body for MEA."

6.46 Another Diplomat in a note furnished to the Committee stated:

"I think it would be advisable that every 10 years there is some kind of a refresher course. It may be for a short period of 3-6 months, that is important. One should know what one is writing, what changes have taken place and this kind of refresher training is really very important, this formal training of academic type."

6.47 He added:

"Something of that kind of academic course can be given."

6.48 In their comments, the Ministry stated:

"The suggestion given here appears useful and constructive and would be forwarded to the Foreign Service Training Institute for structuring into their curricula and training schedule to the extent feasible."

6.49 With regard a mid-career training course the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

"First of all, mid-career training course is not for everybody put together. We have done it region-wise. We take additional area on rent and have additional staff to support those training activities. But once the new Institute comes up with all the conference and committee facilities and equipment, it will be a separate course, apart from the regular training course. And these courses are specially run for Commercial Counsellors or Publicity Officers on Investment Promotion and things like that."

6.50 The Foreign Secretary added:

"The Government of India have allotted us some land in the old campus of the JNU to build a separate Foreign Service Training Institute on which the work now stands initiated. We have now

started regular programmes by expanding the educational process by inviting experts from other field who are working in other institutions to come and lecture at our Institute. It is evolving on positive lines. With more finances and once it goes into new location with all modern facilities. I suppose that it will establish itself as a premised Institute. Its courses have proved attractive. For the summer courses in the year 1992, we have received a fair number of requests for training in this Institute."

6.51 When the attention of the Foreign Secretary was drawn to inadequacy of Training, the Foreign Secretary during evidence, stated:

"We have since the beginning of 1992 started special orientation course for wives of our officers going abroad for the first time. There is an association of the wives of foreign service officers which now includes not only the wives of the senior officers but also wives of all the officials. It is a voluntary organisation which *ex officio* is headed by my wife. They meet once a month or once in six weeks.

As far as training is concerned, training is held in the Foreign Service Training Institute where senior officers talk. For individual postings, depending on the time available, all officers and their wives are briefed at headquarters. They are also allowed what is called a *Bharat Darshan* at Government's cost. They visit areas of interest which are relevant to their posting and country, some knowledge about it.

We have what is called a post report or a country report which gives all the details not only of the living conditions but also of other factors which affect the life and work in the place of posting. That is given to the officer. Hopefully, the wife also reads it.

We have, since 1983 periodically held special orientation courses on economic work or other specialised subjects under the umbrella of the Foreign Service Training Institute in Delhi where we call in middle-level officers. We do have training and seminars. We call senior people, Ministers, academics, Journalists, experts etc. These courses usually last for a fortnight. It is mid-term sort of Training or orientation course. We are trying to increase its frequency. Of course, there can be more improvement in that. There is scope for improvement."

6.52 With regard to the importance of Foreign language the Diplomat during evidence stated:

"Now one very special requirement to foreign work is knowledge of foreign language because people in the foreign service are required to put 25.30 years of their career working abroad. Unlike the people who are working within the country if you are to work effectively abroad it is important in fact, it is perhaps essential to have adequate

knowledge of foreign languages everyone cannot know every foreign language. Thus it is the business of these who are engaged in imparting training to see that a group of say 200 or 300 people is overall so trained in foreign languages that the individual foreign language requirements of the Government can be adequately met."

6.53 Asked what had innovations to specialisation, the Ministry has contemplated for Training Institute the Foreign Secretary during evidence stated:

"The Institute not only caters to the training of officers of the IFS Cadre at the beginning of their career, but also to Diplomats of foreign countries especially from Africa and Central Asian Republics. Taking this into account. The training syllabous has been expanded and geared up to meet the specific needs. The second dimension of improvement is that there is an increase in mid-career training programmes for middle level officers who have put in 9 to 14 years of service. We have a set of courses running into two weeks to ten days geared to specific themes.

We have now initiated action to establish a full-fledged language library so that the officers instead of going to the School of Foreign Languages are now trained inside the institute with modern facilities and equipment which is being put in its place.

We are also introducing modern work methods with modern equipment like the World Processors use of Computers, knowing the techniques of marshalling, data inputs and things like that so that the officer trained in the Institute is familiar with modern details of management and work."

6.54 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 senario. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to organise such courses at various levels more frequently so that officers are kept abreast with the latest development in India and abroad of relevance to their work and function.

6.55 The Ministry has initiated action to establish a fullfledged 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 Institutes (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.

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.

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.

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.

NEW DELHI;

August, 25, 1994

Bhardra 3, 1916(S)

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI,

Chairman,

Estimates Committee.

APPENDIX I

COMPOSITION OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (1992-93)

CHAIRMAN

Shri Manoranjan Bhakta

MEMBERS

2. Shri Abraham Charles
3. Shri Rajendra Agnihotri
4. Shri Mumtaz Ansari
5. Shri Ayub Khan
6. Shri Sartaj Singh Chhatwal
7. Shri Somjibhai Damor
8. Shri Pandurang Pundlik Fundkar
9. Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar
10. Shrimati Girija Devi
11. Shri Nurul Islam
12. Shri R. Jeevarathinam
13. Dr. Viswanatham Kanithi
14. Shri C.K. Kuppuswamy
15. Shri Dharampal Singh Malik
16. Shri Manjay Lal
17. Shri Hannan Mollah
18. Shri G. Devāraya Naik
19. Shri Rupchand Pal
20. Shri Sriballav Panigrahi
21. Shri Harin Pathak
22. Shri Harish Narayan Prabhu Zantyc
23. Shri Amar Roypradhan
24. Shri Ebrahim Sulaiman Sait
25. Shri Moreshwar Save
26. Shri Manabendra Shah
27. Shri Mahadeepak Singh Shakya
28. Shri Rajnath Sonker Shastri
29. Shri Manku Ram Sodhi
30. Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy

APPENDIX II

Statement of Recommendations / Observations

Sl. No.	Para No.	Recommendations
1	2	3
1	1.16	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 <i>have to promote economic cooperation and interest</i> , to boost exports, attract foreign investment and generate technology flows.
2	1.17	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.
3	2.16	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.
4	2.17	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.

1	2	3
5	2.22	<p>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.</p>
6	2.26	<p>The Committee note that powers delegated under General Financial Rules of Government of India, the Central Government Accounts (Receipts and Payments) Rules and Supplementary Rules have also been delegated to Heads of Missions. Financial powers delegated to India's Representatives abroad for various items of routine office functioning are subject to financial ceilings and conditions as laid down in the Booklet on Financial Powers to Government of India's representatives abroad.</p> <p>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.</p>
7	2.36	<p>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</p>

1	2	3
		law and order situation in a number of countries abroad.
8	2.37	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 requisite resources both in terms of equipment and personnel should be made available.
9	2.38	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.
10	2.52	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 <i>inter alia</i> recommended that flats and houses, abroad should be bought at a more vigorous rate.
11	2.53	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.
12	2.54	The Committee find that the actual expenditure under the major head 4216 which includes expenses on repairs/maintenance over the residential buildings is far less than the revised estimates in all the years during the

1	2	3
		<p>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 years 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.</p>
13	2.55	<p>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 requirements 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.</p>
14	2.58	<p>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</p>

1	2	3
		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.
15	2.70	The constant dynamism of present day international diplomacy and statecraft requires on equally fast and efficient line of communication. Policies made and decisions taken in the nick of time are required to be communicated at twice that speed. An efficient communication system 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.
16	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.
17	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 informatics systems.
18	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 Missions should lag behind in

1	2	3
		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.
19	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 the foreign countries are being channelised through Indian Council of Cultural Relation 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 (ARE) and 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 Ministry of External Affairs should seriously ponder over this issue and make concerted efforts in this regard.
20	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 coordination 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

1	2	3
		be made in consultation with the Department of Culture.
21	3.18	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.
22	3.19	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 audiences in each region while organising cultural functions.
23	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

1	2	3
		staff strength and introducing modern aids wherever considered necessary.
24	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 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.
25	3.43	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 emptor counter negative or adverse publicity against India and that India based officers are primarily responsible far 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.
26	3.44	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

1	2	3
		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.
27	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 knowledgte 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.
28	3.46	The Committee would also suggest that suitable attractive incentives in the form of special allowance 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 difficity faced in this regard.
29	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.

1	2	3
30	3.58	<p>The Committee note that in Indian Missions/Posts abroad economic and commercial wings also discharge important functions. They have been informed that these wings have been found useful by trade and industry in our country. The Committee are of the view that in the present environment of economic liberalisation much more is required to be achieved. The Committee, therefore, suggest that suitable mechanism needs to be evolved by the Ministries of External Affairs and Commerce for holding periodic consultations with the Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Export Promotion Councils and other organisations engaged in development of international trade so that the Head of Mission/commercial representatives abroad could meet the needs and demands of trade and industry, both in our country and abroad and improve the functioning of the economic and commercial wings in the light of the suggestions.</p>
31	3.59	<p>The Committee would also like the Ministry to organise regional meetings and all the Head of Missions/commercial representatives abroad should have periodic meetings relating to matters concerning trade, industry and other economic interests in the regions 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.</p>
32	3.60	<p>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 pursuance 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 desire that such proposals should be accorded priority and expeditiously finalised.</p>

1	2	3
33	3.61	<p>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 concerned 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.</p>
34	3.75	<p>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 sent 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.</p>
35	3.76	<p>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.</p>
36	3.77	<p>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 number of people of Indian origin are settled or there are large number of workers, there</p>

1	2	3
		<p>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.</p>
37	3.91	<p>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.</p>
38	4.11	<p>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 Africa which indicates that there are no guidelines laid down for holding periodically regional conferences. The Committee are of the view that personal contact 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.</p>
39	4.12	<p>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 Minister, to formulate guidelines for such regional conferences covering duration, agenda, list of participants and representatives of various Ministries as necessary.</p>

1	2	3
40	4.16	<p>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 the Mission.</p>
41	4.17	<p>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.</p>
42	4.18	<p>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.</p>
43	4.19	<p>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.</p>
44	4.28	<p>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</p>

1

2

3

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.

45 4.29

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

1	2	3
		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.
46	5.32	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.
47	5.33	The Committee are also informed that even at head-quarter, 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.
48	5.34	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.
49	5.35	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

1	2	3
		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.
50	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.
51.	5.37	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".
52.	5.38	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 station 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."
53.	5.39	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.
54.	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 serce at a hard station. According to a former Diplomat, one of the most important causes for demoralisation in the Service

1	2	3
		<p>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, recommend 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.</p>
55.	6.18	<p>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.</p>
56.	6.19	<p>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.</p>
57.	6.20	<p>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 eminent 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</p>

1	2	3
		the action taken in this regard at the earliest.
58.	6.25	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, 1961. Regarding the constitution of the Board Indian Missions Review Committee 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.
59.	6.26	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, recommend 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.
60.	6.35	The Committee have been informed that selection of I F S 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.
61.	6.36	The Committee feel that there is need for review of the existing recruitment system for selection to Indian

1	2	3
		<p>Foreign Service. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry to constitute an Expert Committee to examine the existing recruitment system in the light of recruitment procedure/system in vogue for selecting 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 its requirements adequately.</p>
62.	6.54	<p>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 development in India and abroad of relevance to their work and function.</p>
63.	6.55	<p>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.</p>
64.	6.56	<p>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.</p>
65.	6.57	<p>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 preferable by an independent team.</p>

1	2	3
66.	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.
