

02

**COMMITTEE
ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(2019-20)**

SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA

MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

**DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2020-21)**

SECOND REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

MARCH, 2020/PHALGUNA, 1941 (Saka)

SECOND REPORT

**COMMITTEE ON
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(2019-20)**

(SEVENTEENTH LOK SABHA)

**MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(2020-21)**

Presented to Lok Sabha on 3 March, 2020

Laid on the Table of Rajya Sabha on 3 March, 2020



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

MARCH, 2020/PHALGUNA, 1941 (Saka)

COEA NO. 142

Price : Rs. 135

© **2020 by Lok Sabha Secretariat**
Published under Rule 382 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha
(_____Edition) and Printed by

CONTENTS	PAGE
COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (2019-20)	(i)
INTRODUCTION	(ii)
CHAPTER I ANALYSIS OF DEMAND FOR GRANTS	1-26
I. Overall Budgetary Proposals and Allocations	
II. Classification of budget into ‘Scheme’ and ‘Non Scheme’	
III. Review of Past Performance	
CHAPTER II SECTORAL ALLOCATIONS	27-54
I. Embassies and Missions	
II. Passport and Emigration	
III. International cooperation	
A. South Asian University	
B. Nalanda University	
CHAPTER III INDIA’S DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION	55-105
I. Aid to Bangladesh	
II. Aid/Loans and Advances to Bhutan	
III. Aid to Nepal	
IV. Aid to Sri Lanka	
V. Aid to Maldives	
VI. Aid to Myanmar	
VII. Aid to African Countries	
VIII. Aid to Afghanistan	
IX. Aid to Latin American Countries	
X. Indo-Pacific Cooperation	
XI. Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation	
CHAPTER IV ORGANIZATIONAL SET UP	106-112
I. Sushma Swaraj Foreign Service Institute Training	
II. Protectorate General of Emigrants (PGoE)	
CHAPTER V OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS	113- 129
I. Engagement with Diaspora	
II. Schemes/Programmes related to Overseas Indians	
(i) Know India Programme (KIP)	
(ii). Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora	
(iii) Awareness Campaign / Media Plan	
(iv) NRI Marriages Dispute	
CHAPTER VI AUTONOMOUS BODIES AND INSTITUTIONS	130 - 140
I. Indian Council of Cultural Relations	
II. Indian Council of World Affairs	
CHAPTER VII POLICY PLANNING & RESEARCH	141 -149
APPENDICES	
I. Minutes of the Fourteenth Sitting of the Committee held on 27.02.2020	150
II. Minutes of the Fifteenth sitting of the Committee held on 02.03.2020	153
ANNEXURES	
I. Programmes/projects by India in African countries	155
II. Training Programmes for Indian diplomats/officials for the year 2020-21	168

COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (2019-20)

1. Dr. P.P. Chaudhary, Chairperson
Lok Sabha

2. Shri Abhishek Banerjee
3. Shri Margani Bharat
4. Kunwar Pushpendra Singh Chandel
5. Shri Jayadev Galla
6. Shri Dileshwar Kamait
7. Smt. Preneet Kaur
8. Shri Pakauri Lal Kol
9. Smt. Meenakashi Lekhi
10. Smt. Poonam Mahajan
11. Shri P. C. Mohan
12. Shri Borlakunta Venkatesh Netha
13. Shri Ritesh Pandey
14. Dr. K. C. Patel
15. Shri Soyam Babu Rao
16. Shri Achyutananda Samanta
17. Shri Ram Swaroop Sharma
18. Shri Ravindra Shyamnarayan Shukla *alias* Ravi Kishan
19. Shri Manoj Tiwari
20. Shri Rebati Tripura
21. Shri N.K. Premachandran

Rajya Sabha

22. Shri K. J. Alphons
23. Smt. Jaya Bachchan
24. Smt. Misha Bharti
25. Shri P. Chidambaram
26. Shri Swapan Dasgupta
27. Shri Chunibhai Kanjibhai Gohel
28. Shri Sharad Pawar
29. Shri Shamsher Singh Manhas^{\$}
30. Shri Kapil Sibal
31. Shri Abdul Wahab

Secretariat

1. Shri P.C.Koul - Joint Secretary
2. Dr. Ram Raj Rai - Director
3. Shri Paolienlal Haokip - Additional Director
4. Ms. Smita Singh - Assistant Executive Officer

^{\$} Shri Neeraj Shekhar, Member, Rajya Sabha had resigned from the membership of the Committee *w.e.f.* 31.1.2020 and Shri Shamsher Singh Manhas, Member, Rajya Sabha nominated *w.e.f.* 4.2.2020.

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of the Committee on External Affairs having been authorized by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present this Second Report of the Committee on External Affairs (2019-20) on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of External Affairs for the year 2020-21.

2. The Committee heard the views of the representatives of the Ministry of External Affairs at their Fourteenth Sitting held on 27 February, 2020.

3. The Committee wish to express their gratitude to the officers of the Ministry of External Affairs for placing before them the material and information that the Committee desired and also appearing before the Committee for placing their considered views before them in connection with the examination of Demands for Grants 2020-21.

4. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their Fifteenth Sitting held on 2 March, 2020.

5. The Minutes of the Sittings of the Committee held on 27 February, 2020 and 2 March, 2020 are given in Appendix-I and II respectively to the Report.

6. For facility of reference, the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in bold.

NEW DELHI
2 March, 2020
12 Phalguna 1941 (Saka)

SHRI P.P. CHAUDHARY
Chairperson,
Committee on External Affairs

CHAPTER I

ANALYSIS OF DEMANDS FOR GRANTS FOR THE YEAR 2020-21

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) formulates and conducts India's foreign policy within the framework of our values and principles of fostering international peace and cooperation with the overall objective of meeting India's strategic aims and aspirations as well as to secure our national interests. In pursuance of its mandated objectives, the MEA headquarters in New Delhi is assisted by Missions and Posts abroad; its Branch Secretariats and Passport Offices in India; and Autonomous Bodies funded by it. The Ministry is also supported by other Ministries and State Governments who also contribute to India's international engagement in consultation and coordination with MEA.

1.2 Under the Constitution of India [Article 113 (2)], estimates of expenditure is submitted to Lok Sabha in the form of Demands for Grants. Generally, one Demand for Grant is presented in respect of each Ministry or Department. The Demands for Grants of the Ministry of External Affairs (Demand No. 17) was presented on 8 February, 2020.

1.3 A major announcement in the Union Budget 2019-20 was the Government of India's goal of making India a US\$ 5 trillion economy by 2024-25. The Department of Economic Affairs of the Ministry of Finance is the nodal Department for the purpose. In the status of implementation of Budget Announcement, 2019-20 the following has been indicated against the instant announcement:-

“to prepare the road map to achieve the above target a meeting of CoS was held on 20.09.2019. A presentation was made before the Cabinet Committee on Investment and Growth. Suitable strategies for the same including sector specific measures are under consideration by all relevant Ministries.”

1.4 When told that the US\$5 trillion goal would require a much greater effort and initiative from the Ministry, the Foreign Secretary during the evidence before the Committee on 27 February 2020¹ spelt out the exact role of the Ministry in achievement of the five trillion dollar economy :

“We can only facilitate these Ministries towards reaching their targets. Of course, we are aware whether we reach or they reach, it is the target of the Government of India and it is the national target. Our job is to help these different Ministries which have the Budget,

which has the necessary specialization to reach out and meet these requirements in terms of our global engagement that we have.”

1.5 The Foreign Secretary further added:-

“The focus of the MEA in the past may not have been on economic diplomacy, but it is increasingly becoming so. We have a Secretary, Economic Relations; we have a separate Additional Secretary who deals with economic diplomacy. We have at least five or six divisions that are focussed on the economic aspect of our work. We will, I think, be increasing that salience in time to come, but at the end of the day, we are the facilitators; we are not the actual implementors of policy, either here or abroad.

1.6 The Principal Witness was asked to submit a detailed note for the Committee to reach a considered view in the matter. In a strategy paper for achieving US\$ 5 trillion economy, the Ministry of External Affairs provided the details of several initiatives that have been undertaken by them for achieving this goal. These initiatives aim to increase India’s exports to countries abroad, facilitate investments into the country by enhancing our bilateral and multilateral economic engagements, enable technological collaboration and transfer of vital, strategic and emerging technologies and secure access to essential mineral resources necessary for our development.

1.7 As a part of its vision to further the GOI’s objective of achieving a US\$ 5 trillion dollar economy by 2024, the Ministry has stated that it seek to facilitate investment and economic engagement with partner countries. It will focus on enhancing economic engagement with neighbours, especially on connectivity and facilitate States of the Union in their economic engagement with foreign countries. MEA will also enhance global economic engagement through Development Partnership, including through Lines of Credit and grant assistance.

1.8 Several of these initiatives, already taken/ planned by the MEA are as below:

I. MEA’s Economic Diplomacy for Facilitating Trade and Investments: The Ministry of External Affairs will leverage its diplomatic resources for achieving the defined trade and investment goals. It will systematically involve the missions across the world to reach out to business and economic stakeholders. The MEA, in consultations with the Line Ministries, will enhance involvement and engagement of Missions for increasing trade and investment. This will be done by undertaking the following:

- i. Coordination and Liaison with DPIIT
 - ii. Facilitating Export Strategies of Line Ministries in Various Sectors such as Ayurveda, Pharmaceuticals, Solar Energy, Aviation, Agriculture, Cooperatives, Fintech etc
 - iii. Market Expansion & Investment Promotion Activities
 - iv. Website and Global Mapping of Resources
 - v. Disaster Management
- II. Enhancing Developmental Partnership:
- III. Increasing Connectivity with Immediate Neighbors:
- IV. Partnering with States for Greater Outreach & Economic Engagement
- V. Sector-Specific initiatives: Matching Complementarities such as Bilateral Trade Treaties (BTAs), Air Services Agreement (ASAs), Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements (DTAAs), Social Security Agreements (SSAs),
- VI. Engagement with Multilateral Institutions:: India’s multilateral economic engagements in G20, BRICS, IBSA, Development Banks etc. are important mechanisms for developing common understanding with other partner countries on fiscal, monetary, financial, taxation, anti-corruption, customs issues.

1.9 In view of the fact that post-globalization, the foreign policy of a country is virtually the economic policy also, the Committee desired to know as to whether the MEA had factored in its pivotal role in this monumental venture and what policy or course correction had been worked out or were being worked out for this purpose? In this context, the Foreign Secretary informed the Committee during the oral evidence on 27 February, 2020 that since 2015, the Ministry’s policy had been Diplomacy for Development.

1.10 The Committee note that since 2015 the Ministry of External Affairs has been practicing a purposeful and well defined policy of Diplomacy for Development. They also note that in the General Budget, 2019-20, the Government has announced its initiation of making India a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25. The Foreign Secretary when asked about the role of Ministry of External Affairs in the scheme of things and steps taken to make this

goal a reality, enumerated several measures the Ministry is taking/intending to take in tandem with other ministries/departments of Government of India. Over the years, the Ministry of External Affairs has been acting as a facilitator for various Line Ministries in achievement of economic targets. Through its development cooperation/ assistance programme and Investment Promotion and Publicity Programme, the Ministry has been instrumental in facilitating the cause of Indian economic diplomacy abroad.

Having extensively considered across the board challenging requirements of the goal of becoming a US\$ 5 trillion economy by 2024-25 and the efforts being put by MEA as of now as their contribution towards realization of this goal, the Committee strongly feel that MEA could do more with better allocation of resources in this regard. In the globalised era the foreign policy elements and the economic policy elements are two sides of the same coin. What the Ministry is required to do immediately is to come up with a clear-cut foreign policy woven with the strands of economic policy. It is but imperative that the Ministry expand its activities in the economic realm and play a proactive and pivotal role in India's vision of becoming a US\$ 5 trillion dollar economy. The Committee understand that it is a challenging task which may require strengthening of existing division with appropriate human resources and adequate budgetary allocation.

(Recommendation No.1)

I. OVERALL BUDGETARY ALLOCATION

1.11 MEA's budget allocation in Budget Estimates (BE) 2019-20 was Rs. 17884.78 crore. The allocation in Revised Estimates (RE) 2019-20 was Rs. 500 odd crore less at Rs. 17372.27 crore and the actual expenditure of the Ministry in FY 2019-20 (upto December 2019) has been Rs.13413.41 crore. The allocation in BE 2020-21 is Rs 17346.71 crore, which is 3% less than BE 2019-20 allocation and 0.15% less than RE 2019-20 allocation. The total budgetary allocation

for the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) during the last five years along with Revised Estimates (RE) for the respective years and Actuals is as follows:

(Rs. in Crores)

Year	BE	RE	Actual Expenditure
2016-17	14662.66	13426.00	12753.37
2017-18	14798.55	13690.00	13749.73
2018-19	15011.00	15582.00	15526.32
2019-20	17884.78	17372.27	14551.95*
2020-21	17346.71	-	-

*Upto January, 2020

1.12 Explaining the reasons behind the reduction in budgetary allocation at the RE 2019-20 as well as BE 2020-21 stage *vis-à-vis* BE 2019-20, the Ministry stated that it projected a budgetary demand of Rs. 21173.50 crore for RE 2019-20 to the Ministry of Finance, along with detailed justifications. The basis of these demands was explained in detail during discussions with Secretary (Expenditure) in October 2019. However, allocation for RE 2019-20 conveyed in December 2019 by Ministry of Finance was Rs. 17372.27 crore, *i.e.* 82.05 % of MEA's demand. No reasons were provided by Ministry of Finance for lower allocation of funds.

1.13 The Committee wondered whether in the opinion of the Ministry of External Affairs such a diminished allocation will suffice for its expanding mandate. The Ministry in a written reply stated that it undertook an assessment of the funds requirements for various heads in the MEA budget for suitable re-appropriation of allocation within the RE 2019-20 ceiling of Rs. 17372.27 crore, with identified savings being re-allocated to heads that needed enhancement, to ensure that the on-going projects, schemes and programmes are not adversely impacted.

1.14 The details of the budgetary demands sought from the Ministry of Finance and the actual allocations made during the last 3 financial years are as follows:-

(Rs. in Crores)

FY	BE Demand	BE Allocation	RE Demand	RE Allocation	Actuals
2017-18	23830.95	14798.55	17693.78	13690.00	13749.73
2018-19	20873.40	15011.00	19762.73	15582.00	15527.70
2019-20	19965.57	17884.78	21173.50	17372.27	14551.95*

					(upto Jan 2020)
2020-21	23657.76	17346.71	-	-	-

* Expenditure upto January 2020

1.15 On being asked to justify such treatment by the Ministry of Finance in fund allocation to the Ministry of External Affairs at each and every stage, the Ministry stated that in FY 2018-19, MEA was allocated Rs. 15582.00 crore against its demand of Rs. 19762.73 crore, which was 78% of the demand. For FY 2019-20, MEA was allocated Rs. 17372.27 crore against its demand of Rs. 21173.50 crore at the RE stage, which was 82% of the demand. Thus, the gap between the demand and allocation has narrowed. It may also be noted that overall GoI expenditure at RE stage has been reduced to Rs. 26.98 lakh crore (*i.e.* a cut of Rs.87000 crore, or approximately 3%, from the BE figure of Rs. 27.86 lakh crores). Thus MEA's RE allocation has been reduced by a similar proportion as the reduction in the overall GoI budget. The Ministry will continue to make efforts to further reduce the gap between demand and allocation by, firstly, further rationalizing our demand to make it more realistic, need-based, and aligned to targets, as recommended by the Hon'ble Committee; and secondly, working more closely with the Ministry of Finance to facilitate a better appreciation by Ministry of Finance of MEA's important initiatives and associated funds requirements.

1.16 Elaborating upon the nature and manner through which the Ministry has taken up the issue of reduced allocation with the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry stated that it holds extensive discussions with Ministry of Finance at all stages of the budgetary cycle, especially when the demands for grants for RE of a given financial year and the BE of the next financial year are submitted by the Ministry and discussed with Ministry of Finance. Further, Ministry has been making constant endeavours to project its requirement of funds in a given year based on realistic and need-based estimation of schemes and projects so that our demand for funds is earnestly considered by the Ministry of Finance. These efforts have borne fruit and the gap between demand and allocation of budget has narrowed over years.

1.17 Providing the criteria for adjustment of funds requirement for various Heads made in MEA budget in order to accommodate them within the diminished allocation, the Ministry replied that it undertakes a detailed and careful assessment of funds requirements for the various

heads in the MEA budget, in consultation with concerned Divisions and Spending Units, as per the existing funds utilization status in the concerned budget head; stage of implementation and progress of on-going projects, schemes and programmes; and anticipated expenditure as per the implementation schedules of on-going initiatives as well as new planned initiatives which are to begin within the budgetary cycle under consideration.

1.18 The Ministry has informed that the percentage of MEA's budget allocation, as a percentage of the overall GoI budget is as under:

(Rs. in Crores)

	BE 2017-18	BE 2018-19	BE 2019-20	BE 2020-21
MEA Budget	14798.55	15011.00	17884.78	17346.71
Overall GOI Budget	2146735.00	2442213.00	2786349	3042230.00
%	0.69 %	0.61 %	0.64%	0.57%

It can be seen from the table that in terms of percentage of MEA's budgetary allocation to the GOI budget, the allocation made to MEA is lowest for past three years.

1.19 On being asked about the steps taken to carry out a cross-country analysis of budgetary allocation made to Departments/Ministries responsible for conducting foreign policies of important countries across the globe, the Ministry stated that as recommended by the Hon'ble Committee, it commissioned a cross- Ministry as well as cross-country comparative study of budgetary allocations of Ministries/Departments with the mandate of managing foreign affairs through Research and Information System for economic development (RIS). The preliminary report of the study has been received from RIS and is being examined. Ministry closely coordinates with other Ministries/Department in implementation of projects abroad, such as Ministry of Power, Ministry of Defence, Department of Science & Technology, Ministry of Road, Transport & Highways etc. along with maintaining close liaison with Ministry of Finance for seeking funds at various stages of the budgetary cycle, based on physical progress of projects.

1.20 In their previous Demands for Grants Reports, the Committee had strongly recommended that the Ministry should develop a well-defined and focused budgetary planning process so as to ensure that allocations sought are arrived at keeping in view achievable plans and projects and the absorption capacity of various units under the Ministry. The Ministry was further urged to consider the concept of Zero Based budgeting while drawing their future funds projects. On the Committee's query regarding the specific steps taken by the Ministry to develop a focused and

well-defined budgetary planning process, the Ministry stated that allocations for Aid heads are made after undertaking a realistic spending assessment based on project implementation cycles, local conditions and physical progress for on-going projects, schemes and programmes; and based on project implementation timelines and cost estimates for planned projects, schemes and programmes.

1.21 The Ministry further informed that it has developed a rigorous mechanism of Quarterly Budget Management Meetings, which is chaired by Foreign Secretary. These budget management meetings are detailed exercises for head-wise evaluation of projects and evolving needs under various heads of Technical & Economic Cooperation as well as for the Non-Scheme heads. For ongoing projects under the aid programs, the budgetary requirements are gauged based on inputs from the primary Divisions/Spending units which are collated and compared with the past utilization, work progress and pace of expenditure of the project. Aided by these budget management meetings as well as deliberations with various spending units at the RE and BE stages, a realistic budgetary estimates is drawn by the Ministry. For new projects, budgetary provisions are made as per estimates determined by project implementation timelines and cost estimates in their Detailed Project Reports. Allocations are then made to the extent of funds available within the overall budgetary provision made by Ministry of Finance. The selection of the projects to be undertaken under the Aid heads is an administrative decision which is taken by the Territorial Divisions and DPA in view of the political relations with the respective countries.

1.22 The Committee further enquired whether the Ministry has taken into account the idea of Zero Based budgeting while drawing budgetary demands for FY 2020-21. The Ministry replied that the overarching principle of zero-based budgeting guides the continuous evaluation and assessment of budgetary allocation as against funds utilization in Ministry's budget management. The Ministry is making sincere efforts towards realistic budgetary demands by its spending units. The Ministry will make more efforts in this direction to realize credible budgetary demands justified by past efficient utilization of funds and objective assessment of anticipated expenditures based on implementation progress.

1.23 In pursuance of the Committee's Recommendation in the Fifteenth Report (16th Lok Sabha) on improving financial management and spending pattern of the Ministry to avoid last quarter expenditure beyond the 33% ceiling and March expenditure beyond the 15% ceiling, the

Ministry in their Action Taken Replies had stated that Quarterly Budget Management Meetings were instituted. Elaborating upon the mechanism and agenda of these Meetings, the Ministry stated that all instructions contained in various Circulars of Ministry of Finance towards economy measures, rationalization of expenditure, etc., are scrupulously followed by the Ministry. The number of personnel sent on visits to foreign countries is limited to the bare essential. Creation of posts is avoided, and where functionally necessary, is done with the approval of Ministry of Finance.

1.24 All expenditure is closely monitored and fund releases are made in line with physical and financial progress of projects to ensure that there is no parking of funds with implementing agencies. To ensure optimal utilization of budgetary resources during each quarter of the financial year, expenditure is closely and regularly monitored by the Financial Advisor in consultation with Divisional Heads, including through quarterly expenditure review meetings. During the quarterly expenditure review meetings, the expenditure plans of the Ministry's various Divisions and Spending Units are discussed and the importance of ensuring balanced expenditure during each quarter of the financial year is emphasized. Divisions/Spending Units accordingly make all efforts to ensure evenly paced expenditure, within the constraints of a majority of the spending being in foreign countries where diverse local conditions and varying project development and implementation schedules pose a challenge for alignment of expenditure to our own budget cycle. The mechanism of quarterly expenditure review meetings has been very effective in ensuring proper utilization of funds during each quarter. This is evident from Ministry of External Affairs total budget utilization annually which has averaged 98% over the past 5 years.

1.25 During Oral Evidence of the Ministry on 27 February, 2020, Foreign Secretary informed the Committee that: -

“This year, the Ministry of Finance has issued new instructions limiting expenditure in the last quarter of 2019-20 to only 25 per cent of the Budget Estimates. The Committee will be happy to however know that the MEA is not adversely affected by the new instructions, since we have already utilized 75 per cent of our BE and 77 per cent of our RE by December 2019 as a result of our regular monitoring and optimum utilization throughout the year. This year, the Ministry of Finance has also mandated that expenditure in the last month must not be more than ten per cent. We fully expect that due to timely utilization and re-appropriation, we will not be adversely affected by this

rule and we are making all efforts to both judiciously and fully utilize our budget allocation.”

1.26 The Ministry also informed that it is planning to link IMAS 2.0 with Public Finance Management System (PFMS) to ensure seamless, real time reporting and monitoring of financial date. When asked about the status of their linkage, the Ministry responded that as of now, O/o Pr. CCA incorporates the Monthly Accounts of Indian Missions/Posts abroad into PFMS through an intermediary tool *i.e.* Compiler. The process of incorporation includes file uploading into PFMS in XML format files. The idea of integration was envisaged by the O/o Pr. CCA to remove the intermediary tool for uploading data into PFMS by introducing one separate module in IMAS version 2.0 Sync with PFMS. This module as a result will only generate XML format files and TEXT format files which will be uploaded into PFMS portal on monthly basis. Inputs regarding all types of XML files used (Formats given by IT Division, O/o CGA) in the incorporation were shared by the O/o Pr.CCA team to the NIC development team, MEA and the module is currently in its development phase.

1.27 The Committee wanted to know whether the element of inflation has been factored in the allocation for RE 2019-20 and BE 2020-21. In a written reply, the Ministry submitted that the budgetary projections made by Divisions and Spending Units factor in the element of inflation. However, in view of the overall allocation by the Ministry of Finance being lesser than the projected demand, it is not possible to provision for it entirely.

1.28 In the same context when the Committee asked the Ministry to indicate the manner in which it seeks to handle inflationary pressure, the Ministry submitted in a written reply that the budgetary projections made by Divisions and Spending Units factor in the element of inflation. Based on priorities of the Ministry and the immediate need for funds under some heads, allocation of funds, within the ceiling provided by the Ministry of Finance, is made to ensure that Ministry’s ongoing projects, schemes, programmes and commitments have requisite funds.

1.29 While examining the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of External Affairs for the year 2020-21, the Committee observe that as against a demand of Rs 23657.76 crore, an allocation of Rs. 17346.71 crore has been made. The given budgetary allocation is 3% less than BE 2019-20 allocation and 0.15% less than RE 2019-20 allocation. Even in terms of

percentage, MEA's share in the total Government of India expenditure has come down to 0.57%. In view of the expanding mandate and global footprint of India, the reduction in allocation to MEA at both RE 2019-20 and BE 2020-21 stage is beyond comprehension. Furthermore, the Ministry has apprised the Committee that no reason has been furnished by the Ministry of Finance for diminished allocation for BE 2020-21. The Ministry has informed that due to reduction in funds disbursal in the last fiscal, the Ministry had to undertake re-assessment of fund requirements for various heads in order to ensure that ongoing projects, schemes and programmes are not adversely impacted.

In the considered opinion of the Committee, the underfunding of the Ministry of External Affairs will invariably lead to undermining of our foreign policy objectives. Taking a serious view of this issue and considering foreign policy as one of the Government's top priority, the Committee strongly recommend that the Government of India should reconsider and enhance the allocation to MEA by at least nearly 20 per cent than what it is being provisioned now so that it can be commensurate with India's burgeoning global outreach and engagement. The Ministry of External Affairs is urged to identify priority heads to suitably incorporate the enhancement in allocation and seek additional requirement of funds at the RE 2020-21 stage so that lack of financial resources does not hinder the conduct of Indian foreign policy.

(Recommendation No. 2)

1.30 Over the years, the Committee have expressed a deep concern over the persistent mismatch between the budgetary demand made by the Ministry of External Affairs and actual allocations provided by the Ministry of Finance. In its written replies, the Ministry has submitted that the gap between the amount demanded and actual allocations has

reduced over the years due to realistic and need based rationalization of various sub heads as well as extensive consultations with the Ministry of Finance. The claim of the Ministry that due to their more realistic and need based rationalization of various sub-heads the gap between amount demanded and actual allocations has reduced over the years is slightly confusing. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of External Affairs should continue to pursue with the Ministry of Finance about the imperative of provisioning adequate budgetary allocation for efficient conduct of our foreign policy and diplomatic outreach so that shortage of funds does not lead to compromises in foreign policy objectives in the context of the allocation made during BE 2020-21.

In pursuance of the Committee's earlier recommendation, the Ministry has informed that it has commissioned a inter-ministerial as well as a cross-country comparative study of budgetary allocations of Ministries/Departments with the mandate of managing foreign affairs to the Research and Information System for Economic Development (RIS). The Committee note that a preliminary report of the study has been received from RIS and is being examined in the Ministry. The Ministry of External Affairs should examine the preliminary data on cross-country study of budgetary allocations and apprise the Committee within two months of presentation of this Report. This data can assist the Ministry of External Affairs to bolster their case for enhanced allocation during the RE stage.

(Recommendation No. 3)

1.31 In their previous Demand for Grants Reports, the Committee had exhorted the Ministry to incorporate the idea of zero-based budgeting for drawal of budgetary demands. The Committee note that the overarching principles of zero-based budgeting is a guiding

factor in the continuous evaluation and assessment of budgetary allocation as against fund utilization in Ministry's budget management. The Committee are happy to learn and appreciate about the development of a rigorous mechanism of Quarterly Budget Management Meetings, where detailed exercise for head-wise evaluation of projects and evolving needs under various heads of Technical and Economic Cooperation as well as on the Non-Scheme section are undertaken. Furthermore, the Ministry has been scrupulously adhering to all instructions contained in various Circulars of Ministry of Finance relating to economy measures, rationalization of expenditure, etc and as a result, annual budget utilization has improved significantly. A fact that needs to be appreciated. However, despite the existence of a credible and meticulous budgetary planning process undertaken by the MEA and almost perfect spending of the allocated budget, the persistent mismatch between budgetary demand and budgetary allocation appears puzzling. The Committee, therefore, reiterate that the Ministry should continue making sustained efforts towards projecting a rigorous, objective and realistic demand by incorporating the idea of zero based budgeting and on this basis make a positive case before the Ministry of Finance for provisioning of requisite funds at the RE and supplementary grants stage.

(Recommendation No. 4)

II. CLASSIFICATION OF BUDGET OF MEA

1.32 The Plan and Non-Plan classification has been discontinued since FY 2017-18. The budget classifications are now only in terms of Revenue and Capital heads and Scheme and Non-Scheme sections.

A. Revenue & Capital

1.33 Allocations as per Revenue/Capital heads are given below:

Revenue And Capital

(Rs. in Crores)

Section	BE 2019-20	RE 2019-20	BE 2020-21
Revenue	16511.23	16239.59	16014.43
Capital	1373.55	1132.68	1332.28
Total	17884.78	17372.27	17346.71

1.34 In comparison to BE 2019-20, it can be discerned that there has been a decrease in allocation under both the Revenue and Capital Sections during RE 2019-20 as well at BE 2020-21 *vis-a-vis* BE 2019-20. Providing justifications for decrease at the RE stage for 2019-20 as well as BE 2020-21 under both these sections, the Ministry stated that it undertakes a detailed and careful assessment of funds requirements for the various heads in its budget, in consultation with concerned Divisions and Spending Units, as per funds utilization status and implementation progress of projects, schemes and programmes, to suitably allocate funds within the RE 2019-20 and BE 2020-21 ceilings conveyed by Ministry of Finance, to ensure that Ministry's ongoing projects, schemes, programmes and commitments have requisite funds. The trend of decrease in RE 2019-20 & BE 2020-21 allocations is essentially because of the overall budgetary allocation given to MEA by Ministry of Finance being less at RE and BE stages. Therefore, adjustments are made in the allocations to various heads of MEA's budget to adhere to the overall RE and BE ceilings given by Ministry of Finance. Some of the adjustments made are as follows:

a. Capital Section

RE 2019-20: Reduced allocation under Loans to Bhutan and Capital Outlay on Public Works and Housing, based on actual pace of expenditure, local conditions, etc.

BE 2010-21: No allocation under Loans to Maldives and increased allocation under Loans to Bhutan. However, allocation for Capital Outlay on Public Works and Housing is substantially increased to 500 cr from 330 cr in RE 2019-20.

b. Revenue Section

RE 2019-20: Allocation under Aid budgets heads have been rationalized based on progress of work in projects and funds utilization status, as well as the overall budgetary allocation, as

shown below. Allocations under Aid to Mauritius, Africa, Eurasia, etc have been maintained unchanged. However, allocation under the Secretariat, Embassies and Missions, Special Diplomatic Expenditure, South Asian University, Nalanda International University, United Nations Organisation have been increased.

BE 2020-21: Based on overall budget allocation and the expected pace of expenditure, allocations have been rationalized in the Aid budget heads, which will be reviewed at the RE stage based on the pace of expenditure and progress on the ground.

1.35 The Ministry also provided the details of schemes/projects/activities where allocations were rationalized as a result of the actual pace of expenditure and the overall budget allocation under RE 2019-20 are as follows: -

(Rs. in Crores)

Schemes	BE 2019-20	RE 2019-20
Bhutan		
Grants	2135.79	2048.28
Loans	666.00	626.23
Nepal	1050	1200
Mauritius	1100	1100
Aid to Bangladesh	175.00	150.00
Aid to Sri Lanka	250.00	205.00
Aid to Maldives Grants	400.00	150.00
Myanmar	400.00	170.00
Aid to Mongolia	5.00	2.00
Aid to Latin American Countries	15.00	10.00
Chahbahar Port	45.00	0.00
Aid to Seychelles	100.00	50.00
ITEC-Programme	220.00	200.00
Indo-Pacific Co-operation (ASEAN Multilateral)	45.00	30.00
Investment Promotion and Publicity Programme	300.00	200.00
Non-Scheme	BE 2019-20	RE 2019-20
Passport & Emigration	1620.95	1604.39
Entertainment Charges	367.75	323.13
Other Scheme	8.51	6.91
Public Works	381.55	190.00
Housing	150.00	140.00
Expenditure relating to Pilgrimages abroad	13.00	11.00

The schemes/projects/activities where allocations were rationalized due to overall allocation under BE 2020-21 as well as expected utilization in the next Financial year are as follows : -

(Rs. in crores)

Schemes	BE 2019-20	BE 2020-21
Bhutan		
Grants	2135.79	2052.37
Aid to Nepal	1050.00	800.00
Aid to Sri Lanka	250.00	200.00
Aid to Maldives		
Grants	400.00	300.00
Loans	176.00	0.00
Myanmar	400.00	300.00
Aid to Mongolia	5.00	2.00
Aid to African Countries	450.00	350.00
Aid to Other Developing Countries	150.00	120.00
Aid to Mauritius	1100.00	1025.00
Investment Promotion and Publicity Programme	300.00	250.00
Non-Scheme	BE 2019-20	BE 2020-21
Passport & Emigration	1620.95	1348.59
Entertainment Charges	367.75	284.19
Public Works	381.55	350.00
Expenditure relating to Pilgrimages abroad	13.00	1.00
India Centre for Migration	0.50	0.50

B. Scheme And Non-Scheme

1.36 The following table indicates the budgetary allocation as per the Scheme and Non-Scheme Sections during 2019-20 and 2020-21.

(Rs. in Crores)

Section	BE 2019-20	RE 2019-20	BE 2020-21
Scheme	8175.79	7246.01	7449.65
Non-Scheme	9708.99	10126.26	9897.06
Total	17884.78	17372.27	17346.71

1.37 On being asked about the objectives for classification of the budget into Scheme and Non-Scheme, the Ministry replied that the „Scheme“ and „Non-Scheme“ classification has been made by Ministry of Finance, and is not specific to MEA. Ministry of Finance“s Budget Circular for FY 2017-18 in its introductory chapter states the following with regard to doing away with the Plan/Non-Plan classification (leaving the Scheme/Non-Scheme classification).A significant reform initiative in the budgeting process, announced by the Finance Minister in his budget speech of 2016-17, is the merger of Plan and non-Plan distinction in expenditure budgeting. This is to be implemented from the budget of 2017-18. The reform has been initiated in light of the policy decision to do away with the term „Plan“ while distinguishing expenditure on socio-economic welfare programmes and schemes in the wake of abolition of Planning Commission. Besides, a notion has widely gained ground among the policy makers and officials across all levels that Plan expenditure is good and Non-Plan is bad. This bias in favour of Plan expenditure and against Non-Plan expenditure has led to a situation in which essential Non-Plan expenditure such as maintenance of assets, recruitment of doctors, teachers, etc. is neglected. This has also led to a motivation for showing higher Plan expenditure and higher Plan sizes both at Central and State levels.

1.38 Further, several factors such as shift of focus of Plan expenditure from capital to revenue expenditure and the process of transferring expenditure of old schemes to Non-Plan at the end of each Five-Year Plan means that a clear correspondence cannot be drawn between Plan and developmental expenditures. The Plan/Non-Plan bifurcation of expenditure has also contributed to a fragmented view of resource allocation to various programmes/schemes. With this fragmented distinction, it is difficult not only to ascertain cost of delivering a service but also to link outlays to outcomes. Outcomes and outputs of programmes depend on total expenditure, Plan and Non-Plan put together and merely on Plan expenditure. Plan and Non-Plan distinction in the budget is, therefore, neither able to provide a satisfactory classification of developmental and non-developmental dimensions of Government expenditure nor an appropriate budgetary framework. In the above context, the Government has decided to do away with the practice of classifying expenditure as „Plan“ and „Non-Plan“ in the Budget. The reclassification of expenditure under accounting heads will start from Budget 2017-18 and after the 12th Plan period (2012-17) comes to an end. With the removal of the Plan and Non-Plan distinction the focus of budgeting and expenditure classification will shift to revenue and capital, as has been

envisaged in the Constitution of India. A clear distinction between capital and revenue expenditures is also essential for analytical purposes, transparency, and efficient policy decision-making.

1.39 The details of allocations under the heads of Schemes as per the Ministry are as follows: -

(Rs. In crores)

Schemes	BE 2019-20
Bhutan	
Grants	2135.79
Loans	666.00
Afghanistan	400.00
Aid to Bangladesh	175.00
Aid to Nepal	1050.00
Aid to Sri Lanka	250.00
Aid to Maldives	0.00
Grants	400.00
Loans	176.00
Myanmar	400.00
Aid to Mongolia	5.00
Aid to African Countries	450.00
Eurasian Countries	45.00
Aid to Latin American Countries	15.00
Aid to Other Developing Countries	150.00
Aid for Disaster Relief	20.00
Chahbahar Port	45.00
Aid to Mauritius	1100.00
Aid to Seychelles	100.00
ITEC-Programme	220.00
SAARC Programme	8.00
SCAAP Programme	0.00
Multilateral Economic Relation (MER) Programme	20.00
TCS of Colombo Plan	0.00
Indo-Pacific Co-operation (ASEAN Multilateral)	45.00
Energy Security	0.00
Investment Promotion and Publicity Programme	300.00
Total Schemes	8175.79

1.40 The details of allocations under the heads of Non-Schemes are as follows: -

(Rs. In crores)

Non-Scheme	BE 2019-20
Secretariat-General Services	459.94

Embassies & Missions	2748.06
Passport & Emigration	1620.95
International Conferences/ Meetings	0.50
Entertainment Charges	367.75
Other Scheme	8.51
Public Works	381.55
Housing	150.00
Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana	0.00
Special Diplomatic Expenditure	2663.01
International Cooperation	448.69
Nalanda University	220.00
South Asian University	317.50
Demarcation of Boundaries	3.00
Celebration of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas	0.00
Expenditure relating to Pilgrimages abroad	13.00
Loss by exchange	0.01
Grants to Institutions	0.00
Other Institutions	3.72
Training	25.30
Indian Council of Cultural Relations	250.00
Indian Council of World Affairs	15.00
Research and Information System for Developing Countries	12.00
India Centre for Migration	0.50
Total Non-Scheme	9708.99
GRAND TOTAL	17884.78

1.41 On being asked about the existence of a monitoring mechanism for keeping a check on expenditure under the aegis of the new categorization of expenditure under „Scheme“ and „Non-Scheme“ Heads, the Ministry replied that all expenditure is closely monitored and fund releases are made in line with implementation progress of projects, programmes and schemes, including through quarterly expenditure review meetings. There has been more intensive monitoring and review of the technical aid and development assistance projects in the past year, including at the level of the External Affairs Minister and Foreign Secretary. These reviews have identified the way forward for many projects where progress was slow. Further, due to the regular review and monitoring of MEA’s scheme section at high levels, several new initiatives and projects have been identified in consultation with the concerned beneficiary host governments, which would be getting finalized and operationalized in the next two financial years.

1.42 An amount of Rs. 7449.65 crore and Rs. 9897.06 crore has been earmarked for Scheme and Non-Scheme sections respectively for the FY 2020-21. Explicating the rationale for decreased allocation at the BE 2020-21 stage *vis-à-vis* BE 2019-20 under the Scheme head, the Ministry informed that it may be noted that BE 2019-20 allocation for Scheme head (Rs. 8175.79 cr.) was itself a significant increase over BE 2018-19 allocation (Rs. 5985.05). The slightly reduced allocation in BE 2020-21 (Rs. 7449.65 cr.) is still much higher than the allocation made to the Scheme section in 2018-19 (Rs. 5985.05 cr.) and in previous years. The Ministry undertakes a detailed and careful assessment of funds requirements for the various heads in the MEA budget, in consultation with concerned Divisions and Spending Units, as per funds utilization status and implementation progress of projects, schemes and programmes, to suitably allocate funds within BE 2020-21 ceilings conveyed by Ministry of Finance, to ensure that Ministry's ongoing projects, schemes, programmes and commitments have requisite funds.

1.43 The Scheme Section primarily comprises the Technical and Economic Cooperation (Grants and Loans) assistance programmes for other countries. Despite the Committee's repeated recommendations on refraining from any budgetary cuts under such a significant aspect of our diplomatic outreach, the Committee wanted to know the reason for diminished deduction under this head over the years. In a written reply, the Ministry submitted that the Scheme section of the MEA budget comprises Grants and Loans to foreign countries, where it is to be ensured that expenditure is in line with physical progress of projects to ensure that there is no parking of funds with concerned implementing agencies. Identified savings in areas where there is slow spending are therefore suitably re-appropriated at the RE stage and provided to heads which require more funds, to ensure that all of Government's projects and commitments, international and domestic, are provided with requisite funds. The reasons for slow spending in some of the Aid heads, i.e. the Scheme Section, is largely on account of our technical assistance and development cooperation schemes, projects and programmes being implemented abroad. The funds demands sometimes include projects and schemes in the planning stage or under discussion with the concerned beneficiary foreign government, and these are included in the Ministry's overall budgetary demands in anticipation, to avoid any interruption in implementation later. However, at times, the timeframe for the finalization and execution of such initiatives may become longer than expected because of extraneous factors such as delay in approvals or land acquisition on the part of the beneficiary government or adverse local

conditions such as security concerns, political instability, change of regime, unfavourable weather, geological surprises at the work front etc. Such unforeseen circumstances, causing delay in project implementation and thus a slowdown in funds utilization, causing savings to occur in some BE allocations, which are then addressed in the RE stage.

1.44 When asked about the steps taken by the Ministry to convince the Ministry of Finance for better budgetary allocation under heads that specifically caters to our international image, the Ministry replied that allocations to MEA budget heads adhere to the overall RE and BE ceilings given by Ministry of Finance, while ensuring that none of our international commitments or projects are adversely impacted. Over the years, the issue of provision adequate allocation of funds has been taken up with the Ministry of Finance at various levels, including that of Minister, Secretary and Financial Advisor.

1.45 The Ministry has stated that the reasons for slow spending in some of the Aid heads, *i.e.* the Scheme Section, is largely on account of our technical assistance and development cooperation schemes, projects and programmes being implemented abroad. Even though the extraneous factors are taken into consideration, the Committee desired to know the implications of such budgetary cuts on our foreign policy goals and priorities. In a written reply, the Ministry clarified that the host/beneficiary countries of the Ministry's technical assistance and development cooperation initiatives are fully cognizant of the challenges faced in their implementation due to extraneous factors, and are GoI's partners in jointly finding solutions to address them. India is recognized by fellow developing countries for our willingness and ability to provide technical and financial assistance through our development cooperation initiatives.

1.46 **The Committee are aware that after the discontinuation of the Plan and Non-Plan classification since 2017-18, budget classifications are done only in terms of Revenue and Capital heads and Scheme and Non-Scheme sections. During the examination of budget documents, the Committee observe reduced allocation under both the Revenue and Capital sections for RE 2019-20 as well as BE 2020-21 *vis-à-vis* BE 2019-20. The Ministry has submitted that the declining trend in both the sections is a reflection of the overall budgetary allocation given to MEA and overall BE/RE ceilings. Owing to reduction in**

allocations, various schemes/programmes/activities of the Ministry had to be rationalized during RE 2019-20 as well as BE 2020-21. On the basis of the replies and justifications furnished by the Ministry of External Affairs, the Committee deduce that the Ministry has accepted this fact of reduced allocations and further adjustments as the ceilings given by the Ministry of Finance. Given the Committee's expectations from the MEA in the context of making India a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25 it is but imperative that the Ministry thinks beyond its conventional requirement of funds. For an endeavor of such a global magnitude, funds ought not be a constraint for any reason whatsoever. The Committee, therefore, recommend that a compelling rationale must be presented for availability of requisite funds to MEA through engagement with the Ministry of Finance at all levels, focused budgetary planning process and usage of comparative facts and figures and with the imperative to bolster India's standing in the comity of nations at the backdrop and the 5 trillion dollar economy target firmly in view.

(Recommendation No. 5)

1.47 The Committee observe that in terms of distribution, about 43 % of MEA's budget is on Scheme side and about 57 % on the Non-Scheme. The Scheme section primarily comprises of Technical and Economic Cooperation with other countries, which is a central plank of our diplomatic outreach. The Committee further observe that there has been a marginal decrease in allocation under this head during BE 2019-20. In its queries on the issue, the Ministry has stated that the slightly reduced allocation in BE 2020-21 (Rs. 7449.65 crores) is still much higher than the allocations made in 2018-19 (Rs. 5985.05 crores) and in previous years. The Committee find the justification offered by the Ministry unconvincing. The Committee also note that the expenditure under the Scheme section is

closely monitored and funds are released on the basis of progress reports of the implementation of programmes and schemes. The Ministry has also informed that as a result of intensive monitoring and review of technical aid and development projects in the past year, several new initiatives and projects have been identified in consultation with the concerned beneficiary host governments.

The Committee are of the considered view that the Ministry of External Affairs should continue making persistent efforts to pursue the Ministry of Finance to facilitate a better appreciation of our technical and development cooperation and associated fund requirements. The Ministry may also apprise the Committee about the various new initiatives and projects once it gets crystallized.

(Recommendation No. 6)

III. REVIEW OF PAST PERFORMANCE

1.48 On being asked about the reason for the huge gap between RE 2019-20 and actual expenditure, the Ministry replied that the expenditure in 2019-20 upto December 2019 only is Rs. 13413.41 crore, i.e. 77% of RE 2019-20 of Rs. 17372.27 crore and 75 % of BE 2019-20. Expenditure upto January 2020 is Rs. 14551.95 crore, i.e. 83.77% of RE 2019-20. Ministry is confident that actual expenditure by March 2019 (i.e. for the full year 2019-20) will continue to show this robust trend.

1.49 Elaborating upon the expenditure incurred during past two years, the Ministry stated that there is no sharp fall in expenditure trend. In fact, expenditure in the current financial year is significantly higher than the corresponding figure for previous financial year. The actual expenditure in 2018-19 upto January 2019 was Rs. 12634.27 crore as compared to Rs. Rs. 14551.95 crore upto January 2020, which is significantly higher than in the previous year. Similarly, the expenditure upto December 2018 was only Rs. 11361.75 crore, while expenditure upto December 2019 was Rs. 13413.41 crore.

1.50 The quarterly allocation and utilization in the last three FYs is given below

(Rs. in Crores)

2017-18	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Total
Allocation	3305.01	3305.01	3305.01	4883.52	14798.55
Utilisation	3897.14	2734.53	2227.65	4890.41	13749.73

2018-19	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Total
Allocation	3352.45	3352.45	3352.45	4953.65	15011.00
Utilisation	4860.58	3493.12	3008.05	4164.57	15526.32

2019-20	1st Quarter	2nd Quarter	3rd Quarter	4th Quarter	Total
Allocation	3994.26	3994.26	3994.26	5902.00	17884.78
Utilisation	4353.59	5623.33	3436.49	1138.54*	14551.95

**4th quarter expenditure upto January 2020.*

1.51 When asked about the steps taken by MEA for balanced expenditure during each quarter, the Ministry stated that in 2019-20, Ministry has ensured smooth and balanced pace of expenditure during each quarter. Cumulative expenditure in the first three quarters has been 24%, 55% and 75% of the BE 2019-20. This has also ensured that Ministry has fully satisfied Ministry of Finance instructions that expenditure in the final quarter should not be more than 25% of BE. All expenditure is closely monitored and fund releases are made in line with physical and financial progress of projects to ensure that there is no parking of funds with implementing agencies. To ensure optimal utilization of budgetary resources during each quarter of the financial year, expenditure is closely and regularly monitored by the Financial Advisor in consultation with Divisional Heads, including through quarterly expenditure review meetings. During the quarterly expenditure review meetings the expenditure plans of the Ministry's various Divisions and Spending Units are discussed and the importance of ensuring balanced expenditure during each quarter of the financial year is emphasized. Divisions/Spending Units accordingly make all efforts to ensure evenly paced expenditure, within the constraints of a majority of the spending being in foreign countries where diverse local conditions and varying project development and implementation schedules pose a challenge for alignment of expenditure to our own budget cycle. All instructions contained in various Circulars of Ministry of Finance towards economy measures, rationalization of expenditure, etc., are scrupulously followed by the Ministry. The number of personnel sent on visits to foreign countries is limited to the bare essential. The conduct of seminars, conferences, etc. in five star hotels is discouraged. Purchase

of new cars is banned, except against condemned ones, which is pursued with the approval of Ministry of Finance. Creation of posts is avoided, and where functionally necessary, is done with the approval of Ministry of Finance. All expenditure is closely monitored and fund releases are made in line with physical and financial progress of projects to ensure that there is no parking of funds with implementing agencies. To ensure optimal utilization of budgetary resources during each quarter of the financial year, expenditure is closely and regularly monitored by the Financial Advisor in consultation with Divisional Heads, including through quarterly expenditure review meetings.

1.52 Elaborating upon the utilization pattern of the Ministry, the Foreign Secretary during oral evidence on 27 February, 2020 submitted: -

“Similarly we have taken on board the Committee’s recommendation regarding the need for maintaining an even pace of expenditure throughout the year. This year, the Ministry of Finance has issued new instructions limiting expenditure in the last quarter of 2019-20 to only 25% of Budget Estimates (BE). The Committee will be happy to know that Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) is not adversely affected by the new instructions, since we have already utilized 75% of our Revised Estimates (RE) by December 2019, as a result of our regular monitoring and optimum utilization throughout the year. This year, the Ministry of Finance has also mandated that expenditure in the last month must not be more than 10%. We fully expect that due to timely utilization and reappropriation, we will not be adversely affected by this rule and we are making all efforts to both judiciously and fully utilize our budget allocation.”

1.53 **The Committee are pleased to note the optimal and even expenditure pattern of MEA for the financial year 2019-20. On a thorough scrutiny of the utilization pattern of budgetary allocation during 2019-20, the Committee found that the Ministry has already utilized 83.77% of RE 2019-20 allocation. The Committee note that with continuous persuasion by the Committee the Ministry has developed a mechanism to ensure optimal utilization of budgetary resources during each quarter of the financial year and the expenditure is being closely and regularly monitored by the Financial Advisor in consultation with Divisional Heads, through quarterly expenditure review meetings. The Ministry has also informed the Committee about new instructions issued by the Ministry of**

Finance regarding limiting of expenditure in the last quarter to only 25% of BE. Further the March spending has also been curtailed to a maximum 10% from the previous ceiling of 15%. The Committee are happy to learn that due to timely utilization and re-appropriation the Ministry will be able to present a convincing result sheet before the Ministry of Finance for a better appreciation of their future requirement of funds. The Committee also hope that the Ministry will also abide by the new ceiling of 10% for March spending.

The Committee are appreciative of the balanced and prudent utilization pattern of MEA for RE 2019-20 and urge that it should keep up the good performance in the last quarter of 2019-20 and in the new financial year. Such an expenditure trend will yield three benefits, that is, lead to timely progress of physical projects and targets, assist in making a strong case for increased allocation and also bolster our international credibility.

(Recommendation No. 7)

CHAPTER II

SECTORAL ALLOCATIONS

The budget's sectoral distribution for major allocations is given below:

Sector	Allocation (In ₹ Crores)	
Technical and Economic Cooperation (TEC) with foreign countries	Grants	7333.79
	Loans	842.00
	Total TEC	8175.79
Indian Missions and Posts abroad	2748.05	
Special Diplomatic Expenditure	2663.01	
Passport and Emigration	1620.95	
International Cooperation	986.19	
Capital Outlay on Public Works and Housing	531.55	
MEA Secretariat	459.93	
Grants-in-Aid to Institutions	281.22	
Others	418.06	
Total BE for FY 2019-20	17,884.75	

I. EMBASSIES AND MISSIONS

2.2 This minor head provides for expenditure on India's representation abroad and functioning of Missions and Posts abroad. An outlay of Rs. 2748.06 crore was allocated during BE 2019-20 and it was increased to Rs. 2910.56 crore at the RE stage. A provision of Rs. 2994.06 crore has been made in BE 2020-21.

2.3 Explicating the rationale behind increase in allocation at the RE stage for 2019-20 as well as BE for 2020-21, the Ministry stated that in keeping with the growing diplomatic outreach by Government of India and the need to expand our presence in various parts of the world, which are currently represented through concurrent accreditations, Government of India has already approved setting up of 18 new Missions in Africa. In pursuance of this, 9 out of these 18 Missions have been set up. Ministry is in the process of establishing the remainder of the Missions. These allocations are also affected by the movement of the Rupee vis-à-vis foreign

currencies, increase in salaries and allowance, local rents and taxes, etc. These factors accounted for increase in allocation at the RE stage for 2019-20 as well as BE for 2020-21.

2.4 The Ministry also enumerated the details of the projections made by the Ministry, allocations made and actual expenditures incurred under the Head „Embassies and Missions“ during the past three years as follows: -

(Rs. in Crores)

Financial Year	Projection		Allocation		Actual Expenditure
	BE	RE	BE	RE	
2017-18	3046.78	2778.21	2528.56	2631.47	2469.27
2018-19	2800.01	3053.62	2701.00	2678.81	2737.69
2019-20	3243.22	3060.07	2748.06	2910.56	2473.65*

* Upto January 2020.

2.5 On being specifically asked whether the available funds are adequate for smooth functioning of various Embassies and Missions abroad after the devaluation of Rupees *vis-à-vis* USD, the Ministry replied that adequate funds are provided for the smooth functioning of Missions and Posts abroad.

2.6 When asked about the criteria which determine the decision for establishment of Embassies/Missions abroad, the Ministry replied that the establishment of Missions and Posts abroad is guided by assessment of India’s geo-political priorities, level of bilateral ties, regional factors, diaspora connections, commercial, developmental, cultural interests and reciprocal ties with the country concerned, on a case to case basis. These priorities change over time and are evaluated at senior most levels in the Ministry from time to time.

2.7 In view of the expanding ties between India and other countries and taking into consideration the Hon’ble Prime Minister’s visits abroad, the Committee wanted to know about the plans of expansion in terms of establishing new Missions/Posts/Consulates/Indian Cultural Centres abroad. In a written reply, the Ministry submitted that in keeping with the growing diplomatic outreach by Government of India and the need to expand our presence in various parts of the world, which are currently represented through concurrent accreditations, Government of India has already approved setting up of 18 new Missions in Africa. In pursuance of this, 9 out of these 18 Missions have been set up. Ministry is in the process of

establishing the reminder of the Missions. Government of India is also in the process of finalizing the list of countries where we are currently unrepresented and which are of importance to our bilateral ties to further open Missions.

2.8 On being asked to furnish details about these Missions, the Ministry submitted that In March 2018, the Union Cabinet approved the opening of 18 Missions in Africa during 2018-21. Of these, 9 Missions are already operational- Burkina Faso, Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea, Rwanda and Kingdom of Eswatini (Swaziland). Missions in Cape Verde, Chad, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Sao Tome& Principe, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Togo shall be opened in phases in a time-bound fashion.

RE 2019-20 Allocation (Figures in Rs. Thousands)

S No	Name of the Missions	TOTAL
1	EoI Djibouti	102412
2	EoI Malabo	49286
3	EoI Conakry	48913
4	EoI Ouagadougou	45040
5	EoI Yaounde (Cameroon)	34096
6	HCI Mbabane (Eswatini)	25193
7	EoI Brazzaville	28202
8	EoI Asmara	28292
9	EoI Freetown	4551

2.9 Given the budgetary constraints being endured by the Ministry, the Committee wanted to know the steps have been taken by the Ministry to rationalize the working and expenditure of Indian Missions/Posts abroad. In a written reply the Ministry submitted that establishment expenditure by Ministry, including on Missions and Posts abroad, has been kept at the minimum possible. Ministry constantly reassesses requirement of funds towards „Embassies and Missions“ head and ensure that our Missions and Posts are able to fulfill Ministry’s priorities, commitments and immediate requirement of funds within the overall budgetary constraints.

2.10 On the Committee's query about data on countries where there are no resident Missions currently, the Ministry responded that India does not have resident Missions in 61 UN member States namely Albania, Andorra, Antigua & Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Costa Rica, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Grenada, Guinea Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Kiribati, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Micronesia, Monaco, Montenegro, Nauru, Nicaragua, North Macedonia, Palau, Paraguay, Republic of Moldova, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Timor Leste, Togo, Tonga, Tuvalu, Uruguay and Vanuatu. Decision to open new Missions are guided by a host of factors including geopolitical priorities, depth of bilateral ties, regional factors, diaspora connections, commercial, developmental, cultural interests etc on a case to case basis. In accordance with this, new Missions are established at the most opportune time. During the course of the oral evidence of 27 February, 2020, the Foreign Secretary informed that after focusing on the requirement of mission in Africa the Ministry's next endeavour would be regarding establishment of missions in Latin America and other places.

2.11 Regarding the existence of a centralized monitoring mechanism at Headquarters to keep a check on the activities and to ensure efficient and fast delivery of services by various Indian Missions/Posts, the Ministry stated that it monitors functioning of Missions/Posts and critically evaluates them by employing a combination of tools. While some of these tools deal with overall functioning, others are more specialized and concerned with specific spheres of work. Broadly, these tools jointly provide a realistic feedback regarding working of Missions/Posts abroad which enables the Ministry to initiate guidance, corrective actions, wherever required, on an ongoing basis. Mechanisms used by the Ministry for the purpose are listed below:

General Mechanisms:

- (a) Inspections: Ministry undertakes periodic inspection of Missions / Posts to evaluate their overall functioning with particular emphasis on all aspects such as Political, Economic & Commercial, Consular, Cultural etc. Recommendations of Inspection Teams provide specific inputs for further improvement of overall performance of Missions/Posts. These recommendations are in tune with GoI's priorities – for instance on the Economic

& Commercial work, the Missions are recommended to focus on major initiatives of the Government including 'Make in India', 'Digital India', 'Invest in India', 'Skill India', and increase interaction with the Business leaders of the country of their accreditation and Indian diaspora wherever they are prominently placed. Similarly, Missions are instructed to undertake activities under Government initiatives under the 'Swacch Bharat Abhiyan' and 'Swachta hi Seva' and maintain high standards of cleanliness in the entire Mission, especially in the Consular, Commercial, Library areas where general public visit the Mission for obtaining various services.

(b) Annual General Report: The Report submitted by all Missions is an aggregate of activities of a Mission/Post in various spheres of activities. As the Report encompasses all aspects of a Mission/Post, it helps the Ministry in assessing overall functioning of a Mission, its achievements, challenges etc. during the year. Further, the Report is also instrumental in ascertaining manpower requirements, gauging compliance with GoI's administrative and financial principles, etc.

(c) MEA Performance Smartboard: In line with the Government of India's objectives of tracking key performance metrics, the Ministry of External Affairs has developed a dashboard to make performance indicators of MEA accessible in a smart and uncluttered manner. MEA Performance "Smartboard", launched in August 2019, is a visual display of most important information relating to the Ministry. Information displayed includes data on Passports issued state-wise since 2014; growth of Passport Seva Kendras over the years, data on citizen-centric services like visas, Pilgrims, and OCI Cards, amongst others. Data on Trade & Commerce across all 193 Missions and Posts of MEA around the globe can be viewed with a single click. Information on Iconic Projects undertaken by MEA in various countries and the Grants and Loans extended as Development Assistance to countries abroad is also readily visible. Data is updated on regular basis and the MEA Performance Smartboard serves as a tool for monitoring and transparency.

Specific Mechanisms:

(a) Political Reports: Political Reports from Missions/ Posts aid GoI in calibrating its foreign policy. These Reports are sent by Missions and Posts on a weekly,

monthly and annual basis. Other than these periodical Reports, special issue-specific despatches are sent from time to time. These despatches provide an in-depth analysis on multiple issues of interest. Heads of Mission sent their overall assessment every year which usually contains their evaluation of the year, prognosis/projections and policy recommendations.

(b) Economic & Commercial Reports: Ministry obtains detailed inputs regarding bilateral trade, investment, projects, sectors with potential, tenders/ opportunities, etc. from Missions/Posts on a monthly basis. Inputs are also shared with Department of Commerce on a bi-monthly basis with the objective of employing targeted interventions towards bolstering commercial and economic engagements. Annual trends are captured through the Annual Economic & Commercial Reports. Ministry also send guidance and advice to Missions/ Posts such as specific focus on “Study in India”, agricultural & food exports, major business events, etc.

(c) Annual Consular Report: With increased focus on diaspora engagement and timely delivery of services to Indian citizens abroad, this Report provides valuable information regarding efficiency of Missions/Posts in delivering efficiently on this front. With Government’s emphasis on expanding the scope of tourism and attracting investors, data on visas which feature in the Report becomes critical inputs in framing/ modifying its visa policies, tourism promotion and other initiatives.

(d) Cultural outreach, etc.: Missions/ Posts with dedicated cultural centres or active interface in cultural and public diplomacy sphere report periodically about cultural promotion activities and suggestions for strengthening the cultural, educational and community outreach in respective countries. There is similar engagement between the Ministry and Missions/ Posts in areas such as development cooperation, scientific collaboration, and projects in relevant countries.

Through the above-mentioned mechanisms, it is the constant endeavour of the Ministry to regularly monitor the functioning and performance of Indian Missions and Posts abroad towards increasing efficiency and effectiveness in their day-to-day functioning and providing guidance and support, wherever required.

2.12 The Committee in their 21st Report of DFG (2018-19) had desired that a centralized monitoring mechanism should be established to ensure an efficient and timely delivery of services in the Indian Missions/Posts abroad. In the ATR, the Ministry had stated that the Performance Evaluation and Monitoring System (PEMS) was currently being modified to put in place an annual appraisal system by which a dynamic two way interface between Ministry and Missions/Posts can take place. Furnishing the details of work completed on the newly modified portal on performance appraisal of Missions Posts abroad, the Ministry replied that the Directorate General of Inspection (DGI) was set-up in 2014 to streamline the system of inspection of Indian Mission/Posts abroad. Ministry introduced a web-portal namely Performance Evaluation and Monitoring System (PEMS) in 2016 using a set of 60 binary questions for use as basis for selection of Missions/Posts for onsite inspections. On the basis of this, till date 46 Missions/Posts have been inspected so far. However, it was felt that on-site inspection of Missions/Posts is a time consuming process and it is not possible to inspect more than 15-20 Mission/Posts in a year. It was thus decided that off-site inspection mechanism may also be put in place. Keeping this in mind, it was planned that existing PEMS portal be modified with a view to not only identify Missions/Posts for onsite inspection but also to enable Ministry to undertake off-site inspection of all Mission/Posts on the basis of documents submitted/uploaded by them on PEMS portal. It may be agreed that this is an innovative step being planned by any Ministry/Department of the Government of India and thus took some time for ministry to implement. Inputs from several Divisions have already been sought to frame suitable questions/queries which would enable the Ministry to conclude whether a particular Mission/Posts is in compliance with ministry's directions on a particular subject/matter. Since, Missions/Posts abroad work with limited work-force, attempt has also been made that the submission/upload of documents on revamped PEMS portal by Missions/Posts do not add to the existing work pressures. The revamped PEMS portal may be launched by ministry in the second quarter of 2020.

2.13 Furnishing the details of inspections held by the Directorate General of Inspections in the Missions/Posts abroad during last two years, the Ministry stated that the Directorate General of Inspections (DGI) was set-up in 2014 to streamline the system of regular inspection of Indian Mission/Posts abroad. Ministry introduced a web-portal namely Performance Evaluation and Monitoring System in 2016 using a set of 60 binary questions for use as basis for selection of

Mission/Posts for onsite inspections. The endeavour is to impress upon the Missions/Posts that their performance is under regular vigil and is being monitored at Headquarters. On the basis of this, 10 Missions/Posts have been inspected in 2018 and 2019. During the Inspections, The Inspection Team conducted a comprehensive inspection broadly encompassing issues related to Administration, Establishment, Consular, Visa and Commercial issues, Finance and Accounting, Security, Communication, cultural, utilization of resources and various activities undertaken by the Mission/Posts in the last few years. The Inspection Teams found that there had been considerable scaling up of activities by the Missions/Posts. The political engagement and bilateral meetings have considerably picking up pace. Missions/Posts changed the previous mould of limited contacts with the local Indian origin people and extensively reached out them. Missions/Posts were inspected keeping in mind the mandated terms of reference for the Inspections and the local operational level of Missions/Posts.

2.14 The Committee's further query regarding the existence of an internal mechanism to monitor that all the instructions issued by the Headquarters reach the Missions/Posts on time/immediately and are followed across its establishment particularly regarding Consular and visa services. In a written reply, the Ministry submitted that the consular matters in Ministry are dealt with by CPV, PSP and OIA Divisions. The instructions, as required by these Divisions are conveyed to Missions/Posts from time to time. Visa Policy falls under the purview of MHA and accordingly instructions on the subject are mainly issued by MHA and are transmitted to Missions/Posts by Ministry as soon as they are received. However, in order to further improvise transmission of visa related instructions, since last year all changes in visa policy matters and fresh instructions being issued by MHA are uploaded on web portal (Indianvisaonline.gov.in) immediately upon issuance. The working of Consular Wing of Missions/Posts is monitored by respective Division of the Ministry regularly and periodic reports are sought from individual Mission/Post. The inspection team from Ministry's Inspection Unit (under CNV & I Division) which undertakes periodic inspection of the functioning of Missions/Posts abroad also inspects the functioning of Consular Wing of the respective Mission/Post. In addition, all Missions/Posts are required to send Annual Consular Report on the work being done by them. There has not been any generic issue with regard to functioning of the Consular Wings in the last three years. However, wherever required, vigilance team also undertakes inspection of the Missions/Posts.

2.15 The Committee observe that there has been an upward trend in budgetary allocation under the sub-head ‘Missions and Embassies’, moving from Rs. 2748.06 crore in BE 2019-20 to Rs. 2910. 56 crore at RE 2019-20 stage and to Rs. 2994.06 crore at BE 2020-21 stage. As per the Ministry, the enhanced allocation under this Head is in keeping with the growing diplomatic outreach by the Government of India and the need to expand our presence in various parts of the world, which are presently represented through concurrent accreditations. The Committee note that the establishment of Missions and Posts abroad is guided by six factors – assessment of India’s geo-political priorities, level of bilateral ties, regional factors, diaspora connections, commercial, developmental cultural interests and reciprocal ties with the countries concerned. The Committee also observe that approval has been given for establishment of 18 new Missions in Africa. Of these, 9 Missions are already operational in Burkina Faso, Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guinea, Rwanda and Kingdom of Eswatini (Swaziland).

The Committee are satisfied to note that with increase in the allocation under the sub-head ‘Embassies and Mission’ for 2020-21 the Ministry has shown determination to open new Missions in the countries. However, India still has no resident Missions in 61 UN member states, mostly in Africa and Latin America and it is carrying out preparatory work to ascertain the feasibility of establishing new Missions in such countries. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should complete the establishment of the remaining 9 Missions in Africa in a time-bound manner and after taking into consideration the various factors, prepare a roadmap along with timelines for opening up of Missions in remaining countries and apprise the Committee about the same. In view of our relations

with Latin American countries, the Committee expect the Ministry to accord due priority to setting up of Missions/Posts in that region.

(Recommendation No. 8)

2.16 In their previous Report on Demands for Grants, the Committee have been urging the Ministry to improve monitoring mechanism of all the Missions/Posts abroad. The Committee observe that the Ministry has resorted to two broad tools *i.e* General Mechanisms such as inspections, annual general report, MEA Performance Smart Board and Specific Mechanisms like Political Reports, Economic and Commercial Reports, Annual Consular Report, Cultural Outreach etc. to regularly monitor the functioning and performance of Indian Missions and Posts abroad. The Ministry has apprised the Committee that the web-portal namely Performance Evaluation and Monitoring Systems (PEMS) is being revamped and will be launched by second quarter of 2020.

The Committee are pleased to learn that the combination of tools employed by MEA for monitoring the functioning and performance of Indian Missions/Posts abroad with the objective of increasing their efficiency and effectiveness has considerably scaled up the activities by Missions and Posts and political engagement and bilateral meetings have picked up the pace. In this regard, the Committee, however, would suggest that the Ministry should prepare an annual data on the overall outcomes of monitoring mechanism of various Missions/Posts abroad along with the country-specific challenges faced by them. The Committee also desire to be apprised about the launching of the revamped PEMS portal which has already failed on several schedules.

(Recommendation No. 9)

II. PASSPORT AND EMIGRATION

2.17 The sub-head „Passport and Emigration“ caters to expenditure on Passport Offices, printing of travel documents, lease/purchase of passport printers, payments to State Governments and Union Territories for verifications, expenses of pre-departure orientation and skill upgradation of emigrant workers etc. Expenditure on procurement of travel documents has been increasing due to an increase in number of travel documents issued. The allocation during BE 2019-20 was Rs. 1620.95 crore decreased to Rs. 1604.39 crore at the RE stage. The budgetary allocation for BE 2020-21 has been decreased to Rs. 1348.59 crore.

2.18 The issuance of passports has emerged as one of the most noticeable statutory and citizen-centric services rendered by the Ministry. The Ministry has been making quantitative and qualitative changes so that passports can be delivered to the citizens in a timely, transparent, more accessible, reliable manner and in a comfortable environment through streamlined processes and by a committed, trained and motivated workforce.

2.19 The Committee enquired about the details of the progress made in the work relating to establishment of PSKs/PoPSKs and the amount allocated for each project during 2019-20, the Ministry replied that at present, 93 Passport Seva Kendras (PSK) and 424 Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSK) are functioning as extended arms of the 36 Passport Offices in the country thus providing extended reach to passport applicants. 12 POPSK have so far been opened during 2019-20 taking the total number of functional POPSK to 424. With the addition of 424 POPSK, the total number of Passport Kendras operational in the country for the benefit of the citizens is 517 as on 13 February, 2020. An allocation of Rs. 326 crore has been made under the Budget Head “Information Technology” in FY 2019-20. Expenditure on setting up of POPSK is met out of this Budget Head. No amount has been specifically allocated for setting up of POPSK. There were no PSKs/POPSKs pending due to lack of inadequate funds and have been completed in this financial year.

2.20 The Committee also desired to know about the measures that have been taken to make quantitative and qualitative improvements in the delivery of passport services in the country during 2019-20. The Ministry responded that as regards quantitative improvements, 12 POPSK have been added into the Passport Seva Programme (PSP) during 2019-20 raising the total

number of POPSKs to 424 to provide greater reach to the citizens at their doorsteps for convenience and ease of Passport related services. In addition, the Passport Seva Programme has been extended to Indian Missions/Posts abroad in order to provide better and smoother service delivery experience to Indian Diaspora living abroad. As on date, 54 Indian Missions/Posts have been integrated into PSP and integration in several other Missions/Posts is in progress.

2.21 As regards qualitative improvements, following enhancements have been undertaken to improve the service levels:

- (i) Apply, pay and book appointments through mPassport Seva mobile App
- (ii) Apply anywhere in India
- (iii) Enhancement in Passport booklet design and quality
- (iv) Addition of another central passport printing facility in Mumbai for spill over load catering to seasonal spikes
- (v) Electronic Exit letter and Token Issuance at PSKs providing paperless environment and promoting green initiatives of GOI
- (vi) Centralised granting facility for better resource management ensuring greater productivity
741 DPHq have been integrated with PSP system and mPassport Police App have also made the Police Verification (PV) Process faster thus decreasing the turnaround time for PV.

2.22 The service delivery of passports in terms of „Normal“ and „Tatkaal“ passports to applicants is given below:

Type of Passport	2018 (in Days)	2019 (in Days)
Normal (excluding PV time)	6	8
Tatkaal (excluding PV time)	2	4
Police Verification Time	18	18

2.23 Police Verification plays an important role in timely issuance of passports. The Ministry has launched the „mPassport Police“ app for speedy submission of Police Verification Report (PVR) to bring down the time limit of verification to twenty one days. The Ministry informed that the number of applications processed through the „mPassport Police“ App in 2019 was 31,12,900. Overall 66, 68,031 passport applications have been processed through this app till 31

January, 2020. This app is being used in 208 DPHq covering 4,668 Police Stations as on 31 January, 2020. The State/UT where „mPassport Police“ App has been launched, the average PVR submission time has reduced to 12 days.

2.24 On being asked about the technical constraints faced by the Passport offices in capturing the Police Verification Report (PVR) digitally, the Ministry replied that the Passport Offices have not faced any constraints after launch of „mPassport Police“ App. It has rather helped them to ascertain the data entry, approval etc. done by the police authorities in the App including meta-data remarks mentioned by the filed verification officials against each PV questionnaire.

2.25 The Ministry has informed that the Passport Seva Project (PSP) went „live“ in June 2012 with the opening of 77 Passport Seva Kendras (PSK) as prescribed in the Request for Proposal (RFP)/ Master Service Agreement (MSA) between the Ministry of External Affairs and the Service Provider M/s Tata Consultancy Services (TCS). Thereafter, the Ministry has opened another 16 PSK and 424 POPSK till date functioning as the extended arms of the 36 Passport Offices in the country in rendering passport related services today. More POPSK are scheduled to be inaugurated in the near future. The PSP has received till January 2020 nearly 8 crore passport and passport-related applications in India and abroad. The number of applications received in 2019 was more than 1.28 crore.

2.26 On being asked about the constraints faced by the Ministry in expansion of PSPs, it stated that a challenge being faced by the Ministry in the expansion of the PSP is the shortage of personnel in the Central Passport Organization (CPO) particularly those at the Superintendent level to function as the Granting Officers (PGO). There is also shortage of Assistant Superintendents, Senior Passport Assistants (SPA), and Junior Passport Assistant (JPA) who function as Verification Officers (VO).

2.27 The Committee also wanted to know about the progress made so far in the direction of integration of Missions and Posts abroad with the Passport Seva Portal. The Ministry informed that as on date, 54 Missions/Posts abroad have been integrated with Passport Seva system as on 13 February, 2020. The integration is under progress in several other Missions/Posts abroad. The progress status is depicted below:

No.	Mission/Post	No.	Mission/Post
1	Australia - Canberra	2	Australia - Melbourne
3	Australia - Perth	4	Australia - Sydney
5	Bahrain - Manama	6	Botswana-Gaborone
7	Brunei Darussalam-Bandar Seri Begawan	8	Canada - Ottawa
9	Canada - Toronto	10	Canada - Vancouver
11	China-Hong Kong	12	China-Shanghai
13	China - Beijing	14	France - Paris
15	Greece-Athens	16	Indonesia-Bali
17	Indonesia-Jakarta	18	Italy-Milan
19	Italy-Rome	20	Japan-Tokyo
21	Kuwait - Kuwait City	22	Malaysia – Kuala Lumpur
23	Mexico-Mexico City	24	Myanmar-Yangon
25	New Zealand - Wellington	26	Nigeria-Lagos
27	Oman – Muscat	28	Qatar - Doha
29	Rwanda - Kigali	30	Russian Federation - Moscow
31	Russian Federation-St. Petersburg	32	Russian Federation - Vladivostok
33	Saudi Arabia - Jeddah	34	Saudi Arabia - Riyadh
35	Singapore - Singapore	36	Spain - Madrid
37	Sri Lanka - Colombo	38	Sri Lanka - Hambantota
39	Sri Lanka - Kandy	40	Switzerland-Geneva
41	Thailand-Bangkok	42	United Arab Emirates - Abu Dhabi
43	United Arab Emirates - Dubai	44	Uganda-Kampala
45	United Kingdom - Birmingham	46	United Kingdom - Edinburgh
47	United Kingdom - London	48	USA - Atlanta
49	USA - Chicago	50	USA - Houston
51	USA - New York	52	USA - San Francisco
53	USA - Washington DC	54	Vietnam-Ho Chinn Minh City

2.28 When asked about the allocation made during BE 2020-21 for integration of Mission/Posts with PSPs, the Ministry replied that there is no separate budget head for Missions/Posts integration. Expenditure on the procurement of IT equipment is to be met out of the Budget Head of the PSP Division under “2061.00.105.01.99.13 Information Technology

(OE)” in the event of adequate funds being not available in the Missions“/Posts“ relevant Budget Head “2061.00.101.01.99.13 Information Technology (OE)”.

2.29 The Committee were curious to know whether there exists any database, containing details of passports issued to Indian citizens. The Ministry replied that a central database containing details of passports is maintained by the Ministry which is called Passport Related Information Data Exchange (PRIDE).

2.30 The Ministry has informed that it maintains a database called Passport Related Information Data Exchange (PRIDE). On being asked about the details about this database, the Ministry replied that the Passport Related Information Data Exchange (PRIDE) database was set up as part of the Passport Seva Project. It superseded the Passport Information System on Net (PISON) database set up by the National Informatics Centre (NIC). The legacy passport data has been transferred from PISON to PRIDE. Passport data currently being generated by the Passport Issuing Authorities (PIA) in India and abroad through the PSP system is directly fed into the PRIDE. The data of other Missions/Posts, which are part of Centralized Indian Passport Printing System (CIPPS), are updated into PRIDE the very next working day.

2.31 Regarding existence of a Grievance Redressal Mechanism related to passport services, the Ministry stated that under the Passport Seva Project, MEA has put in place a strengthened Grievance Redressal system whereby a multilingual National Call Centre with a toll free number (1800-258-1800), operating in 17 languages and on 24X7 basis, has been set up to cater to dissemination of information about various passport-related services, including handling of grievances and citizen feedback, which at present works on a central system platform. It handled approximately 15,000 calls per day in the year 2019 (out of which 55% were in Hindi, 25% in English and 24% in regional languages). The Passport portal has also an email-based helpdesk, where suggestions and grievances can be logged. Citizens can also monitor the status of their passport application/grievance online through this portal. All Passport Offices (POs) handle public grievances through the latest version of CPGRAMS 7.0 of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions (<https://pgportal.gov.in>) and Passport grievances i.e. Service Request Number (SRN) received through Passport portal. Information and Facilitation Counters, Public Grievance Cell, complaint/ suggestion boxes and Help Desks have been set up at strategic locations in PO and PSK to assist applicants and to attend to grievances/ complaints

expeditiously. The name, address and phone number of the Public Grievance Officer are also displayed in the PO/PSK and on the website of the PO. There is a Public Grievance redressal mechanism in all POs to enquire into and redress any complaints from citizens in a timeframe. The average grievance redressal time under CPGRAMS is 15 days.

2.32 The Central Passport Organization (CPO) was created in 1959 as a Subordinate Office of the Ministry and is headed by Joint Secretary and Chief Passport Officer, who also acts as Appellate Authority under the Passports Act 1967 and the Head of Department under the Delegation of Financial Powers Rules 1978. As per the Ministry the total sanctioned strength of the CPO Cadre is 2,697 against which the working strength is 1,821 as on 01.02.2020. In addition, 15 Technical and 6 supporting staff man the Project Management Unit (PMU) of the Passport Seva Project.

2.33 On being asked about the progress made so far to fill up the vacant gazetted/non-gazetted posts in CPO. The Ministry stated that the difficulty in filling the vacant posts in the CPO cadre stems from the extant Recruitment Rules. Direct recruitment is possible only in the grades of Office Assistant, Junior Passport Assistant (JPA), Stenographer, Junior Translator and Assistant Superintendent. The Ministry has been regularly placing its indents with the Staff Selection Commission (SSC) for recruitment in these grades as per available vacancies. Indents for 310 have been placed with SSC since 2017 for recruitment in these grades as per available vacancies. Recently, 87 Dossiers for the post of JPA have been received from SSC and the Ministry is in the process of issuing offers of appointment letters to them. Further, the Granting Officers are in the grades of Superintendent and Senior Superintendent where 100% recruitment is by promotion of Assistant Superintendents. There is no scope for direct entry or taking officials on deputation, or promotion of Assistant Superintendent possible through Limited Departmental Competitive Examination (LDCE). There is also shortage of Assistant Superintendents with requisite qualifying service to be promoted as Superintendent. Ministry is regularly conducting Departmental Promotion Committees (DPCs) to promote eligible officials to the next grade. The Ministry has, however, engaged 361 Data Entry Operators and 60 Office Assistant (MTS) through Outsourced Service Provider to bridge the gap between the sanctioned strength and the working strength of the non-gazetted posts.

2.34 The Ministry has mentioned that shortage of personnel in Central Passport Organization (CPO) is a major challenge in the expansion of Passport Seva Project. Specifying the efforts made to overcome this challenge, the Ministry replied that the vacancies at Group 'A' level are filled up by promotion failing which by taking officers on deputation as per Recruitment Rules from other Government Departments. Regular meetings of the Departmental Promotion Committee (DPC) have been held in the CPO during the year. Up to December 2019, 1 Passport Officer from Deputy Passport Officer, 17 Deputy Passport Officers from Assistant Passport Officers, 37 Assistant Passport Officers from Senior Superintendents, 1 Superintendent from Assistant Superintendent and 7 Assistant Superintendents from Senior Passport Assistants have been promoted. Ministry has also deployed 370 Data Entry Operators and 60 Office Assistants (MTS) against the vacant non-Gazetted posts for smooth functioning of the Passport Offices through an Outsourced Agency to bridge the gap between the sanctioned strength and the working strength of the non-Gazetted posts. A proposal for the physical inspection and staffing study of CPO by the Staff Inspection Unit (SIU) of the Department of Expenditure has been sent to the Ministry of Finance in November 2019.

2.35 The Committee in their various Reports have highlighted the issue of inadequate human resource in the Ministry, as reflected in the gap between the sanctioned and actual strength. The Ministry has stated that the difficulty in filling the vacant posts in the CPO cadre stems from the extant recruitment Rules. The Committee wanted to know about the concrete steps taken by the Ministry to put across to the concerned Division/Department/Ministry about the problems faced by them on account of extant Recruitment Rules and due to shortage of staff. In a written reply the Ministry enumerated that there are 920 posts which are lying vacant as on 01.02.2020 in various grades in the Central Passport Organization as under:

Sl. No.	Group 'A'		Group 'B' Gazetted		Group 'B' and Group 'C' non Gazetted	
	Sanctioned Strength	Working Strength	Sanctioned strength	Working strength	Sanctioned strength	Working strength
Total	226	189	565	268	1950	1364
Vacancy	37		297		586	

As per Recruitment Rules the minimum length of service in the lower grade prescribed as a condition for promotion to the higher grade. The qualifying service for promotion from one

grade to another is necessary so that there is no premature promotion or under jump in pay and also to ensure that the officer has sufficient opportunity to demonstrate his competence/potential for holding the higher post. The period of qualifying service varies from post to post depending upon the scale of pay and the experience, required for manning the higher post. The Recruitment Rules are framed with the approval of Department of Personal and Training, Union Public Service Commission and Ministry of Law & Justice by making the qualifying service for promotion from one grade to another grade. Therefore, the detailed reasons for the gap between the sanctioned strength and working strength may be perused while having a glance at the 'Remarks' column of the concerned statement indicating the cadre position at Annexure 'A' and 'B'. A proposal for the physical inspection and staffing study of CPO by the Staff Inspection Unit (SIU) of the Department of Expenditure has been sent to the Ministry of Finance in November 2019.

2.36 The total revenue generated from all passport services till December, 2019 is Rs. 1885.59 crore compared to Rs. 1957.64 crore during corresponding period in 2018. Moreover, the MEA's contribution to the consolidated funds of India primarily from passports, Visas and OCI services in 2018-19 was Rs. 6048.00 crore i.e. 40% of its BE allocation and 38% of its RE allocation.

2.37 The Ministry has informed that the establishment of Videsh Bhawans in the State Capitals was pursued with the aim of consolidating all the services provided by the Ministry and its subordinate offices, under one roof, for better delivery of service to the people of respective States/Union Territories and to enhance coordination between the State Administration and the Ministry. Several acquisition projects were initiated, on-going construction/renovation projects were completed and work on several new construction/renovation projects commenced.

2.38 **The Committee observe that the budgetary allocation under the sub-head 'Passport and Emigration' has decreased from Rs. 1620.95 crore in BE 2019-20 to Rs. 1604.39 crore at RE 2019-20 to Rs. 1348.59 crore during BE 2020-21. The Committee note that the sub-head 'Protector General of Emigrant' (PGoE) has been brought under this head and a new sub-head 'Welfare of Overseas Indians' has been opened under this head w.e.f. FY 2019-20.**

It is disconcerting to find that despite the inclusion of two significant sub-heads, namely, Protector General of Emigrant and Welfare of Overseas Indian Affairs under this minor head, budgetary cuts have been effected. The Committee are of the view that the Ministry should provide requisite funds under such a critical minor-head, particularly after the merger of erstwhile Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and Ministry of External Affairs. Moreover, in view of the significant contribution of revenue from the passport and visa services to the Consolidated Fund of India, sufficient investment in improving passport and visa service delivery is essential. The Committee, therefore, also recommend that the Ministry should seek additional funds for this minor head that directly impinges on public services delivery and welfare of our Overseas Indians. The Committee desire that a Videsh Bhawan may be established in every state capital on the lines of the one set up in Mumbai. These Videsh Bhawans should be the umbrella organization in each state for providing public services relating to all activities of MEA. In view of the compelling need of such institutions in the states, the Committee desire that Videsh Bhawans in all state capitals may be set up within a period of 18 months.

(Recommendation No. 10)

2.39 The Committee are aware that the Passport Seva Project (PSP) is one of the largest citizen-centric project under the National e-Governance Plan. The scale and magnitude of passport related services can be gauged from the fact that in 2019, approximately 1.22 crore passports were issued in India and abroad. The Committee are happy to learn that there are 93 Passport Seva Kendras (PSK) and 424 Post Office Passport Seva Kendras (POPSK) that are functioning as extended arms of the 36 Passport Offices in the country. There is a proposal of opening of PSK/POPSK in every Parliamentary constituency of the

country. The Ministry has also informed that Passport Seva Programme has been extended to Indian Missions/Posts abroad in order to provide better and smoother service delivery experience to Indian Diaspora living abroad. So far, 54 Indian Missions have been integrated into Passport Seva Project and integration in several other Missions/Posts is in progress. The Committee observe that the Ministry maintains a central database called Passport Related Information Data Exchange (PRIDE) which contains details of Passports. Moreover, the Committee also note that MEA has put in place a strengthened Grievance Redressal Mechanism, whereby a Multilingual Call Centre with a toll free number (1800-258-1800), operating in 17 languages and on 24*7 basis caters to dissemination of information about various passport related services.

The issuance of passports in a timely, seamless and hassle-free manner is the most citizen centric public delivery function performed by the Ministry. The Committee are satisfied to know about the slew of initiatives taken by the Ministry to make qualitative and quantitative improvements in the delivery of passport services in the country during 2019-20. The Committee, however, desire that initiative should be taken to open up new PSK/POPKs in every Parliamentary constituency as per the targets fixed in this regard. The Committee also desire to be apprised about the progress made in integration of remaining Missions/Posts abroad into the Passport Seva Project. The Ministry should also ensure that the grievance redressal of citizens related to passport services is addressed in a time-bound manner.

(Recommendation No. 11)

2.40 The Committee note that against a sanctioned strength of 2,697, the actual working strength of the Central Passport Office (CPO) cadre is 1,821 as on 1 February, 2020.

Shortage of personnel in CPO has been stated as a constraining factor in expansion of the Passport Seva Project. It is observed that there are 876 posts which are lying vacant in various grades in CPO. As per the Ministry, the difficulty in filling up the vacant posts stems from the extant Recruitment Rules. Direct recruitment is possible only in grades of Office Assistant, Junior Passport Assistant (JPA) Stenographers, Junior Translator and Assistant Superintendent. The Ministry has placed indents for 310 with the Staff Selection Commission since 2017 for recruitment in these grades. Further, the Ministry has engaged 361 Data Entry Operators and 60 Office Assistant (MTS) through Outsourced Service Provider. The Committee notice that a proposal for physical inspection and staffing study of CPO by the Staff Inspection Unit (SIU) of the Department of Expenditure has been sent to Ministry of Finance in November, 2019.

The issue of human resource crunch has been a major area of concern and has been part of the Committee's recommendations over the years. Taking serious cognizance of this matter, the Committee would strongly recommend that the Ministry should take up this issue with Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) at the highest level and ensure that the vacant positions are filled up in the shortest possible time. The Ministry should also apprise the Committee about the outcomes of the interaction with DoPT.

(Recommendation No. 12)

III. INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

2.41 As per the Brief furnished by MEA, allocation under this head is for obligatory contributions to UNO and other international organizations of which India is a member; Establishment of South Asian University (SAU) and Nalanda University (NU); and for expenses on celebration of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas and other schemes related to engagement with Indian Diaspora. An allocation of Rs. 986.19 crore was made in BE 2019-20, which was enhanced to

Rs. 1224.23 crore at the RE stage. Specifying the reasons for increase in budgetary allocation at RE 2019-20 during the last year, the Ministry stated that enhanced allocation at RE 2019-20 was made mainly for payment of obligatory (assessed) contribution to the United Nations and other International Organizations, as well as voluntary contributions in line with India's growing participation in these forums. Enhanced allocation was also made for the construction activity related works for Nalanda International University and for the BIMSTEC Secretariat.

A. South Asian University

2.42 The budgetary allocation for the construction of South Asian University (SAU) has been increased from Rs. 317.50 crore in BE 2019-20 to Rs. 341.80 crore at RE stage. An allocation of Rs. 325 crore has been provided for BE 2020-21. On being asked about the reasons for the enhanced allocation at the RE 2019-20 and the progress achieved in establishment of SAU with the enhanced allocation at RE 2019-20. The Ministry stated that allocation for construction was unchanged between BE 2019-20 and RE 2019-20 (at Rs. 251 cr.). The increase was on account of allocation for operational expenditure of the university and rental for the temporary campus which are distinct from the construction cost. Package I has been completed. The progress of work under Package II and Package III as of 31st December 2019 has reached 86% and 63% respectively. Package II is expected to be completed by May 2020 and Package III by December 2020. As regards Package IV, concerted and sustained efforts are being made by the university as well as the Ministry for approval of revised DPR, clearance of forest land pockets and tree cutting permission from Forest Department and expeditious conclusion of court cases.

2.43 The Committee also wanted to know about the contribution of each country associated with the University till date. The Ministry stated that South Asian University operates under two budget heads, viz. Operational Expenditure and Capital Expenditure. The operational budget of the university is met through assessed contribution from the Member States in the following ratios: (i) Afghanistan (3.83%) (ii) Bangladesh (8.2%) (iii) Bhutan (3.83%) (iv) India (57.49%) (v) Maldives (3.83%) (vi) Nepal (4.92%) (vii) Pakistan (12.98%) (viii) Sri Lanka (4.92%). The operational budget was formulated in two phases: Phase I (2010-14 extended till December 2018) and Phase II (Interim) (January 2019 to June 2020). All countries except Pakistan have fully paid up their contributions under Phase I. Pakistan has an outstanding contribution of US\$ 510436.79 from Phase I. No country except India has made any contribution

under Phase II (interim). The university and the SAARC Secretariat are regularly reminding the Member Countries concerned to remit their outstanding contributions. The Capital Budget of the university is met 100% by the Government of India besides the cost of land and rental for the temporary premises of the university. In addition, India provides 100 postgraduate and Ph.D. scholarships to the university every year.

2.44 Financial contribution made by each Member Country on all heads since establishment of the university in 2010 is as follows:-

Country	Contribution (in US\$ million)	Remarks
Afghanistan	2.3	Interim budget contribution(Phase II) outstanding
Bangladesh	4.92	Interim budget contribution(Phase II) outstanding
Bhutan	2.3	Interim budget contribution(Phase II) outstanding
INDIA	230.73*	On all heads
Maldives	2.3	Interim budget contribution(Phase II) outstanding
Nepal	2.95	Interim budget contribution(Phase II) outstanding
Pakistan	7.33	Part contribution under Phase I and Interim budget contribution(Phase II) outstanding
Sri Lanka	2.95	Interim budget contribution(Phase II) outstanding

* *Cost of land* : US\$ 14.94 million

Cost of construction : US\$ 141.18 million

Rent for temporary premises : US\$ 34.73 million

Operational expenditure : US\$ 39.02 million

Scholarships : US\$ 00.86 million

Total US\$ 230.73 million

2.45 Over the years, the Committee in their Reports has expressed serious concerns over the undue delay in the completion of the South Asia University campus project. Updating the Committee about the progress of the South Asian University, the Ministry stated that Package I has been completed. The progress of work under Package II and Package III as of 31st December 2019 has reached 86% and 63% respectively. Package II is expected to be completed by May 2020 and Package III by December 2020. As regards Package IV, concerted and sustained efforts are being made by the university as well as the Ministry for approval of revised DPR, clearance of forest land pockets and tree cutting permission from Forest Department and expeditious conclusion of court cases. The construction project is handled by the university itself. Ministry provides the finances and monitors the project through regular meetings with the university

authorities. The Ministry accords top priority for timely completion of the South Asian University project.

2.46 The Committee observe that the allocation for construction of South Asian University (SAU) has been kept at Rs. 325 crore for BE 2020-21 which is less than BE 2019-20 allocation and more than RE 2019-20 allocation. The Committee note that there are two budget heads that cater to SAU, namely Operational Expenditure and Capital Expenditure. While the operational expenditure part of the budget is met through contributions from the Member States, the capital budget is met fully by the Government of India. The Committee observe that except India, no country has made any contribution for SAU under Phase II. Regarding the construction of the SAU campus, the Committee note that Package I has been completed; Package II and Package III are expected to be completed by 2020 and clearances relating to Package IV are under process.

Expressing disapproval and disappointment with the undue delay in the construction work of South Asian University Campus, the Committee strongly recommend that the Ministry should accord highest priority for timely construction and completion of the South Asian University project by ensuring that Package II and III are completed by 2020 and necessary clearances for Package IV are obtained at the earliest. The Committee also desire to be apprised of the progress made in this regard at regular intervals.

(Recommendation No. 13)

B. Nalanda University

2.47 The Nalanda University Act 2010 established the university and the teaching began in 2014. As per the Act, it is an international institution, which has also been declared as an institution of national importance. Nalanda has made steady progress both in terms of the physical structure of the campus as well as the academic programmes.

2.48 The progress of work in the Nalanda University project as on 31.12.2019 is as follows:

Sl. No.	Work Package and cost	Work Package Status
1.	Package 1C (Residential Parcel)	(I) Physical Progress – 38.5% (ii) Financial Progress – 36.63%
2.	Package 2: Water treatment plant and high side plumbing	(I) Physical Progress – 37.85% (ii) Financial Progress – 12.53%
3.	Package 3A: for Admin building	(I) Physical Progress – 62.25% (ii) Financial Progress – 37.20%
4	Package 3C: Overall heating, ventilation and air-conditioning system for both residential and non-residential package	(I) Physical Progress – 25 % (ii) Financial Progress – 10 %
5.	Package 4A: High side electrification works for the admin building	(I) Physical Progress – 70% (ii) Financial Progress – 59.67 %
6.	Package 4B: Overall High side electrification works	(I) Physical Progress – 25% (ii) Financial Progress – 0%
7	Package 4C- on grid solar	Tender in process
8	Package 4 D DG set for five priority buildings	(I) Physical Progress – 95% (ii) Financial Progress – 77.47%
9	Package 5A ELV-Extra low voltage, data cabling and CCTV works for entire campus	(I) Physical Progress – 50.73% (ii) Financial Progress – 25.53%
10	Package 5 B AV- audio visual and smart classroom in five priority buildings	(I) Physical Progress – 12.5% (ii) Financial Progress – 0%
11	Package 6A- light fixture supply for non-residential parcel of the campus	(I) Physical Progress – 40% (ii) Financial Progress – 25.14%
12	Package 6 B- Light fixture supply for residential parcel of the campus	The tender is in process

13	Package 3B: CHP-Combined Heat and Power Engine, Heat pump/VAM chiller and renewable energy gas based plant	The tender is in process
14	Tender Package 8A Interior works in 5 priority buildings	(I) Physical Progress – 25% (ii) Financial Progress – 21.34%
15	Tender Package 7A Horticulture works for east part of the campus	(I) Physical Progress – 18% (ii) Financial Progress – 0%
16	Procurement of furniture for the 5 buildings presently occupied	(I) Physical Progress – 40% (ii) Financial Progress – 16%

2.49 The Committee desired to know about the existence of any monitoring mechanism has been put in place to avoid further delays in the Project. In a written reply, the Ministry stated that the Govt of Bihar allotted 455.19 acres of land in 2011 for construction of the Nalanda University campus after the Nalanda University Act was approved by the Parliament in 2010. In January 2014, the Cabinet Committee for Economic Affairs approved financial support of Rs. 2727.10 crore to Nalanda University on account of capital cost as well as operational expenditure for the period 2010-11 to 2020-21. Actual construction work commenced in May 2017. The time lag between January 2014 and May 2017 was due to selection of a suitable architect for the project; Preparation of Master Plan and the Conceptual Drawing including the Preliminary Estimate by the Architect consultant and tendering process for the work packages. Though there was a time overrun at the initial stage, the pace of progress in the construction project has accelerated commendably from 0.3 % in May 2017 to more than 60% in October 2019 within a period of less than 2 years. Construction of internal road and water bodies for the main campus was completed 100 % in April 2018. Five buildings are ready and others are in various stages of completion with the target to complete the non-residential and residential buildings by the end of 2020.

2.50 In order to further accelerate the progress in construction work, the university has undertaken the following measures:-

- i) Establishment of a Project Monitoring Committee to diligently monitor and evaluate project progress and quality construction.

- ii) Appointment of Nodal Officer to advise the university in technical issues and construction progress.
- iii) Institution of Net-Zero Campus Steering Committee comprising of various Regulatory Bodies of Government of India to advise and assist in building the campus which is supposed to be the largest Net-Zero campus in the world.

2.51 When asked to enumerate the opportunities explored by Ministry of External Affairs for channelizing contributions for the project from other countries, which have signed MoU, the Ministry informed that all foreign contributions to Nalanda University are voluntary. No contribution has been received from the partner countries during the last three years. The university has approached some of the East Asia Summit countries to renew their commitment to the university and contribute voluntarily. No response has been received so far. Ministry is taking up the matter with the respective Governments through the concerned Indian Missions abroad to encourage partner countries to make voluntary financial contributions.

2.52 After the approval of Nalanda University Act, 2010 by the Parliament, the Cabinet Committee for Economic Affairs has approved financial support of Rs. 2727.10 crore for Nalanda University. Despite the time overrun in the initial stage, the Ministry has submitted that there is steady progress both in terms of physical structure of the campus as well as academic programmes. It is observed that a Project Monitoring Committee has been established to monitor and evaluate project progress and quality of construction. It is disheartening to know that no contributions have been received from the partner countries during the past three years. The Ministry has informed that the matter of voluntary financial contributions have been taken up with respective Governments through concerned Indian Missions abroad.

As an international institution of national importance for pursuit of intellectual, philosophical and historical studies, the Committee find that the inordinate delay in completion of Nalanda University is highly unfortunate. The Committee strongly

recommend that the Ministry should draw a clear roadmap with fixed timelines for completion of the project and adhere to the same. The Ministry should also pro-actively pursue the issue of foreign voluntary contributions with partner countries at all levels.

(Recommendation No. 14)

CHAPTER III

INDIA'S DEVELOPMENTAL COOPERATION

3.1 Development partnerships hold an important place in India's external engagement, particularly with reference to our immediate neighbourhood under the Government's Neighborhood First" and „Act East" policies. While India's development cooperation initiatives have a long and enduring history, the nature and spread of such development assistance has, in recent years, expanded both geographically and sectorally. India's development cooperation aligns with the development priorities of its partner countries.

3.2 The largest allocation in the Ministry's budget is for Technical and Economic Cooperation (TEC) with foreign countries through assistance as grants and loans. The budget head „Technical and Economic Cooperation (TEC)" caters to India's aid and assistance programmes not only in India's immediate and extended neighborhood, but also countries in South East Asia, Central Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Indo-Pacific region. It also caters for Aid for Disaster Relief and contributions to various regional funds. Aid programmes are influenced by the dynamics of India's national interest, diplomatic engagements and political relations. The table below illustrates the details of aid and loans to countries:

(Rs. in crore)

Sl.No.	Country	BE 2019-20	RE 2019-20	BE 2020-21
1.	Bangladesh	175.00	150.00	200.00
2.	Bhutan	2135.79	2048.28	2052.37
3.	Nepal	1050.00	800.00	1200.00
4.	Sri Lanka	250.00	205.00	200.00
5.	Maldives	400.00	150.00	300.00
6.	Myanmar	400.00	170.00	300.00
7.	Other Developing Countries	150.00	150.00	120.00
8.	Disaster Relief	20.00	30.00	20.00
9.	ITEC	220.00	200.00	220.00
10.	SAARC Programme	8.00	8.00	8.00
11.	African countries	450.00	450.00	350.00

12.	Multilateral Economic Relations Programmes	20.00	21.50	20.00
13.	Investment & Promotion	300.00	200.00	250.00
14.	Eurasian Countries	45.00	45.00	45.00
15.	Afghanistan	400.00	400.00	400.00
16.	Latin America	15.00	10.00	20.00
17.	Indo-Pacific Cooperation	45.00	30.00	45.00
18.	Mongolia	5.00	2.00	5.00
19.	Chabahar Port	45.00	00.00	100.00
20.	Mauritius	1100.00	1100.00	1025.00
21.	Seychelles	100.00	50.00	140.00

3.3 On being asked the Ministry provided the percentage of MEA's total budget outlay that has been earmarked under the head „Technical and Economic Cooperation“ as under:-

(Rs. in Crores)

Year	Budget Outlay (BE)	TEC (BE)	%age of BE	Budget Outlay (RE)	TEC (RE)	% age of RE
2017-18	14798.55	6894.03	46.59	13690.00	5074.49	37.07
2018-19	15011.00	5148.55	34.30	15582.00	5970.50	38.32
2019-20	17884.78	7333.79	41.01	17372.27	6619.78	38.11
2020-21	17346.71	6617.37	38.14	-	-	-

3.4 Providing the parameters for proposing budget under the head „aid programmes“, the Ministry stated that allocations for aid heads are made after undertaking a realistic spending assessment based on project implementation cycles, local conditions and physical progress for on-going projects, schemes and programmes; and based on project implementation timelines and cost estimates for planned projects, schemes and programmes. For ongoing projects under the aid programs, the budgetary requirements are gauged based on inputs from the primary Divisions/Spending units who are closely involved with the Implementing Agencies in monitoring the progress of work. The inputs thus received are collated and compared with the past utilization, work progress and pace of expenditure of the project. With this information, deliberations are conducted by IFD with the Divisions to get a realistic estimates of their

demands. Similarly, for new projects, budgetary provisions are made as per estimates determined by project implementation timelines and cost estimates in their Detailed Project Reports. Allocations are then made to the extent of funds available within the overall budgetary provision made by Ministry of Finance. The selection of the projects to be undertaken under the Aid heads is an administrative decision which is taken by the Territorial Divisions and DPA in view of the political relations with the respective countries.

3.5 The Ministry also furnished details of budgetary demands made, actual allocations given and utilization under this Head to various countries during past three years as under:-

(Rs. In crore)

Budget Heads	2017-18			2018-19			2019-20		
	BE Demand	BE Allocation	Actual Exp.	BE Demand	BE Allocation	Actual Exp.	BE Demand	BE Allocation	Actual Exp. upto Jan 2020
Aid to Bangladesh	363.45	125.00	78.02	403.81	175.00	131.81	466.27	175.00	66.64
Aid to Bhutan (Grants)	2418.87	2083.87	1789.47	2100.00	1813.50	1985.88	2562.40	2135.79	1900.28
Aid to Nepal	629.95	375.00	376.61	1018.45	650.00	763.39	1452.35	1050.00	986.91
Aid to Sri Lanka	190.25	125.00	77.89	538.00	150.00	168.78	512.50	250.00	152.04
Aid to Maldives	121.87	75.00	109.24	194.18	125.00	439.40	417.22	400.00	89.54
Aid to Myanmar	1383.40	225.00	223.55	800.71	280.00	376.22	954.78	400.00	101.28
Aid to Other Developing Countries	261.39	115.00	122.32	185.63	115.00	124.99	204.53	150.00	120.51
Aid to African Countries	1623.63	330.00	172.72	768.81	200.00	339.98	1269.91	450.00	371.22
Aid to Eurasian Countries	30.00	25.00	37.02	47.59	30.00	29.52	38.65	45.00	25.27
Aid to Latin American	57.00	20.00	19.95	44.06	20.00	10.02	35.00	15.00	11.28

Countries									
Aid to Afghanistan	776.19	350.00	365.96	627.50	325.00	469.98	867.99	400.00	331.26
Aid to Mongolia	5.00	5.00	4.16	5.00	5.00	0.62	2.10	5.00	0.00
Aid to Mauritius	1899.74	350.00	350.39	800.00	350.00	659.81	1544.33	1100.00	906.50
Aid to Seychelles	1305.66	300.00	223.16	600.00	300.00	99.80	145.41	100.00	11.79

3.6 From the above table, we can clearly discern that there has been a decrease in aid to countries like Bhutan, Maldives, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, African countries, Chabahar Port and other developing countries in our neighbourhood. During the examination of Demands for Grants during the past two years and through the Action Taken Replies of the Ministry, the Committee had specifically recommended that the Ministry should refrain from reducing funds to aid to countries. When asked to state the actions initiated by it to secure additional funds and the response of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of External Affairs replied that as per the Hon'ble Committee's recommendation, allocations for various Aid heads are done through careful prioritization within available resources to ensure that none of our developmental work suffers any setback and all our commitments are implemented smoothly and speedily. For ongoing projects under the aid programs, the budgetary requirements are gauged based on inputs from the primary Divisions/Spending units who are closely involved with the Implementing Agencies in monitoring the progress of work. The inputs thus received are collated and compared with the past utilization, work progress and pace of expenditure of the project. With this information, deliberations are conducted with the Divisions to get a realistic estimates of their demands. Similarly, for new projects, budgetary provisions are made as per estimates determined by project implementation timelines and cost estimates in their Detailed Project Reports. Allocations are then made to the extent of funds available within the overall budgetary provision made by Ministry of Finance. In some cases, where projects are of strategic interest or where project implementation stage needs funds, allocations have been enhanced, including by identifying savings and reducing allocation in other Aid heads after undertaking a realistic spending assessment based on project implementation cycles, local conditions and physical progress of projects.

3.7 The Ministry further stated that the issue of provisioning of adequate allocation of funds has been taken up with the Ministry of Finance at various levels. Ministry's concerted efforts and engagement with the Ministry of Finance at the level of Minister, Secretary and Financial Advisor, apart from regular interaction at other levels has inter alia resulted in increase in Ministry's BE 2019-20 allocation from Rs. 16061.78 cr. in the Interim Budget to Rs. 17884.78 cr. in the Regular Budget 2019-20. The higher allocation for MEA in BE 2019-20 compared to previous years has allowed paying of pending liabilities under the Aid Section (for example pending dues to Air India for Operation Maitri conducted in Nepal). Based on the expenditure pattern and actual utilization next year, the requirement of funds will be reassessed at the stage of First Supplementary and RE stage in 2020-21.

3.8 The Committee wanted to know the manner in which the classification of aid and assistance budgets under the Scheme section has led to better appreciation of the Ministry of External Affairs budget under this Head during the previous year. In a written reply the Ministry responded that the „Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation“ or „ITEC“ Programme is one of the programmes under the Ministry's overall technical assistance and development cooperation budget, which spans two Major Heads (MH) – MH 3605 „Technical and Economic Cooperation with Other Countries“; and MH 7605 „Advances to Foreign Governments“. MH 3605 comprises Grant assistance and MH 7605 comprises Loans assistance. Together, MH 3605 and MH 7605 comprise the Scheme section of the Ministry's budget. The Scheme classification of the Ministry's overall technical assistance and development cooperation budget provides better appreciation for funds requirements and allocation as all aid-related spending has come under a single classification, enabling the allocation and expenditure to be viewed and monitored as a consolidated and clear percentage of the overall budget.

3.9 In view of the increasing Chinese presence in infrastructure projects in our neighbourhood, the Committee were keen to understand whether the Ministry has evolved any strategy to meet this challenge, the Ministry stated that Government is aware that China is providing assistance and undertaking projects for development of infrastructure facilities in various countries, including under its „Belt and Road Initiative“. Deepening of India's development partnership with her immediate neighbours is an important element of the political and economic objectives of our Neighbourhood First policy. We are implementing not only large

infrastructure projects such as hydro electric plants, railways and power transmission lines, housing, roads, waterways, ports, and bridges; but also many small-scale but high-visibility grass-roots level projects (known as High Impact Community Development Programmes); as well as high-impact training and capacity-building programmes. Extension of GoI Lines of Credit (LOCs) on concessional terms is an important component of India's diplomatic strategy and has been very useful in generating goodwill and building long term partnerships. The scheme also attempts to promote India's strategic political and economic interests abroad by positioning it as an emerging economic power, investor country and partner for developing countries in diverse areas of socio-economic development such as power, transport connectivity, agriculture and irrigation, manufacturing industries, water and sanitation, healthcare etc. The GoI LOC programme is now an extensive one with 298 LOCs having been extended to 64 countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America, Caribbean, Oceania and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) aggregating nearly US\$ 30.61 billion.

3.10 A mechanism called Project Preparation Facility (PPF) has been set up by India to assist its development partner countries towards preparation of Project Formulation Reports (PFR) for viable projects. PPF would provide consultancy support on grant basis to requesting Governments for project formulation. The details of Governments who have sought Project Preparation Facility (PPF) during last 2 years are as follows:

SI No.	Country	Project
1	CAR	For re-validation of costs for revival & completion of the project for setting up of cement plant and associated limestone mine in Central African Republic
2	D.R. Congo	For three Solar Projects in Lusambo, Mbandaka and Karawa Provinces of Democratic Republic of Congo
3	Egypt	For rehabilitation of existing Chemical Fertilizer Plant and establishment of new Nitric Acid Production Unit in Egypt
4	Liberia	For Road Project under Bali Infrastructure Project in Liberia
5	Mali	For 50 MW Photo-voltaic Power Plant at Fana in Mali
6	Mali	For setting up a sustainable village and use of Solar Photo-voltaic technology for irrigation in Mali
7	Myanmar	For setting up of state-of-the-art general hospital in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar
8	Nauru	For Land Rehabilitation and Development of Quarry Sites
9	Seychelles	Solar Projects
10	Seychelles	Super Specialty Tertiary Hospital Project in Seychelles

11	Sri Lanka	Three solar power projects in Sri Lanka
12	Suriname	For Rural Electrification through Hybrid Solar PV Systems in 50 Remote villages
13	Swaziland	Design and Construction of new Parliament building in Lobamba-Zabeni

3.11 During the course of oral evidence on 27 February, 2020, the Foreign Secretary submitted:

“Overall, we are hopeful of having our aid and non-aid outlays becoming even more evenly distributed in the coming years. We are accelerating the completion of on-going projects through high-level review mechanisms, including at the level of the External Affairs Minister himself, with the participation of concerned Line Ministries and implementing agencies. These review mechanisms are at three levels – Intra-Ministry, Inter-Ministry and Bilateral, that is, with the concerned Foreign Governments. This consultative process enables recognition of bottlenecks and joint identification of ways to resolve them. We are also optimistic that some large infrastructure projects that were conceived and initiated in the last year will transform from the planning and design phases to the implementation stage.”

3.12 **The Committee are happy to learn that development cooperation that constitutes a significant facet of India’s external engagement has expanded both geographically and sectorally in terms of its reach and spread. For BE 2020-21, just like the trend for MEA’s budget, the proportion of allocation under the sub-head ‘Technical and Economic Co-operation’ has dipped from Rs. 7333.79 crore to Rs. 6617.37 (BE 2020-21). Despite repeated recommendations of the Committee to avoid budgetary cuts under this head, the reduced allocations for developmental aid and assistance is incomprehensible.**

The Committee observe that this budget head caters to India’s aid and assistance programmes not only in India’s immediate and extended neighbourhood but also to countries in South East Asia, Central Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Indo-Pacific region. The Ministry has informed that allocations for aid heads are based made after undertaking a realistic spending assessment based on project implementation

cycles, local conditions and physical progress for ongoing projects. On the basis of facts and figures furnished by the Ministry, the Committee observe a disparity between the budgetary demands made by MEA and actual allocations given by the Ministry of Finance as well as between actual allocation and utilization of the same by MEA. The Ministry's assertion regarding the provisioning of adequate allocation of funds being taken up with the Ministry of Finance at various levels has been noted. Taking a serious view of this matter, the Committee recommend that the Ministry of External Affairs should ensure that the uneven utilization pattern under this head is reduced to bare minimum and limited only to delays pertaining to extraneous factors. Furthermore, the Committee also suggest that a study may be conducted on the objectives, modalities and implications of our developmental cooperation over the years so that more funds allocation may be justified for India's external engagement. The Committee would also like to convey that while allocating budget under the head 'Technical and Economic Cooperation', the Ministry of Finance should bear in mind the ramifications of budgetary cuts under this head on our bilateral, regional as well as multilateral engagements.

(Recommendation No. 15)

3.13 Expressing concern over the unpredictable and fluctuating budgetary demands and allocation under this Head, the Committee in their previous DFG Report had recommended that the Ministry should frame a developmental aid/cooperation policy with a clear roadmap for developmental assistance to countries in alignment with our national interest. The Committee had also urged the Ministry to explore the feasibility of establishing an autonomous aid disbursement body that strictly caters to planning, execution and implementation of the projects in a timely manner. The Committee reiterate its earlier

recommendation that a general aid policy must be framed and a separate aid disbursal body on the lines of similar bodies in other countries (such as USAID, OECD etc) may be established by the Ministry.

(Recommendation No. 16)

3.14 On the basis of data furnished by the Ministry, the Committee observe a decline in allocation under the head ‘Technical and Economic Cooperation’ pertaining to our neighbourhood. Barring two sub-heads *i.e.* ‘Aid to Bangladesh’ and ‘Aid to Nepal’, there has been a reduction in allocation for development cooperation to South Asian countries. Such a situation is all the more appalling in the light of increasing Chinese presence in providing assistance and undertaking development projects in various countries under the ‘Belt and Road Initiative’. The Committee note that in order to deal with this challenge, the Ministry has been extending GoI Lines of Credit (LoC) on concessional terms to 64 countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America, Caribbean, Oceania and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). While appreciating such extensive LoCs, the Committee are of the view that much more needs to be done for positioning India as an emerging economic power. The Committee therefore would urge the Ministry to re-visit the development cooperation, particularly with our neighbours so as to enable long-term partnerships with careful assessment of projects, adequate disposal of funds and efficient implementation..

(Recommendation No. 17)

I. Aid to Bangladesh

3.15 The budgetary allocation made under the sub-head 'Aid to Bangladesh' was Rs. 175 crore during BE 2019-20, which was reduced to Rs. 150 crore in RE 2019-20. The allocation at BE 2020-21 has been earmarked as Rs. 200 crore. Enumerating the reasons for reduction in the

allocation at the RE stage for 2019-20, the Ministry stated that a requirement of INR 30 Crore for new projects at BE stage for the FY 2019-20 had been projected. However, these could not be undertaken as the prospective beneficiaries could not submit proposals on time with all supporting documents as procedures for obtaining various clearances in local government offices takes considerable time. Furthermore, with regard to the ongoing projects, the beneficiaries were not able to submit the bills on time as they were struggling to complete the work on time due to various issues such as unavailability of material, manpower for specific work, inclement weather conditions etc. Lack of experience of some beneficiaries for submission of bills with proper documentation also led towards resubmission of bills and finally resulted in delay in disbursement of funds.

3.16 When asked about the reasons for which enhanced allocations has been made during BE 2020-21 Ministry specified that an amount of INR 70 crore was projected for new projects for the BE 2020-21 in anticipation that a number of HICDP projects in the next Financial Year would be undertaken. The estimated cost of each project will be around INR 2.5 crore to INR 21.11 Crore and our Mission in Dhaka is expecting to release at least two instalments of the each project in the next Financial Year. A few projects from the ongoing projects will be completed in the next Financial Year or next to next Financial Year only. Moreover, even though physical progress of around 19 ongoing projects are likely to reach upto 100%, we will not be able to release the final instalment as the beneficiaries may not be able to submit bills with all supporting documents in the CFY itself.

3.17 The Ministry furnished a detailed note on the status of other ongoing developmental projects in Bangladesh as follows:-

(A) High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs)

In the beginning of CFY 2019-20 there were 36 ongoing HICDPs. Three new HICDPs in the CFY were also undertaken. Hence the total number of HICDPs in the CFY are 39. Out of the 39 HICDPs 12 projects have already been completed and final instalment also have been released. Another 19 projects are likely to be completed by the end of the CFY. Even though physical progress of these projects are likely to reach 100%, it is unlikely to release final instalment as the beneficiaries take time for collating documents for releasing final instalment. It is estimated that we would be able to release final payment of at least 15 out of these 19 projects. The current status of each HICDP is attached herewith as Annexure V.

(B) Other Projects:

(a) India Bangladesh Friendship Pipeline Project. So far, the physical progress of project is 23.8 % (as on 31 January 2020). To improve the progress and early completion of the project, Mission and Ministry have been regularly following up the issue with the Bangladesh authorities concerned.

(b) Akhaura-Agartala Rail Link Project: May see Para 55 above

(c) Dredging of Rivers: An MoU was signed between GoI and GoB during the visit of Bangladesh Prime Minister to India in April, 2017. The total cost of project is Rs. 305.84 cr, out of which India's share would be Rs. 244.67 cr and Bangladesh share would be Rs. 61.16 cr. (Project duration is 7 years from the year 2019).

(i) Ashuganj-Sirajganj Stretch: Dredging started on the Ashuganj-Zakiganj stretch in April 2019, but halted in May 2019 due to floods and the dredging resumed from 17 December 2019. As the year 2019 was the first year of the project, the dredgers found it difficult to mobilize the dredgers initially and also the alignment for the Dredging was released late by the BIWTA, Bangladesh. The issue was also discussed in the Shipping Secretary Level talks held in December 2019 in Dhaka and it was agreed that dredging will be expedited on this stretch. It is pertinent to mention that dredging becomes difficult during the Monsoon season in Bangladesh; hence the dredging would be feasible for only 6 months in a year (January to May and December). Bill 1 of the amount BDT 87,70,654 was received by the High Commission on 22 January 2020 and the same has been forwarded to IWAI India for further processing.

(ii) Sirajganj- Daikhawa Stretch: Dredging has not started yet as the BIWTA, Bangladesh is finding it difficult to fix the alignment for this stretch due to frequent shifting of channels. The issue was also discussed in the Shipping Secretary Level talks held in December 2019 in Dhaka and it was agreed that resolution of this problem of not able to fix the alignment for the dredging will be discussed in the technical level Joint Monitoring Committee meeting to be held in Dhaka in February 2020 between the officials of the IWAI and IWTA. The case is also being

taken up with the BIWTA and IWAI for the early appointment of the PMC (Project Management Consultancy) for the Dredging project.

3.18 The Akhaura-Agartala Rail Link Project was initiated to provide better connectivity between India and Bangladesh. In their Demands for Grants Reports, the Committee have been firmly recommending that this project should be expedited without any delay and adequate funds should be allocated for the same. Furnishing the status of the project, the Ministry stated that Akhaura-Agartala Rail Link Project, Bangladesh portion, is being funded by MEA. Indian portion is being funded by M/o DONER. Work on Bangladesh portion is ongoing. Physical progress of 29.5% and Financial progress of 28.65% has been achieved as on 31.01.2020. The project is likely to be completed by September 2020. Progress of the project is being monitored by PMC M/s IRCON and reviewed by MEA on weekly basis.

3.19 The Committee note that an allocation of Rs. 200 crore has been provisioned as aid to Bangladesh for BE 2020-21 which is more than the allocation Rs. 175 crore during BE 2019-20 and RE 2019-20 stage. The enhanced allocation has been provisioned in anticipation of new HICDP projects in the areas of education, health, water, culture, urban development, disaster management etc. in the coming Fiscal Year. The Committee observe that physical progress of 29.5% and financial progress of 28.65% has been achieved on the Akhaura-Agartala Rail Link Project. Timely completion of infrastructure projects is key for our expanding development projects. The Committee, therefore, recommend that all possible measures should be taken to ensure the completion of Akhaura Agartala Rail Link Project by September 2020. Moreover, additional fund requirements should be sought at the RE stage for implementation of all ongoing projects in Bangladesh.

(Recommendation No. 18)

II. Aid to Bhutan

3.20 India has extensive development partnership with Bhutan, based on Bhutan's priorities. For the current 12th Five Year Plan (2018-23), GOI has committed economic assistance of Rs

4500 crores, apart from transitional Trade Support Facility of Rs. 400 crores. Over 400 big and small projects in areas of infrastructure development, roads and bridges, construction of regional hospitals, schools, cultural heritage buildings and covering sectors like ICT, capacity building, industries, agriculture, e-governance, community development projects like irrigation channels, farm roads, block connectivity roads, basic health units, etc. have been identified by the two sides and are at various stages of implementation. Both sides continue to monitor these projects closely to ensure their timely implementation. Timely GoI assistance has been helpful in successful implementation of several developmental projects that are contributing to the socio-economic development of Bhutan.

3.21 Government of India's aid and assistance programmes in Bhutan are currently covered under both Revenue and Capital Heads with Grants coming under Revenue and Loans coming under Capital sections of the budget. The funds under the Grants head are utilized for various development projects including hydroelectric power projects, development subsidy to Bhutan, subsidy to Power Grid Corporation of India for drawal of power from Chukha hydroelectric project, payment to IOC for supply of kerosene oil and liquefied petroleum gas to Bhutan at a subsidized price, excise duty refund to Bhutan, projects/schemes under Project Tied Assistance framework, scholarships to Bhutanese students in various institutions in India etc.

3.22 On being asked about the latest loan to grant ratio *vis-à-vis* Bhutan based on BE 2020-21. The Ministry submitted that Loan to Grant ratio for the hydropower projects in Bhutan is fixed. For Puna- I, the ratio is 60:40, for Puna- II, the ratio is 70:30 and for Mangdechhu, the ratio is 70:30. The Loan to Grant ratio as per the draft demand of BE 2020-21 of INR 2884.65 Cr [Capital (Loan) INR 832.28 Cr and Revenue (Grant) INR 2052.37 Cr] is 29:71. The majority of Grant component, however, includes projects other than Hydro-power projects. As per past practice, grant to loan ratio is maintained during the fund releases.

The latest position with regard to Loan: Grant for HEPs is tabulated below:

Project (HEPs)	Loan (% of total funds released so far)	Grant (% of total funds released so far)
Puna- I	60.08	39.92
Puna- II	68.38	31.62
Mangdechhu	70.00	30.00

3.23 An allocation of Rs. 2052.37 crore was made under this head during BE 2020-2, which is less than the BE 2019-20 allocation of Rs. 2135.79 crore. Justifying the reasons for decreased allocations under this head, the Ministry stated that it may be noted that the total allocation under Grant plus Loan to Bhutan (Rs. 2052 cr + Rs. 802 cr) in BE 20-21 is more than the Grant plus Loan allocation in BE 2019-20 (Rs. 2135.79 cr + Rs. 666 cr). Moreover the BE 2020-21 allocation is more than the RE 2019-20 allocation of Rs. 2048 cr.

3.24 The Committee were keen to know whether in the opinion of the Ministry the allocated funds are adequate for the completion/ progress of the projects. In their reply the Ministry justified that it undertakes a detailed and careful assessment of funds requirements for the various heads in the MEA budget, in consultation with concerned Divisions and Spending Units, as per funds utilization status and implementation progress of projects, schemes and programmes, to suitably allocate funds within the BE 2019-20 ceilings conveyed by Ministry of Finance, to ensure that Ministry's ongoing projects, schemes, programmes and commitments have requisite funds.. Ministry would consider additional fund at the RE stage based on physical progress and actual expenditure.

3.25 Furnishing the details of various ongoing projects in Bhutan along with the funds allocation for each project, timeframe for completion and the status of each Project, the Ministry submitted as follows:

HEPs

S. No.	Project/ Scheme	Approved Value	Scheduled date of completion	Current Status
1.	Mangdechhu (720 MW HEP)	(vii) INR 5012.63 Cr (as approved in 3 rd RCE in March 2019) (viii) Final cost of completion is pending with CEA for vetting.	Project has been commissioned. It was inaugurated in Aug 2019 by PMs of India and Bhutan.	Project has been commissioned.
2.	Punatsangchhu-I (1200 MW HEP)	(i) INR 9375.58 Cr	June 2019	Physical progress- 86.65% (as of Jan

		(as approved in RCE in July 2015)		2020); Fund released so far: INR 7945.3796 Cr <i>*The project has been delayed due to geological surprises.</i>
3.	Punatsangchhu-II (1020 MW HEP)	(i) INR 7290.62 Cr (as approved in RCE in July 2016)	2018-19	Physical progress- 86.32% (as of Jan 2020); Fund released so far: INR 6468.723 Cr <i>*The project has been delayed due to geological surprises.</i>
4.	Kholongchhu (600 MW HEP)	(i) INR 3868.870 Cr (DPR completion cost)	Bilateral discussions are ongoing for the signing of Concession Agreement, after which project construction will commence.	INR 166.2817 Cr has been released by MEA towards DGPC's equity till date. <i>*Pre-construction activities in progress</i>

Non-HEPs (Development Assistance):

GoI is implementing Projects including Project Tied Assistance and Small Development Projects in Bhutan under the GoI's committed assistance of INR 4500 Cr to Bhutan's XII Five Year Plan for 2018-23 (approved by Union Cabinet in 2018). Out of the INR 4500 Cr, INR 2800 Cr have been allocated for Project Tied Assistance, INR 850 Cr for Small Development Projects and INR 850 Cr for Programme Grants.

3.26 Regarding „Aid to Bhutan“, the Foreign Secretary during oral evidence on 27 February 2020 informed the Committee:

“Among our development partners, Bhutan has traditionally been the largest recipient of our financial assistance for strategic reasons that the Committee is well aware of. The Government of India has made a commitment of Rs. 4,500 crore towards Bhutan’s Twelfth Five Year Plan Period from 2018 to 2023, besides providing Rs. 400 crore as transitional Trade Support Facility. About 72 large and intermediate, and 359 Small Development Projects are already under implementation. These projects virtually cover all areas of socio-economic development, ranging from agriculture, infrastructure, information and communication technology, health, education, capacity building and culture. Among the ongoing Hydroelectric Power Projects, Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Power Project was inaugurated jointly by the Prime Ministers of both the countries on 17th August, 2019. However, construction of Punatsangchhu-I and Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Power Projects has faced some geological surprises, and their completion schedule may need revision, subject to resolution of issues related to geological factors. “

3.27 The Committee note that Bhutan has traditionally been the largest recipient of India’s aid and assistance programmes and budgetary allocation to them are provided under Revenue and Capital Heads. The Committee note that while there has been a decrease under the aid components, the loans and advances component has witnessed an increase. The Foreign Secretary has informed that about 72 large and intermediate and 359 Small Development Projects have already been implemented. These projects cover all areas of socio-economic development ranging from agriculture, infrastructure, information and communication technology, health, education, capacity building and culture. The Committee are happy to learn that Mangdechhu Hydroelectric Power Project was inaugurated in August 2019. Due to geological factors, construction of Punatsangchhu – I and Punatsangchhu – II Hydroelectric Power Projects may need revision. The Committee note that the physical progress of Punatsangchhu – I, Punatsangchhu – II is 86.65% and 86.32%. Foreign Secretary has also apprised the Committee that talks on financing and management structure for the Sankosh Hydroelectric Power Project is ongoing. The Committee note with satisfaction the performance of the Ministry in spite of several

constraints and are confident that the Ministry would leave no stone unturned towards its commitment in Bhutan.

(Recommendation No. 19)

III. Aid to Nepal

3.28 Government has laid particular emphasis on expeditious implementation of ongoing bilateral connectivity, physical and social infrastructure development projects. The Prime Ministers of India and Nepal remotely inaugurated the Motihari (India) - Amlekhgunj (Nepal) cross-border petroleum products pipeline on 10 September 2019.

3.29 India has made progress in taking forward and completing key infrastructure projects in Nepal in 2019. After completion and inauguration of the Integrated Check Post in Birgunj in April 2018, the second ICP under Indian assistance at Biratnagar has also been completed in end-2019. These ICPs will help ease the movement of people and goods between India and Nepal.

3.30 Under the sub-head 'Aid to Nepal', the budgetary allocation for BE 2018-19 was Rs. 1050.00 crore and it was increased to Rs. 1200.00 crore at the RE stage. The allocation under BE 2020-21 is pegged at Rs. 800.00 crore which is 21.81% less than BE 2019-20. Providing the reasons for the substantial decline in allocation under this head, the Ministry stated that the allocation under sub-head „Aid to Nepal“ has declined from INR 1050 crore for BE 2019-20 to INR 800 crore for BE 2020-21, i.e. an overall decline of INR 250 crore. The main reason for this decline in allocation is that, in FY 2019-20, additional funds were provided specifically to be paid as reimbursement to the Ministry of Defence for pending payment against supplies and services during the rescue and relief operations of GoI's „Operation Maitri“ after the 2015 earthquake in Nepal. Accordingly, in FY 2019-20, Ministry released pending payment amounting to INR 294 crore to the Ministry of Defence. The allocation of Rs. 800 crore for BE 2020-21 will be utilized for several ongoing projects, including reimbursement to the Government of Nepal and payment to the respective consultants and contractors to ensure smooth implementation of the projects. Government remains committed to the expeditious implementation of ongoing bilateral projects in Nepal. Requirement for additional funds will be considered at the revised estimates stage.

3.31 On being asked about the details of the various projects that have been initiated, completed during last three financial years, the Ministry stated that four major GOI-assisted projects have been completed in Nepal while Government has initiated ten major projects. In the financial year 2017-18, construction of 02 nos. of GOI-assisted 132 kV cross border transmission lines from Raxaul (India) to Parwanipur (Nepal), and Kataiya (India) to Kusaha (Nepal) was completed in April 2017 at a cost of INR 29.37 crore. In the financial year 2018-19, the Government completed two major projects, viz.:

- (a) Integrated Check Post at Birgunj, Nepal in April 2018 at a cost of INR 135.19 crore; and
- (b) 400-bed Dharamshala at Pashupatinath Temple Complex in Kathmandu, built at a cost of INR 18.56 crore, was completed and inaugurated in August 2018.

In the financial year 2019-20, construction of Integrated Check Post at Biratnagar, Nepal was completed and inaugurated in January 2020 at a cost of INR 139.73 crore.

3.32 The Ministry further stated that major GOI-assisted projects in Nepal initiated during the last three financial years are as follows:

- a) Construction of 02 nos. of cross-border rail links under Phase I at a cost of INR 759 crore is under implementation at Jogbani (India)-Biratnagar (Nepal) and Jayanagar (India)-Bardibas (Nepal);
- b) 03 nos. of cross-border rail links will be implemented under Phase II at Nepalgunj Road-Nepalgunj, New Jalpaiguri-Kakarbita and Nautanwa-Bhairawaha, for which, finalization of Detailed Project Reports is underway;
- c) Preliminary Engineering-cum-Traffic survey for the new broad gauge rail line between Raxaul and Kathmandu was undertaken in FY 2018-19 and work is underway for conducting final location survey of the rail line;
- d) Upgradation of 10 nos. of roads under Terai Roads project is being undertaken under new „GOI funded-GON implemented“ modality at a cost of INR 500 crore;
- e) Integrated Check Posts at Nepalgunj and Bhairahawa in Nepal are being implemented under Phase II at a cost of INR 421.69 crore;
- f) Nepal-Bharat Maitri Polytechnic in Hetauda is under construction at a cost of INR 38.53 crore;

- g) Preparation of Detailed Project Report for construction of National Police Academy at Panauti, Nepal at an estimated cost of INR 550 crore is underway;
- h) Post-earthquake reconstruction work is underway in health, education, and cultural heritage sectors with grant component of US\$ 250 million.
- i) Under the mechanism of Joint Commission on Inundation and Flood Control, the Ministry extends economic assistance every year for the construction of river embankments on cross border rivers flowing from Nepal to India (work on 3 rivers, viz. Kamla, Lalbakeya, Bagmati, was completed in 2018; work on 3 rivers, viz. Khando, Banganga and West Rapti, is ongoing)
- j) Every year, the Ministry extends assistance to High Impact Community Development Projects or HICDPs (formerly Small Development Projects) programme for the implementation of projects each costing less than NPR 5 crore (INR 3.125 crore approx.) in critical sectors such as health, education and community infrastructure development.

3.33 As per the Brief furnished by the Ministry, allocation at RE 2018-19 was enhanced to meet expenditure for the post-earthquake housing reconstruction project and progress in the Terai Roads project under the revised modality. In BE 2019-20, allocation has been further enhanced keeping in view the requirement of funds for settlement of bills of Operation Maitre, Post-earthquake reconstruction in housing and education sector apart from regular ongoing projects such as Integrated Check Posts at Biratnagar; cross-border rail links; embankment construction on Nepalese rivers; Small Development Projects; supply of electricity; scholarships etc. Elaborating on the number of houses reconstructed in Nepal in Post earthquake period and the targets and timeline, the Ministry stated that as part of the post-earthquake reconstruction package to Nepal, an amount of US\$ 150 million [US\$ 100 million as grant, and US\$ 50 million as LOC] was allocated to support reconstruction in housing sector in Nepal. The Government of Nepal has allocated 50,000 earthquake affected beneficiaries in Gorkha and Nuwakot districts of Nepal to the Government of India. As per the agreed modality, the Government of Nepal is responsible for implementation while the Government of India will provide funding and socio-technical consultancy support for the project. Agreements signed with socio-technical facilitation consultants in March 2018 have set a timeline of three years from the date of signing, i.e. March 2021. Housing reconstruction project has achieved substantial progress since its commencement

in 2018. Over 45,000 (i.e. 90% work) GoI-supported houses have been completed till date. The Prime Minister of India and Nepal remotely witnessed the progress in housing reconstruction work through video conferencing on 21 January 2020.

3.34 The Ministry enlisted the details of various ongoing development projects in Nepal under the Ministry's „Aid to Nepal“ budget head, along with the progress and expected timeline for completion, as below:

SN	Project	Approved Cost	Timeline / Target	Progress
‘Aid to Nepal’ budget head				
.	Integrated Check Post under Phase-II at Nepalgunj, Nepal	Rs. 189.20 crore	2022	Project yet to commence
.	Integrated Check Post under Phase-II at Bhairahawa, Nepal	Rs. 232.49 crore	Will be taken up subsequently after completion of ICP Nepalgunj, in sync with the construction of corresponding ICP on the Indian side, being undertaken by the Land Ports Authority of India.	Project yet to commence
.	Terai Roads project	Rs. 500 crore	2020	About 70% completed
.	Post-earthquake reconstruction in housing sector	Rs. 700 crore <i>[US\$ 100 million]</i>	2021	About 90% completed
.	Post-earthquake reconstruction in education sector	Rs. 350 crore <i>[US\$ 50 million]</i>	2023 Total 70 schools and 2 libraries identified	Work on 07 schools ongoing; construction of 01 school completed.
.	Post-earthquake reconstruction in cultural heritage sector	Rs. 350 crore <i>[US\$ 50 million]</i>	2023 Total 28 cultural heritage sites identified	Preliminary assessment of 11 (out of total 28) cultural heritage sites undertaken
.	Jayanagar-Bijalpura-Bardibas	Rs. 470.00 crore	Stretch from Jayanagar to Kurtha (34.05 km)	Over 65% completed

SN	Project	Approved Cost	Timeline / Target	Progress
	rail link	[RCE Rs. 549.00 crore]	completed; construction of remaining portion of the rail-link is underway. Land from Bijalpura to Bardibas is not available.	
.	Jogbani-Biratnagar rail link	Rs. 210.00 crore [Revised cost of Rs. 373.87 crore under approval]	Stretch from Bathnaha-Jogbani-Nepal Customs Yard (7.74 km) completed; construction of remaining portion of the rail-link is underway.	Over 70% completed
.	National Police Academy at Panauti	Rs. 560.79 crore	DPR preparation is under finalization. Construction time estimated to be 3 years.	Project yet to commence
.	Nepal-Bharat Maitri Polytechnic college	Rs. 38.53 crore	2021	Project commenced in September 2019; over 6% progress achieved.
.	Tanakpur Link Canal	Rs. 80.00 crore	2021	Work has been awarded; Project yet to commence

3.35 During oral evidence before the Committee, the Foreign Secretary stated:

“In Nepal, we have seen expeditious implementation and delivery of ongoing bilateral projects. The Integrated Check Post at Biratnagar, a major Government of India assisted project, was remotely inaugurated by the Prime Ministers of India and Nepal on 21st January, 2020. The Motihari-Amlekhgunj petroleum products pipeline was inaugurated in September, 2019. Similarly, we achieved significant progress with respect to several other major Government of India assisted projects, including post-earthquake housing reconstruction project, with 45,000 houses out of Government of India’s total commitment of 50,000 houses completed till date, that is, 90 per cent rate of progress. Our focus in the year ahead would be to continue timely implementation of ongoing projects as well as early commencement of newly-initiated major projects.”

3.36 The Committee are concerned to note that the budgetary allocation under 'Aid to Nepal' has decreased from Rs. 1200 crore at RE 2019-20 stage to Rs. 800 crore at BE 2020-21 stage. The main reason cited for increase in allocation during RE 2019-20 was the requirement of additional funds for pending payments and supplies relating to Operation Maitri. During the last financial year, construction of Integrated Check Post at Biratnagar, Motihari- Amlekhgunj Petroleum Products Pipeline and about 90% of post-earthquake housing project has been completed. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry should continue making concerted efforts towards expeditious and timely completion of ongoing bilateral projects in Nepal. The Ministry should also obtain enhanced allocation at the RE stage to initiate the new work on aid commitments.

(Recommendation No. 20)

IV. Aid to Sri Lanka

3.37 The budgetary allocation under 'Aid to Sri Lanka' for BE 2020-21 was Rs. 250.00 crore. It was decreased to Rs. 205.00 crore at the RE stage. The budgetary allocation during BE 2020-21 has been further decreased to Rs. 200.00 crore. Stating the reason for decreased allocation at BE 2020-21 stage, the Ministry submitted that there has been a deceleration in the pace of progress in the Hi-Impact Community Development Projects attributable to the aftermath of April 21, 2019 terrorist attacks; the Presidential elections held in November 2019; and on account of the impending Parliamentary elections in April / May 2020. As regards Phase IV of Indian Housing Project (10,000 houses in Plantation areas), land identification for the project has not been completed by the Sri Lankan side and hence the project is moving slow.

3.38 The Committee were keen to know the manner in which the decline in budgetary allocation will affect the ongoing projects in Sri Lanka. In a written reply, the Ministry stated that the decline in the budgetary allocation is not likely to affect the ongoing projects in Sri Lanka. At this stage, allocation seems sufficient. However, any additional funds, if required, may be sought at the RE stage depending on the progress of projects.

3.39 The Ministry furnished details about the various projects that have been initiated and completed during the last financial year as follows: -

Projects completed in the last Financial Year (2018-19)

1. Project to support livelihood of fishing and farming communities in Hambantota district.
2. Supply of Boats and Fishing nets to fishermen of Mullaiteevu in Northern Province.
3. Procurement of medical equipment and furniture for the 200 bed ward complex, Vavuniya
4. Supply and delivery of Equipment and Vehicle Faculty of Agriculture & Engineering, University of Jaffna
5. Setting up of a Rabindranath Tagore Auditorium at Ruhuna University in Matara in Southern Province.

New Projects initiated in the last Financial Year (2018-19)

1. Model Village Housing Project in all 25 districts of Sri Lanka
2. Grama Shakthi housing Project - I in Southern Province
3. 153 houses and infrastructure facilities in Sobitha Thero Village in Anuradhapura
4. Upgrading Saraswathy Central College in Pusselawa, Kandy
5. Setting up of a Training School for Dalada Maligawa, Pallekele, Kandy (Dalada Maligawa Cultural Heritage Project).
6. Construction of 5000 MT cold storage in Dambulla, Central Province
7. Grama Shakthi Model Village Housing Project –II Southern Province
8. Grama Shakti Model village Housing Project – Northern Province

3.40 While rendering evidence before the Committee on 27 February, 2020, the Foreign Secretary submitted:

“In Sri Lanka, there have been two notable developments since the meeting of the Standing Committee in November, 2019. These are the resumption of flights between Chennai and Jaffna after almost four decades, and completion of an iconic project, that is, the Cultural Centre in Jaffna with India’s grant assistance of around Rs. 80 crore. Island-wide expansion of Emergency Ambulance Services in Sri Lanka and implementation of 3rd Phase of Indian Housing Project are other high-profile projects. In addition, many High Impact Community Development Projects are at different stages of implementation. There has been some deceleration in the pace of progress attributable to the aftermath of 21st April, 2019 terrorist attacks, the Presidential Election held in November, 2019 and the impending Parliamentary Election in April/May, 2020.”

3.41 The Committee observe a downward trend in budgetary allocation under the sub-head 'Aid to Sri Lanka' from Rs. 250 crore in BE 2019-20 to Rs. 200 crore in BE 2020-21 owing to the deceleration in pace of progress of Hi-Impact Community Development Project due to April 21, 2019 terrorist attacks, Presidential elections, and the impending Parliament election in April/May 2020. The Committee are delighted to discern two notable developments in India-Sri Lanka *i.e.* resumption of flights between Chennai and Jaffna and the establishment of cultural centre in Jaffna with Indian assistance. During oral evidence, the Foreign Secretary apprised the Committee about the implementation of ongoing high profile projects such as Island-wide expansion of Emergency Ambulance Services in Sri Lanka, implementation of third phase of Indian Housing Projects. The Committee are of the considered view that the ongoing projects in Sri Lanka will invariably require more funds and the Ministry should ensure that underfunding does not lead to delay in their implementation. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry should prepare a roadmap for completion of the ongoing projects in Sri Lanka and seek additional finances for the same at the RE Stage.

(Recommendation No. 21)

V. Aid to Maldives

3.42 Under the head „Aid to Maldives“, an allocation of Rs. 400 crore was made during BE 2019-20 and the same was slashed to Rs. 150 crore at the RE stage. During BE 2020-21, an allocation of Rs. 300 crore has been provided. When asked about the reason for decrease in budgetary allocation under this Head during both RE 2019-20 as well as BE 2020-21, the Ministry stated that there have been delays in certain projects because of capacity constraints on Maldivian side. This has pushed the expenditure to next financial year (NFY). All these projects are expected to pick up pace in NFY. Ministry will consider enhancement in funds at RE stage depending on the progress of projects.

3.43 Development projects in Maldives have picked up pace since late last year and substantial new commitments are also in the pipeline under both grant and LoC assistance. At present, India is, inter alia, providing grant assistance for construction of additional facilities at the Composite Training Centre at Mafillaafushi Island in the Maldives. The main Training Centre was completed in August 2015 and construction of some additional facilities, on Maldives Government request, commenced in July 2019 with Indian grant assistance. India will also be assisting in the construction of a new Ministry of Defence building for Maldives that is scheduled to commence next year. The construction of the Institute for Security and Law Enforcement Studies (ISLES) is proceeding at a good pace and is expected to be completed in 2020.

3.44 Construction of Police Academy has been a long-standing Project. Providing a status note in this regard, the Ministry submitted that the project slowed down because of issues related to work permits and visas during the previous Government in Maldives. However, the pace of work has picked up since the Government of President Solih came to power. The project is expected to be completed by July 2020.

3.45 Clarifying further on „Aid to Maldives“, the Foreign Secretary added during the Oral Evidence:

“In Maldives, the return of political stability has led to a renewed focus on completing ongoing projects and undertaking new projects of mutual interest by both the Governments. Examples include construction of the Institute for Security and Law Enforcement Studies, training of 650 Maldivian civil servants, parliamentary officials, customs officials, defence personnel, police officials, teachers, hospital managers, private sector executives in India in 2019-20, and more than 25 community-level projects. In 2019-20, a loan of US \$ 25 million was also released to the Government of Maldives as the final instalment of the Standby Credit Facility of US \$ 100 million extended in 2011-12. India has also committed to supporting 6 large infrastructure projects in Maldives through USD 800 million Line of Credit. In line with the upswing in bilateral relations in the past year, we are expecting a higher utilization of the budget in 2020-21, and accordingly provision has been made for Rs. 300 crore in BE 2020-21.”

3.46 The Committee notice that the budgetary allocation under the head ‘Aid to Maldives’, has been reduced from Rs.400 crore at BE 2019-20 stage to Rs. 300 crore at BE

2020-21 stage. The Committee have noted the assertion of the Ministry that there have been delays in certain projects because of capacity constraints on Maldivian side. It is heartening to know that with an improved political situation in Maldives, several ongoing projects are stated to achieve significant progress and substantial new commitments are also in the pipeline under both grant and LoC assistance. The Ministry has also informed that the construction of the much delayed Institute for Security and Law Enforcement Studies (ISLES) is proceeding at a good pace and is expected to be completed in 2020.

In view of the upswing in bilateral relations, the Committee are hopeful that there will be a renewed focus on completing ongoing projects and undertaking new projects of mutual interest. The Ministry should ensure smooth, expeditious and timely execution of various ongoing projects in Maldives. The Committee desire that the long standing projects construction of Police Academy and construction of Institute for Security and Law Enforcement Studies is completed as per the agreed timeline of 2020.

(Recommendation No. 22)

VI. Aid to Myanmar

3.47 Development cooperation is a prominent feature in India's overall bilateral cooperation with Myanmar. Our involvement and assistance in this field extends from the setting up of major connectivity infrastructure to significant initiatives in establishing long-term, sustainable and relevant institutions for capacity building and human resource development in areas such as agricultural research and education, IT and skill development. An important aspect of these initiatives is that they are, for the most part, completely grant funded, though India also extends a considerable amount of assistance by way of concessional finance for projects ranging from transport and communications to agriculture and farm mechanization and highway development.

3.48 Allocation under the head „Aid to Myanmar“ during BE 2019-20 was Rs. 400.00 crore and the same was reduced at the RE Stage to Rs. 170.00 crore. For BE 2020-21 the allocation

has been pegged at Rs. 300.00 crore. Furnishing the reasons for drastic reduction in allocation under this sub-head, the Ministry submitted that reduction in allocation was on account of slow spending rate in the year BE 2019-20 due to various reasons including slow rate of execution of projects compared to the anticipated rate as a result of procedural delays on the part of Government of Myanmar in getting their clearances done (Coastal Surveillance System), escalating adverse security situation in Myanmar hindering the execution of projects (Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project), legal hurdles (69 bridges of trilateral highway) are some of the reasons for the slow rate of expenditure; Ministry will consider enhancement in funds at RE stage depending on the progress of projects.

3.49 The Committee desired to know whether in the opinion of the Ministry the allocation of Rs. 300 crore is sufficient in a situation where China has already made strategic inroads into Myanmar. The Ministry in a written reply stated that India is already undertaking major infrastructure and capacity-building projects in Myanmar, all of which will require concentrated effort by Indian and Myanmar agencies to satisfactorily complete. Based on assessment of Myanmar's current capacity to absorb projects, the stage at which our existing menu of projects has currently reached, and the capacity to work with Myanmar's specific rules and regulations, Ministry believes that the allocation currently sought is sufficient to secure India's fundamental strategic interests in Myanmar. The current very positive trajectory of India-Myanmar relations suggests that the Government's assessment of the balance of needs, capacities and ambition is quite accurate.

3.50 On the Committee's query, the Ministry furnished a status note on the progress of Kaladan Project, which will connect India's eastern seaboard with Myanmar's Sittwe Port. Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project (KMMTTP) will create a multi-modal transport corridor for shipment of cargo from the eastern ports of India to Myanmar as well as North-Eastern part of India via Myanmar. The project includes a waterway component of 158 km on Kaladan river from Sittwe to Paletwa in Myanmar and a road component of 109 km from Paletwa to Zorinpui on the India-Myanmar border in Mizoram State. A Framework Agreement between GOI and Myanmar in this was signed in 2008. Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) is the Project Development Consultant for the waterways component of the project and M/s. Iacon Infrastructure Services Ltd. is Project Management Consultant for the road

component. Estimated cost of the project is Rs. 2904.04 (Rs 982.99 crore for waterways and Rs 1921.05 crore for road component) as approved by the Cabinet in October 2015. Work for construction of road has been awarded to M/s. EPI-C&C JV in March 2017. The originally approved works under waterways were completed in May 2017. A bilateral MoU between India and Myanmar for appointment of a Port Operator for operation & maintenance of the facilities created under waterways component was signed in October 2018. The assets created under waterways component have now been handed over to the Government of Myanmar on 31 January 2020 and the port operator selected jointly by India and Myanmar has taken over port operations from 1 February 2020. Work for construction of road is behind the schedule with the current physical progress of three percent. Acute financial crisis faced by JV partner M/s. C&C, delayed action by JV partner M/s. EPIL, non-availability of access to the project site from India-Myanmar border in Mizoram till recently and adverse security situation in the project area are the main reasons for delays in the project. Construction of road is expected to take three years to complete.

3.51 As regards „Aid to Myanmar“, the Foreign Secretary during oral evidence on 27 February, 2020 submitted as under: -

“In the past three months, new initiatives have commenced in Myanmar – a project for the conservation of 92 Pagodas in Bagan and delivery of relief kits to internally displaced persons in Rakhine State. The Government of India is also extending material support to the Government of Myanmar for the Rakhine State Development and Border Area Development Programme. A major item of expenditure during the next financial year will be on Coastal Surveillance Radar System. BE 2020-21 allocation has been kept at Rs. 300 crore, and will be reviewed at RE stage.”

3.52 The Committee are concerned to note the sagging budgetary allocation made under the sub-head ‘Aid to Myanmar’ and this reduction as per the Ministry is on account of slow spending rate in 2019-20. The Committee also note that extraneous factors such as delay in getting clearances, adverse security situation in Myanmar, legal hurdles were some of the prominent reasons behind the slow utilization of allocated funds. The Committee, however, feel that the current allocation is not congruent with the ongoing strategic projects in Myanmar such as Kaladan Multimodal And Coastal Surveillance System. The

Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry should take adequate steps to ensure that the allocated amount is utilized optimally for completion of the ongoing projects so that enhanced allocation can be provided at the RE stage. The Committee also desire that the Ministry in consultation with the concerned stakeholder in Myanmar draw a roadmap for completion of the Kaladan Multi Modal Transit Transport Project to ensure its completion in 2020.

(Recommendation No. 23)

VII. Aid to African Countries

3.53 Allocation under the Head 'Aid to African Countries' was Rs. 450.00 crore at the BE 2019-20 and the same was retained at the RE stage. For BE 2020-21, an allocation of Rs. 350 crore has been provided. Providing reasons for quantum decline in allocation under this head during BE 2020-21, the Ministry replied that allocations of around 260 crore out of 450 crore regarding Mahatma Gandhi Convention Centre in Niger and Assistance to Niger for hosting AU Summit was done in FY 2019-20. Since the Convention Center and been completed and inaugurated by EAM, no expenditure on this project is anticipated in FY 2020-21. Also it is kindly noted that BE 2020-21 allocation remains significantly higher than BE 2018-19 (330 crore) and actual 2017-18 (170 crore) under this head.

3.54 The various programmes/ projects by India in African countries, as provided by the Ministry are attached at *Annexure I*.

3.55 The Committee were keen to know whether a comprehensive review of all the projects announced so far under India-Africa Summit I, II and III has been completed in consultation with all the concerned Ministries/Departments. The Ministry replied that a comprehensive review of all the projects announced so far under IAFS-I, II and II have been regularly reviewed in consultation with all the stakeholders including Africa Union. Progress in the projects is reviewed regularly in consultation with all concerned Ministries. A regular and high level review of projects undertaken under various IAFS is carried out in consultation with all concerned stakeholders and policy decisions are taken accordingly. For example, to respond to capacity

constraints faced by several African countries in developing a proper project proposal, a Project Preparation Facility has recently been set up to assist the requesting countries with preparation of project proposals.

3.56 On being asked about the reasons for delay in setting up of projects committed under IAFS-I, II & III alongwith remedial steps, the Ministry stated that considerable challenges were faced in the implementation of the proposals to set up institutions in Africa. These include: Long delays in decision making on choice of locations to host institutions (by the African Union, the Regional Economic Communities or the countries selected); wrong choice of locations in several cases; lack of interest in several designated host countries; lack of funds with the host countries (mostly LDCs) to provide land/building/running costs as per the terms and conditions of the partnership model; lack of adequate funds and manpower on the Indian side in certain cases to implement the projects offered under IAFS mechanism. Despite these challenges, we have established a total number of 8 Vocational Training Centers (VTCs) in Africa. We have also established 6 IT Centers, a CGARD Center and upgraded a Technology Center. As part of grant assistance, India has also provided medicines, medical equipment, ambulances, NCERT books, vehicles and food grains etc. Over US \$ 700 million has been incurred on various grant projects, since IAFS III. As regards LoCs, projects worth US \$ 6.4 billion have been approved/implemented in various African countries since IAFS-III.

3.57 On the Committee's further query about the existence of a mechanism in the Ministry or at the level of the African Union to oversee the quality and pace of implementation of Projects, the Ministry provided that there is a mechanism to oversee the quality and pace of implementation of projects committed under India-Africa Forum Summit. The Ministry is vigorously engaged with the host countries, the concerned Indian Missions, Implementing Agencies and the line Ministries for timely implementation of the projects. Physical and financial targets are being fixed in consultation with the Indian implementing agencies and their partner organization in Africa including African Union. Ministry has been reviewing policies and procedures with the African Union to ensure effective implementation of projects/institutions in Africa. Ministry has been regularly convening Inter-Ministerial Meetings with line Ministries/agencies to discuss and follow up the action required by Ministries/difference agencies. A draft Joint Plan of Action was drafted and forwarded to the African Union

Commission and the resident African Missions in New Delhi. Ministry is working closely with the host Government to resolve issues as may arise, for timely completion of all ongoing projects.

3.58 Regarding the Pan Africa e-network Project the Ministry furnished a status note along with the allocations and 'Actuals' for the last 5 years. The Ministry stated that forty eight countries from Africa participated in phase one of the Pan Africa e-Network Project („PaeNP“) from 2009–2017. During the 3rd India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS–III) held in New Delhi in October 2015, India and Africa agreed to renew, expand and upgrade the existing PAeNP. Government of India (Cabinet) approved the technological upgradation and extension of PAeNP along with grant of 15000 scholarships to African students over 5 years in 2015. It was subsequently decided to rename phase two of the PAeNP as e-VidyaBharati and e-AarogyaBharati („e-VBAB“) Network Project. An agreement was signed by the Ministry of External Affairs with Telecommunications Consultants India Ltd. („TCIL“) in September 2018 wherein the latter has been designated implementing agency for the project. In phase one of the PAeNP, tele-education and tele-medicine services were offered from Indian Universities and Indian Super Specialty Hospitals to students/doctors/paramedical staff in Africa through telecommunication links/satellite linkages. Under the e-VBAB Network Project, tele-education & tele-medicine services are being offered by linking educational institutions and hospitals in India with those from participating countries in Africa through web based platforms using the medium of internet. The project aims at providing 15000 scholarships to African students over the next 5 years for Certificate, Diploma, Undergraduate and Postgraduate Degree programmes in various disciplines. Duly approved UGC recognised Indian Universities shall provide these services. The iLearn portal was formally launched by Hon'ble External Affairs Minister on 7th October 2019 and is live at www.ilearn.gov.in. Pilot phase for tele-education was undertaken in Ghana and examinations conducted in November 2019. Moving forward, a Learning Centre shall be set up in each partner African country at one of the nominated Universities. In this regard, a tender was floated for selection of an agency for Supply, Installation, Testing, Commissioning and AMC of Learning Center equipment. This work has been awarded and an LOI has been issued on 29th January, 2020. Pilot phase for tele-medicine is expected to begin in February 2020.

3.59 The following expenditure has been undertaken, as per actuals, in the past five years:

S. No.	Year	Amount paid
1	2015	61,57,69,845.00 (Phase-I)
2	2016	59,95,60,768.00 (Phase-I)
3	2017	34,16,13,801.00 (Phase-I)
4	2018	Nil
5	2019	20,94,47,436.00 (Phase-II)
	Total	176,63,91,850.00

3.60 The Committee were also keen to know about the number of countries that are the beneficiaries of the Project and also time and cost overrun in the Project during 2019-20. In a written reply the Ministry submitted that thus far, 15 African countries have signed MoUs with TCIL for participating in the project - Benin, Republic of Guinea, Zambia, Malawi, Ghana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritius, Uganda, Mozambique, Comoros, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Mali and Eritrea. The approved cost of the e-VBAB Network Project is Rs 951.22 crores. Based on the Detailed Project Report, at an estimated cost of Rs 865.50 crores, MEA signed an agreement with TCIL on September 10, 2018. Given the developments along the way, TCIL is proposing an addendum to the agreement incorporating suitable amendments and revising cost estimates. Initial draft is under discussion.

3.61 Briefing the Committee about development cooperation with Africa, the Foreign Secretary during evidence on 27 February, 2020 submitted:

“Africa is a key foreign policy priority. 18 new Embassies are being opened across the Continent by 2021. In the current Financial Year, Rs. 450 crore is expected to be utilized for projects ranging from the Mahatma Gandhi Convention Centre in Niger; IT and Vocational Training Centres across the Continent; training schemes and scholarships; and supply of medicines, books, vehicles and other equipment which are actively sought after. The flagship project -e-Vidhyabharti and e-Arogyabharti is being launched in phases in all 54 countries of Africa. Hon. Members would be happy to know that the Mahatma Gandhi Convention Centre in Niger was built by an Indian company in December, 2019 in a record time of 14 months with grant assistance of US \$ 38.15 million provided by the Government of India. The Centre was inaugurated by the External Affairs Minister on 21st January, 2020. The BE 2020-21 allocation of Rs. 350 crore reflects the fact that the Convention Centre

project has been completed. In addition to grants, 205 Lines of Credit amounting to US \$ 12.54 billion have been extended to African countries in varied sectors such as power plants, hydroelectricity, power transmission & distribution networks, dams, roads, railways, ports, agriculture & irrigation, industrial units, skills development, civil construction etc. New sectors such as Telecommunication have also been included under the Government of India's Line of Credits to Africa. The Ministry of External Affairs, the Ministry of Finance and the Exim Bank of India have been working for the past couple of months on the revision of the Indian Developmental Assistance Scheme (IDEAS) guidelines of 2015. This revision would further streamline the procedures relating to granting and implementation of Line of Credit. The 3 India-Africa Forum Summits on 2008, 2011 and 2015 have further reinforced the development partnership with the Continent. The Fourth India-Africa Forum Summit is scheduled to take place later this year."

3.62 It is disconcerting for the Committee to note decline in allocation under the sub-head 'Aid to African countries' from Rs. 450 crore in BE 2019-20 to Rs. 300 crore in BE 2020-21. Delayed execution of projects leading to under-utilization of earmarked funds seems to be the cause of this reduction. Justifying the delay in completion of projects under India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS), the Ministry has stated that considerable challenges, including lack of funds and manpower from the Indian side, were faced in the implementation of the proposals to set up institutions in Africa. Moreover, IAFS-IV is scheduled to take place this year. The Committee are concerned to note that over the years, there has been slow progress in implementation of projects under India Africa Forum Summits I, II and III. The Committee note that a regular and high-level review of projects undertaken under various IAFS is carried out in consultation with all concerned stakeholders and policy decisions are taken accordingly. The Committee have noted that so far 15 African countries- Benin, Republic of Guinea, Zambia, Malawi, Ghana, Democratic Republic of Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritius, Uganda, Mozambique, Comoros, Sierra

Leone, Sudan, Mali and Eritrea - have signed MoUs with TCIL for participating in the Pan Africa e-network Project (PaeNP).

Given the significance of the African region, the drooping allocation and the slow pace of progress in projects there is disappointing. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that MEA should accord due importance to Africa in our foreign policy and developmental cooperation should clearly reflect it. The Committee are hopeful that the Ministry will actively engage with the host countries, the concerned Indian Missions, Implementing Agencies and the line Ministries for timely implementation of the projects. In this regard, India's experience in development cooperation over the years should come handy in extending our outreach in Africa. The Committee, strongly recommend that enhanced allocation must be provisioned for this head and based on a feasibility study, physical and financial targets should be established for completion of all ongoing projects in Africa. The Committee, further, urge that the Ministry should take suitable measures to ensure the timely handover of the Pan African e-Network Project and apprise the Committee about the same at regular intervals.

(Recommendation No. 24)

VIII. Aid to Afghanistan

3.63 India's developmental assistance to Afghanistan is a key pillar of the close strategic partnership with that country. India has endured security challenges to continue providing development assistance focused on reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. The new Parliament Building in Kabul inaugurated on 25 December 2015, and the Afghan India Friendship Dam (earlier known as Salma Dam) inaugurated in June 2016, are key symbols of India's commitment to the rebuilding of a united, democratic and prosperous Afghanistan. Under the „New Development Partnership“ heralded by both countries in September 2017, India is committed to taking forward its wide-ranging development assistance to Afghanistan.

3.64 The budgetary allocation under the Head „Aid to Afghanistan“ has been kept constant at Rs. 400 crore during the last financial year and the same has been retained at BE 2020-21. When asked the Ministry provided details about allocation and actual expenditures under this head for the last two financial years as under:

In Rs Crore

Head	2017-18			2018-19		
	BE	RE	Actual expenditure	BE	RE	Actual expenditure
Aid to Afghanistan	350	350	365.96	325	470	469.98

3.65 Further, the Ministry also furnished information about the various completed, ongoing and future projects in Afghanistan.

AFGHANISTAN		
S.No	Project	Project Expenditure/Cost
1	8.81lakh tonne of Wheat was supplied to Afghanistan under humanitarian assistance between 2002 and 2018.	Rs. 1434.45Crore
2.	Supply of 2000 MT of pulses was completed in 2018 following same modalities as wheat	Rs. 16.10 Crore
3.	Afghan-India Friendship Dam (Salma Dam)- The Salma dam is a 107.5 m high earth and rock - fill dam on the upper reaches of the Hari Rud River in Herat province. The Project was jointly inaugurated by Prime Minister of India and President of Afghanistan in Herat on 4 June 2016 and renamed as India-Afghan Friendship Dam.	Rs. 1775.69 Crore
4.	Afghan Parliament Building-The Afghan Parliament Building was jointly inaugurated by Prime Minister of India and President of Afghanistan, on 25 December 2015.	Rs. 969 Crore
5.	Construction Transmission line between Pul-e-Khumri and Kabul and substations at Kabul, Doshi and Charikkar was completed under grant assistance.	Rs. 186.71 Crore
6.	Restoration of Stor Palace- Completed	Rs. 38.76 Crore
7.	Supply of Medical equipment to Indira Gandhi Children’s Hospital at Kabul was	Rs. 17.16 Crore

	completed in 2015	
8.	Construction of glazed tile plant for Blue Mosque in Mazar-e-Sharif- Completed	Rs. 0.52 Crore
9.	Zaranj-Delaram Road-218 km long road in south-western Afghanistan connecting the capital of Nimroz Province to the Herat-Kandahar Highway –inaugurated in 2009	Rs 600 Crore
10.	Special Scholarship Scheme for Afghan Nationals (1000 per annum through ICCR) is being implemented from the Academic year 2012-13. The project has been approved till 2021-22- ongoing	Rs 398Crore
11.	500 Scholarship Scheme for Children/Dependantsof Afghan National Defence Forces- ongoing	Rs 4.65 Crore
12.	Agricultural Fellowship program through Indian Council of Agricultural Research-ongoing	Rs 23.16 Crore
13.	Establishment of Afghan National Agriculture Sciences and Technology University (ANASTU) at Kandahar-ongoing	Rs 13.80 Crore
14.	Phase I &II of Small Development Projects- These are high impact community development projects implementedby the Afghan government agencies- ongoing	USD 15.57 million
15.	Phase III of Small Development Projects-ongoing	USD 65.06 million
16.	Supply of spare parts/ refurbishment of old buses- ongoing	USD 2.01 million
17.	Construction of Polyclinic Building in Mazar-E-Sharif- New	-
18.	Construction of Afghan National Park in Kabul- New	-
19.	Shatoot Dam- New	-
20.	Supply of 1000 buses- New	-

21.	Rehabilitation of 16.9 Km road connecting Band-e-Amir to Bamyan-Yakawlang Highway-New	USD7.81 million- Estimate
22.	Construction of 2.38 Km asphalted road connecting Mazar-e-Sharif Airport to Kabul-Char Saraka Road- New	USD 3.004 million- Estimate
23.	Establishment of Gypsum Plant in Kabul-New	-
24.	Construction of 4765 houses for returning Afghan refugees- New	USD 27.36 million- Estimate
25.	75000 tonnes of wheat through Chabahar Port- New	Rs 345 crore- Estimate

3.66 Furnishing a status note on Shatoot Dam Project, road and high impact community projects in Afghanistan, the Ministry stated that India agreed to implement the Shatoot dam and drinking water project for Kabul that would also facilitate irrigation under grant-in aid assistance during the 2nd Strategic Partnership Council Meeting between India and Afghanistan on September 11, 2017. The project involves construction of a rock-fill dam, Water Treatment Plant and associated infrastructure. Currently, tests are being conducted by WAPCOS, a PSU under the Ministry of Water Resource (MoWR) to finalise and confirm the DPR for taking the project forward. An intergovernmental MoU for the project is under negotiation with the Afghan side.

3.67 **The Committee are aware that despite daunting logistical and security challenges, India has been providing wide-ranging developmental assistance to Afghanistan. Allocation under this sub head has been kept unchanged for the ongoing and next fiscals. The Committee are pleased to see optimum utilization of funds under this head for the past two years. The Foreign Secretary has stated that India is providing small and medium projects development assistance in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan and large scale projects are in the planning stage. The Committee, therefore, desire that the satisfactory experience gained from completion of large infrastructural projects in Afghanistan should be applied**

to all our developmental cooperation projects elsewhere. The Ministry should ensure that requisite funds are available for smooth functioning of all our small and medium sized projects in Afghanistan. The Committee also want to be kept informed about the large developmental projects in Afghanistan once finalized.

(Recommendation No. 25)

IX. Aid to Latin American Countries

3.68 The budgetary allocation during BE 2017-18 under the head „Aid to Latin American Countries“ was Rs. 20.00 crore (BE 2019-20) and Rs. 10 crore (RE 2019-20). An outlay of Rs. 20 crore has been provisioned for BE 2020-21. Furnishing the list of projects under implementation during the financial year 2019-20 along with the „Actuals“ is as follows: -

Sr. No.	Particulars of the Project	Amount (INR)	Actuals (INR)
1.	Cash grant to Municipality of Providencia, Chile for plantation of trees in the Plaza da la India	37,26,003/-	37,26,003/-
2.	Second installment for final payment in respect of Indian Arrival Monument in Guyana	57,29,962/-	57,29,962/
3.	Financial assistance of \$20,000 to develop forests at Losa Gandhi Playground on the hill top of San Francisco, Lima (Peru)	14,36,500/-	14,36,500/-
4.	First installment for India“s contribution towards CARICOM Development Fund (CDF)	2,47,03,000/-	2,47,03,000/-
5.	Payment to HLL for supply of medicines to Jamaica	50,96,625/-	50,96,625/-
6.	Second and final installment for India“s contribution towards CDF	4,50,25,500/-	4,50,25,500/-
7.	Upgradation of IT Infrastructure at the CARICOM Secretariat, Guyana (DPA-II)	41,99,561/-	41,99,561/
8.	Setting up of Indo-Belize Centre of Engineering, Belize (DPA-II)	88,62,009/-	88,62,009/-
9.	Financial assistance for the development of Craft Market Place at Paramaribo	63,56,792/-	57,21,120/-

10.	Supply and Procurement of medicine to Nicaragua	27,76,145/-	Ongoing
	Total	10,79,12,097/-	10,45,00,280/-

3.69 The Committee was keen to know whether in the opinion of the Ministry such meagre allocation to such a region will be a limiting factor in our outreach to the Latin American countries. Justifying their position, the Ministry submitted that Latin America and Caribbean region comprises of 33 countries occupying large two landmasses of North and South America as well as the islands of the neighbouring Caribbean Sea. As developing nations, many of them with agricultural and/ or tourism -based economy, our aid is directed towards the priority areas of the host nations as well as extending disaster relief. Our development partnership is not limited to bilateral aid cooperation projects, but also in capacity building such as ITEC courses; Lines of Credits for industrial development as well as providing humanitarian assistance during disasters. Our aid is delivered in a way that is desirable to the host Latin America and Caribbean countries. For example, for the first time during India-CARICOM Leaders Meeting in September 2019, PM had announced US\$ 1 million each to the 14 Caribbean countries for implementation of Quick Impact Community development projects. This is in line with our commitment to strengthen the global capacity and ensure sustainable development. This assistance would be rendered under India-UN Development Partnership Fund. While it is desirable that the aid allocation to such a huge region could be improved, Ministry strived 100% utilization of allocated resources judiciously so as to not becoming a limiting factor in our outreach to the region.

3.70 The Committee are aware that Latin America and Caribbean region comprises of 33 countries occupying two large landmasses of North and South America as well as the islands of the neighbouring Caribbean Sea. Ministry has informed that India's development partnership in Latin America is not limited to bilateral aid cooperation projects, but also in capacity building such as ITEC courses, Lines of Credits for industrial development as well as providing humanitarian assistance during disasters. Keeping in mind the geographical extent and magnitude of developmental cooperation with Latin America, the Committee are surprised to note a paltry allocation of Rs. 20 crore to Latin

America for BE 2020-21. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that the budgetary allocation should be reflective of the importance India attaches to this region and bolster a mutually beneficial partnership with concerned countries in the region. Accordingly, the Committee desire that aid allocation to such a huge region should be improved by allocating more fund at the RE stage.

(Recommendation No. 26)

X. Indo-Pacific Cooperation

3.71 The erstwhile „ASEAN Multilateral“ head has been discontinued and new head „Indo-Pacific Cooperation“ has been opened w.e.f. FY 2019-20. An allocation of Rs. 45.00 crore was made under the Head during BE 2019-20 and the same has been retained during BE 2020-21.

Given the increasing salience of the Indo-Pacific concept in global discourse, the Ministry of External Affairs established a new Division for the Indo-Pacific in April 2019. The purpose of doing so was two-fold: to help consolidate India’s vision of the Indo-Pacific across Government of India, in line with the elements set out by the Prime Minister of India in June 2018, and to provide substantive policy elements and programmes to that vision.

3.72 On being asked about providing the rationale behind renaming this sub head, the Ministry stated that given the increasing salience of the Indo-Pacific concept in global discourse, the Ministry of External Affairs established a new Division for the Indo-Pacific in April 2019 by integrating ASEAN-Multilateral (AML) Division and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) from IOR Division. The purpose for doing so was two-fold: to help consolidate India’s vision of the Indo-Pacific across Government of India, in line with the elements set out by the Prime Minister of India in June 2018, and to provide substantive policy elements and programmes to that vision. AML Division had a separate budget head “3605-Technical and Economic Cooperation with other countries; 00.101 – Cooperation with other countries; 35-ASEAN Multilateral; 35.00.32 Contributions” for budgetary allocation of ASEAN-related activities/projects. However, IORA did not have a separate budget head and the expenditure on contributions/activities handled by it was met from Major Head “2061” External Affairs. The formation of new Indo-Pacific Division required that the budgetary allocations of the merged

entities viz. AML Division and IORA are combined under a new budget sub-head that signifies the policy emphasis placed on Indo-Pacific. India's Vision of the Indo-Pacific focuses on a free, open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific. India emphasizes respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity of all nations in the region, peaceful resolution of disputes, avoidance of use or threat of use of force and adherence to international laws, rules and regulations. India's objective is a multi-faceted engagement with all countries in the region and those with interests in it, encompassing political, security, economic, and socio-cultural spheres, aimed at Security And Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR). A number of regional groupings are dealt under the Indo-Pacific Division – including ASEAN, East Asia Summit (EAS), IORA, Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM), Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) and Ayeyawady-Chao Phraya-Mekong Economic Cooperation Strategy (ACMECS). The new budget head of IP Division is now: 3605- Technical and Economic Cooperation with other countries; 00.101 – Cooperation with other countries; 42-Indo-Pacific Cooperation; 42.00.32 Contributions.

3.73 Specifying the list of projects taken up during the last two years is enclosed.

INDO-PACIFIC DIVISION					
DETAILS OF PROJECTS IMPLEMENTED IN THE LAST TWO YEARS					
Sl. No.	Country	Project Description	Cost (In US Dollars)	Status with Date of completion (For completed projects)	Status with Expected date of completion and budget required for completion (If project not complete)
1	Cambodia	Improving Community Livelihood through Small Scale Water Supply and Integrated Food Security	50,000	Project sanctioned in 2016-17 and completed in March, 2018	

2	Cambodia	Improving Local Communities' Livelihood and Health through Rehabilitation of a Natural Pond in a Community Protected Area in KulenPromtep Wildlife Sanctuary, Preah Vihear Province to be undertaken by Ministry of Environment.	49,990	Project sanctioned in 2017-18 and completed in March, 2019	
3	Cambodia	Women's Economic Empowerment through Information and Communication Technology to be undertaken by Ministry of Women's Affairs.	50,000	Project sanctioned in 2017-18 and completed in March, 2019	
4	Cambodia	Water Sanitation and Hygiene in Schools to be undertaken by Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of Cambodia	50,000	Project sanctioned in 2017-18 and completed in April, 2019	
5	Cambodia	Building toilets (latrines) at Kong Noy Primary School, Tien Primary and Secondary School, TropangVeng Primary School to be undertaken by Ministry of Women's Affairs.	50,000	Project sanctioned in 2017-18 and completed in February, 2019	
6	Cambodia	Last mile TB care delivery in Cambodia to be implemented by Operation ASHA in coordinated with CENAT, M/o Health, Cambodia.	49,950	Project sanctioned in 2017-18 and completed in March, 2019	
7	Cambodia	Intensifying the Community-Directed Intervention (CDI) for malaria treatment and health education intervention in multi-drug resistance in Cambodia	50,000		The project sanctioned in late 2017-18 FY. It is expected to be completed in FY 2019-20

8	Cambodia	Supporting Community Based Eco-tourism and Livelihood Opportunity (SEBET) for TU Tuek Pos Community Protected Area in Oral Wildlife Sanctuary, Kampong Speu Province.	50,000		The project has been sanctioned in the current FY 2019-20 and it is expected to be completed in 2019-20
9	Cambodia	Building the capacity to caregivers and professionals to empower children and adolescents with multiple disabilities and their families in Cambodia	45,937		The project has been sanctioned in the current FY 2019-20 and it is expected to be completed in 2019-20
10	Cambodia	Installation of 23 hand pumps in SamborPrei Kuk area, Kampong Thom Province, Cambodia	49,263		The project has been sanctioned in the current FY 2019-20 and it is expected to be completed in 2019-20
11	Cambodia	Contributing to the acceleration of Malaria elimination through intensifying the case detection, treatment and tracking in Kampong Speu Province.	50,000		The project has been sanctioned in the current FY 2019-20 and it is expected to be completed in 2019-20
12	Cambodia	Intensifying the community and school-based source reduction and prevention for dengue control among the population living in high risk areas in Takeo.	50,000		The project has been sanctioned in the current FY 2019-20 and it is expected to be completed in 2019-20
13	Cambodia	To eliminate the Arsenic element in drinking water around the Tonie Sap lake.	50,000		The project has been sanctioned in the current FY 2019-20 and it is expected to be completed in 2019-20

14	Cambodia	Integrated community development through hygiene and sanitation and vocational training.	50,000		The project has been sanctioned in the current FY 2019-20 and it is expected to be completed in 2019-20
15	Cambodia	Transforming villages to Open Defecation Free (ODF) and safe hygiene behaviour.	50,000		The project has been sanctioned in the current FY 2019-20 and it is expected to be completed in 2019-20
16	Cambodia	Construction of a 3-classroom building for grade 1 to 3 pupils at Wat Purthisat Primary School Project	50,000		The project has been sanctioned in the current FY 2019-20 and it is expected to be completed in 2019-20
17	Cambodia	Construction of a 3-classroom building for grade 4 to 6 pupils at Wat Purthisat Primary School Project	50,000		The project has been sanctioned in the current FY 2019-20 and it is expected to be completed in 2019-20
18	Vietnam	Construction of Chua Moi Bridge at Ho DacKien Commune, Chau Thanh District, Soc Trang Province.	50,000	The project sanctioned in 2017-18 and completed in 2018-19	
19	Vietnam	Construction of kindergarten of two classroom of Van Lung, Van Lung Commune, PhuTho Town, PhuTho Province.	50,000	The project sanctioned in 2017-18 and completed in 2018	
20	Vietnam	Construction of Classrooms at Lac Son Primary School of Ca Na Commune, Thua n Nam District, NinhThuan Province.	50,000	The project sanctioned in 2017-18 and completed in 2018	

21	Vietnam	Construction of 03 Classroom at Hai Long Kindergarten, Hai Hau District, Nam Dinh province.	50,000	The project sanctioned in 2017-18 and completed in 2018	
22	Vietnam	Construction of two-room single-storey kitchen and dining room, Bo Ly kindergarten, Bo Ly commune, Tam Dao District, Vinh Phuc province.	50,000	The project sanctioned in 2017-18 and completed in 2018	
23		Construction of Hau Bong Kindergarten, Hau Bong Commune, Ha Hoad District, PhuTho Province	50,000		The project sanctioned in FY 2019-20 and it is under implementation.
24		Construction of infield canal in Tan An Ward, Nghi Lo town, Yen Bai Province	50,000		The project sanctioned in FY 2019-20 and it is under implementation.
25		Construction of Housing block for the elderly and handicapped people at Centre for social assistance of Quang Ninh Province at Nam Khe Ward, Uong Bi City, Quang Ninh	50,000		The project sanctioned in FY 2019-20 and it is under implementation.
26		Upgradation and repair of overpass bridge at Tan Long village, Xuan Son Nam Commune, Dong Xuan District, Phu Yen Province	50,000		The project sanctioned in FY 2019-20 and it is under implementation.
27	Lao PDR	Establishment of Fertilizer Analysis Laboratory at Department of Agricultural Land Management.	50,000		The project sanctioned in 2018 is under implementation. It is likely to be completed in 2019-20
28	Lao PDR	Promotion of Goat Raising in Lao PDR in Jieng Village, Thoulakhom District, Vientiane Province.	50,000		The project sanctioned in 2018 is under implementation. It is likely to be completed in 2019-20

29	Lao PDR	Promote Green Cardamom Cultivation in Paksong District, Champasak District.	50,000		The project sanctioned in 2018 is under implementation. It is likely to be completed in 2019-20
----	---------	---	--------	--	---

3.74 The Committee notice that the erstwhile budget sub head ‘ASEAN Multilateral’ has been discontinued and new head ‘Indo-Pacific Cooperation’ has been opened *w.e.f.* FY 2019-20. An allocation of Rs. 45.00 crore was made under the Head during BE 2019-20 and the same has been retained during BE 2020-21. A new Division on Indo-Pacific was also created in April 2019 by integrating ASEAN-Multilateral (AML) Division and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) from IOR Division.

The Committee are appreciative of the policy emphasis being placed to the Indo-Pacific region through amendment in existing budget head and creation of a separate Division in the Ministry. Since it is a new development, the Committee are hopeful that this step will lead to multi-faceted engagement with all countries in the region and evolve to become an effective counter strategy to deal with China’s Belt and Road Initiative. The Committee desire to be apprised about the various projects that are being planned as well as implemented under this sub-head in three months.

(Recommendation No. 27)

XI. INDIAN TECHNICAL AND ECONOMIC COOPERATION (ITEC)

3.75 This budget head provides for expenditure on defence and civilian training programmes for candidates, deputation of experts from India to other countries and financial and technical assistance to developing countries. The Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme is a visible symbol of India’s role and contribution to South-South Cooperation,

which constitutes capacity building partnership with a footprint in 160 partner countries from Asia, Africa, East Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean as well as Pacific and Small Island countries. ITEC is one of the major pillars of India's soft power Diplomacy. It has continued to strengthen in scope and outreach, with the inclusion of new partner institutions and advance courses in emerging areas such as artificial intelligence, nanotechnology, cyber security and forensics. ITEC now includes as its partners, institutions of technical excellence like the Indian Institute of Technology, Indian Institute of Management, Indian Institute of Science, etc.

3.76 Under this Head, the budgetary allocation for BE 2019-20 was Rs. 220.00 crore and it was reduced to Rs. 200 crore at the RE stage. An allocation of Rs. 220.00 crore has been allocated during BE 2020-21. The Ministry furnished budget allocations sought and granted along with the Actuals for the past three financial years as under:

(In INR Cr)

Year	BE	RE	FE	Actual	Remarks
2017-18*	274.60	249.60	223.96	223.96	
2018-19	280	220	190	200.57	
2019-20	220	200	-	180	As on 13.02.2020

* (Budget Head for Colombo Plan & SCAAP which have since been merged with ITEC budget)

3.77 The Committee wanted to know about the timeline overall structural review of the programme along with the findings. The Ministry responded that it has undertaken a Comprehensive Review of the ITEC Programme during 2017-19. This overall structural review covered all aspects of the ITEC programme and many major changes were incorporated to make it more effective and efficacious. ITEC norms and guidelines were revised to ensure best practices by all stakeholders. These norms are now expected to provide better participant experience and make programme increasingly demand driven with improved feedback mechanism, closer alumni engagement, expanding outreach, etc. The areas of training as well as the relevance of courses being offered have been fine-tuned to the present day requirement. Additional institutes of higher standing like IITs, IIMs, IISc, etc., have been included in the programme. A RFP process was also undertaken to add new private institutes. System for one-on-one interaction with ITEC participants both by our Missions and designated MEA officials has been put in place to get concurrent feedback. Further, in line with the changing needs and technological advancements and to further expand the scope and reach of ITEC programme,

new modalities have been added in the bouquet of ITEC offerings, including, e-ITEC, ITEC-Onsite and ITEC-Executive.

3.78 Regarding the existence of a feedback mechanism from the participant countries, the ministry elaborated that a feedback mechanism is in place to assess the quality, relevance and impact of the programme. After completion of each course, feedback is obtained from the participants on the course content, teaching methodology, infrastructure, facilities, etc. Feedback is also given by the Institutes about the participants attending the courses. Besides, feedback is also received from the Indian Missions who stay in touch with the participants upon their return from India through various outreach activities. Moreover, the increasing number of ITEC scholarships being requested by our partner countries reflects the continued quality and relevance of the programme. Based on the above feedback, training programmes/courses are assessed at the end of each training year. It has been the constant endeavour of the Ministry to align the programme with the requirements of partner ITEC countries and our foreign policy priorities.

3.79 On the Committee's further query about involvement of private institutes in providing Training under these programmes, the Ministry replied that there are currently a few private Institutes which are involved in training under ITEC. While majority of these Institutes have been selected through an open competitive tendering process, there are a couple of institutes those are taken onboard taking into consideration their experience in respective fields of training, as well as the requests received from partner countries.

3.80 In their Action Taken Reply on the Fifteenth and Twenty First Reports relating to examination of demands for grants of MEA, the Ministry has stated that it has initiated the process of framing modalities for a comprehensive review of the ITEC programme. Providing the details of the modalities so framed, the Ministry submitted that it undertook a Comprehensive Review of the ITEC Programme during 2017-19 under the guidance and review of the External Affairs Minister. The institutes offering the ITEC courses were evaluated for their capacities, including infrastructure, academic strengths and relevance of the offered courses. Senior officers at the level of Joint Secretary/Director, cutting across the various Divisions of MEA, as well as external Subject Matter Experts were also involved for this exercise. Other aspects of the ITEC Programme like introduction of new areas of training, training modalities, terms of participation, etc. were also reviewed comprehensively. Those institutes which were not found up to the mark

in the evaluation process were not offered any training programme under ITEC, and additional institutes of higher standing like IITs, IIMs, IISc, etc., have been included in the programme. Given that our objective is to share India's developmental experiences, government / government supported institutions, which are more involved in the developmental process, both at the policymaking and implementation levels, continues to remain central to the ITEC programme. However, over the decades private institutions of repute have emerged in the country in several areas of training covered in ITEC, hence, in parallel, to tap these vast capacities of the private sector and to have wider participation of Institutes, an open process of inviting expressions of interest from reputed and capable private institutes has been instituted.

3.81 The Ministry further added that areas of training as well as the relevance of courses being offered were examined holistically and wherever required, assistance of subject matter experts was taken. Our Missions were also consulted for their suggestion for possible areas of training based on the needs of the partner countries under their accreditation. Accordingly, training in certain new areas like oil and natural gas, healthcare, vocational training/skill development, etc., have been introduced in ITEC programme. Fresh courses projecting India's capabilities as a major IT/engineering power in more advanced/cutting edge areas (e.g., Artificial Intelligence, Machine to Machine communications, machine learning, big data, robotics, cyber security) are also being offered. Further, in line with the changing needs and technological advancements and to further expand the scope and reach of ITEC programme, new modalities have been added in the bouquet of ITEC offerings, including, e-ITEC, ITEC-Onsite and ITEC-Executive.

3.82 On being asked about the actions taken to put in place an institutional mechanism to review the training programme at regular intervals in order to make the programme up to date, the Ministry replied that since the programme is demand-driven, feedbacks from participants and requests from friendly partner countries are analyzed and reviewed from time to time. Special courses are also conducted to cater to the specific requirements of ITEC partner countries and our foreign policy priorities. The popularity of ITEC Programme can also be assessed during the discussions at mechanisms such as Foreign Office Consultations, Joint Commission Meetings, Heads of Mission Conferences and during the incoming and outgoing visits of VVIPs, when Government of India receives requests for capacity building, upgradation of skills and human resource development from partner countries under ITEC.

3.83 The Committee note that by virtue of its extensive capacity-building and training programmes in 160 partner countries from Asia, Africa, East Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean as well as Pacific and Small Island countries, the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) has emerged as a visible symbol of India's South-South cooperation. The Committee, however, observe that a similar allocation of Rs. 220 crore has been provided under this sub-head for BE 2019-20 as well as as BE 2020-21. In pursuance of the Committee's recommendation, the Ministry has carried out a comprehensive review of the ITEC programmes and its partner institutions and based on its various systemic and policy level modifications have been made. There has been an expansion in the scope and outreach of these programmes and various new initiatives have begun including new modalities like e-ITEC, ITEC- Onsite and ITEC Executive to enhance its effectiveness and impact. The Committee are happy to learn about the inclusion of premier institutes like IITs and IIMs as partner institutes and the existence of a robust feedback mechanism under these programmes. The Committee, however also desire that the Ministry should enhance the budget allocation positively to align the programme with the requirements of partner ITEC countries and our foreign policy priorities.

(Recommendation No. 28)

CHAPTER IV

ORGANIZATIONAL SET UP

The Ministry of External Affairs is headed by the External Affairs Minister. He is assisted in the discharge of his functions by the Minister of State for External Affairs. The Foreign Secretary oversees the functioning of the Ministry at the official level. The MEA HQs in New Delhi is organized into Territorial and Functional Divisions, with Territorial Divisions overseeing and managing bilateral relations with specific foreign countries, structured regionally. Moreover, following the merger of the erstwhile MOIA with MEA, the administrative and Secretarial functions have been integrated in MEA's organizational set up. In this chapter, the Committee specifically analyzes the budgetary allocation, functioning and other related aspects of the two sub heads: 'Secretariat General Services', especially the Protector General of India and the External Publicity and Diplomacy Division (XPD) and 'External Affairs'.

4.2 The Major Head „External Affairs“ caters to Foreign Service Institute, expenditure on India's diplomatic Missions and Posts abroad, Central Passport Organisation and Protector General of Emigrant, welfare of overseas Indians, hospitality to dignitaries, contributions to UNO and other international organisations, grants to autonomous bodies and institutions etc.

4.3 Apprising the Committee about the human resources constraint in MEA, the Foreign Secretary during the course of oral evidence on 27 February, 2020 submitted as under: -

“Lastly, the Committee is aware of the human resources constraints of the Ministry. The gap between our sanctioned strength and actual working strength mainly occurs due to delay in recruitment because of factor beyond the Ministry's control. To address the problem, we have undertaken a number of steps to augment our human resources. These include: 1) increasing indent with the UPSC; and over 175 officers have joined the Indian Foreign Service in the last five years by direct recruitment to the Civil Services Examinations. As compared to the period 2011 to 2014, average intake of IFS officers through the Civil Services Examination increased by 16 per cent during 2015 and 2018. The average annual recruitment in 2011 to 2014 was 32 officers whereas in 2015 to 2018, it became 37; 2) reinforcing of our technical capacity by taking officers with domain expertise on deputation from Line Ministries and Departments of Government as well as specialised Civil Services such as Railways and Civil Accounts; 3) engaging Consultants with expertise in various fields; and 4) placing indents with the Staff Selection Commission for filling up vacancies at the staff level.”

4.4 The Committee are aware of the persistent human resource crunch in the Ministry of External Affairs over the years. The Committee note that the sanctioned strength of the Ministry is 8951, while the working strength is 6859. This huge gap between the sanctioned and actual strength in the Ministry of External Affairs has led to vacancies in vital departments of the Ministry. Time and again, the Ministry has furnished the same justification that the gap is due to delay in recruitment, which is beyond its control. In order to tide over this challenge of shortage in staff, the Ministry has taken various steps such as increasing indent with UPSC, reinforcing technical capacity by taking officers with domain expertise on deputation from Line Ministries and Departments of Governments, engaging Consultants with expertise in various fields and placing indent with the Staff Selection Commission (SSC).

Taking serious cognizance of the vacant posts in the Ministry, the Committee find the steps taken by the Ministry as inadequate and half-hearted. In view of the increasing rate of diplomatic endeavours in development and economy and the pivotal role MEA has to play in our efforts to be a \$5 trillion economy by 2024-25, the Committee exhort upon the Government at the highest levels to consider the human resource requirements of MEA favourably and also direct Staff Selection Commission (SSC) and Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) to fill up the enhanced number of direct recruitments on top priority basis. The Committee would also recommend that the Ministry should continue to create cadre/ induct expertise from other Ministries, academia, think tanks and the private sector, as needed to augment human resource with relevant domain expertise.

(Recommendation No.29)

I. SUSHMA SWARAJ FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE (SSIFS)

4.5 Foreign Service Institute, renamed as Sushma Swaraj Foreign Service Institute, conducts in-service training for Indian Foreign Service Officers and other MEA personnel, courses for foreign diplomats, and other professional training courses.

4.6 The budgetary allocation under the sub-head „Training“ was Rs. 25.30 crore during BE 2019-20, which was slightly increased to Rs. 26.68 crore during RE 2019-20. An outlay of Rs. 25.95 crore has been made during BE 2020-21. The expenditure on training in last three Financial Years are as follows:-

(Rs. in crore)

FY	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20 (Up to 31/01/2020)
Total (in Rupees)	47151171	86033719	162783742	150390143

4.7 While tendering testimony before the Committee on 27 February, 2020, the Foreign Secretary also informed the Committee as under: -

“With a view to improve response mechanisms and streamline decision-making the organisational structure of MEA has been redesigned. Additional Secretaries in the Ministry have now been put in-charge of multiple Divisions whose functional and territorial responsibilities overlap. This dynamic approach not only helps the Ministry in creating synergy among its Divisions but also enables these officers to address issues of a cross-cutting nature in a more effective manner. Such decentralisation of certain key functions has been instrumental in generating more room for Secretaries to focus on strategic issues. In addition, new Divisions on „New and Emerging Strategic Technologies“ and Development Partnership Division (DPA-IV) have been created. The „New and Emerging Strategic Technologies“ Division aims to be the nodal entity, which assesses the Foreign Policy and international legal implications of new and emerging technologies, participates in global negotiates and technology governance rules, standard and architecture; and engage in technological diplomacy. The DPA-IV Division has been created in January, 2020 to coordinate and undertake development partnership abroad for culture and heritage conservation projects, including identification, planning and implementation of such projects in consultation with relevant technical agencies. This Division would also be a repository of all such projects being undertaken by India abroad, and would be instrumental in dissemination of information of such projects and cooperation in the area of culture and heritage conservation.”

4.8 In the last three financial years, the expenditure on training has steadily increased because of more number of training programmes both for Indian diplomats/civil servants/others and for foreign diplomats. On the Indian training side, training programmes such as for officers from NSCS and teachers of Indian culture from ICCR have been introduced. 1-2 week long promotion-related programme for SOs and below were started in 2019. On the foreign training side, more number of country/region-specific programmes were conducted. New thematic programmes such as on disarmament and orientation programme for resident ambassadors have been introduced.

4.9 Enumerating the measures taken to observe fiscal prudence by ensuring optimum utilization of budgetary allocation under the sub-head Training', the Ministry replied that in the last two and half years, Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS) of Ministry has streamlined the procedure for short-listing hotels for courses of foreign diplomats. The tender committee for selection of hotels and price discovery is headed by a JS-level officer. Quotations are invited only from MEA-Protocol empanelled hotels. The quotations are opened in the presence of representatives of hotels. Ministry's concurrence for budget is taken before commencement of the course. After the hotel bills are received, Ministry's concurrence is taken before final payment is made. This has led to savings of nearly six (6) crore rupees to the government in last two and half years. The process for hiring of hotel and other logistic support is started well in advance to get best rates. All officers at FSI starting from Dean (SSIFS) take sessions during courses for Indian diplomats/GoI officers/MEA officials and foreign diplomats. This has led to savings on honorarium to guest speakers and expenditure on transport.

4.10 The Committee also wanted to know about the the steps being taken by the Ministry of External Affairs to professionalize FSI by inducting domain experts as well as faculty from foreign countries. The Ministry I a written reply stated that SSIFS has been able to get the best foreign experts for specialised courses for foreign diplomats such as the annual fellowship programme on disarmament. The cost of international airfare is borne by the organisations that these foreign experts come from. Similarly, for induction training programme for IFS Officer Trainees (OTs), SSIFS has been able to get foreign experts from countries such as Canada at no cost to SSIFS. Resident Heads of Missions of major countries also address the IFS OTs regularly.

4.11 The details of training programmes for 2020-21 are at *Annex II*.

4.12 The Committee note with appreciation that the Foreign Service Institute, renamed as Sushma Swaraj Institute of Foreign Service (SSIFS), conducts in service training for Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officers and other MEA personnel, courses for foreign diplomats and other professional training course. The Committee observe that the expenditure on training has increased substantially in recent times due to increasing demand for training programmes both for Indian diplomat/civil servants/others and for foreign diplomats. However, it is a matter of concern that despite the rising requirement of training, there has been shortfall in utilization of funds under this budget head for past three years and accordingly budget allocation has remained stagnant at the same level. The Committee would strongly urge the Ministry to observe strict fiscal prudence by optimum utilization of available funds. The Committee also desire that a continuous system of evaluation be established so that the inputs and feedback received from the trainees are duly incorporated at regular intervals for value addition of the training programmes and accordingly the number of training programmes should also be enhanced with desired budget allocation.

(Recommendation No. 30)

II. PROTECTOR GENERAL OF EMIGRANT (PGoE)

4.13 An amount of Rs. 17.6 crore was allocated for Protector General of Emigrant during 2019-20 during both the BE and RE stages. For BE 2020-21, an enhanced amount of Rs. 20.08 crore has been provisioned under this sub -head. Enumerating the reason for enhanced allocation during BE 2020-21, the Ministry stated that enhanced allocation is on accounts of anticipated payments to Service Provider for providing services to the e-Migrate project as version II of eMigrate launch being under process. Integration between e-Migrate system and counterpart systems of Ministry of Human Resources and Emiratization (MoHRE),

United Arab Emirates (UAE) and eTawtheeq of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), consultancy towards RFP of e-Migrate version II to National Institute for Smart Government (NISG), upgradation of eMigrate Hardware would further require additional payments as anticipated in next FY 2020-21.

4.14 The Committee wanted to know about the exact role played by Protector General of Emigrants, particularly after the merger of erstwhile MoIA with MEA. The Ministry in a written reply submitted that the operational matters relating to emigration, provision of emigration services to emigrants and the enforcement of Emigration Act, 1983 are administered by the Protector General of Emigrants (PGE) through current 12 Protector of Emigrants (PoE) offices. The PGE is a statutory authority under the Emigration Act, 1983 who is responsible for the welfare and protection of emigrant workers specially who fall in the Emigration Clearance Required (ECR) category

4.15 Adding further, the Ministry stated that the Emigration Act, 1983 *inter-alia* provides for:

1. Supervision by Protector General of Emigrants or PGE of the functioning of Protectors of Emigrants, and their offices which are located in 12 places all over India.
2. Regulation of activities of Recruiting Agents, including, licensing, safeguarding the protection and welfare of emigrants, through the PoEs and its offices and wherever required, even directly.
3. Mandatory Emigration Clearance (EC) for specified categories of jobs going to Emigration Check Required (ECR) countries, which currently are 18 in number. The Government has the prerogative to add to or subtract from the list of ECR countries.
4. Emigration for work related offences and penalties.
5. Liaisoning with the concerned State/Union Territory authorities for better emigration management for work from the respective States and Union Territories.

4.16 The PGE also provides inputs for various policy decision of the Government relating to overseas Employment based on the experience gathered from the field.

4.17 The Committee note that Protector General of Emigrant (PGoE) through 12 Protector of Emigrant (PoE) Offices administers all operational matters related to emigration, provision of emigration services to emigrants and enforcement of Emigrant Act 1983. As a statutory authority under the Emigration Act 1983, the PGoE is primarily responsible for the welfare and protection of emigrant workers falling in the Emigration Clearance Required (ECR) category. With such a vast and critical mandate to fulfill, an measly allocation of Rs. 20.08 crore has been earmarked for BE 2020-21. The Committee have taken a serious view of the low priority being accorded to PGoE, post merger, as evident in the insignificant budgetary allocation. The Committee strongly recommend that the Ministry ought to pay attention to PGoE and its offices by provisioning of adequate funds and human capital.. The Ministry may also chalk out a roadmap with timelines for setting up more PoE offices and apprise the Committee about the progress made in his regard within three months.

(Recommendation No. 31)

CHAPTER V
OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS

The various schemes/programmes related to Overseas Indians along with the budgetary allocations sought, allocations made and Actuals during the last three years are as follows:-

(Rs. in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	2016-17			2017-18			2018-19		
		BE	FE	Actuals	BE	FE	Actuals	BE	FE	Actuals
(a)	Know India Programme	1.50	5.00	2.77	0.90	5.56	5.58	5.00	7.00	7.70
(b)	Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children	6.00	6.00	6.00	4.00	7.00	6.86	7.00	9.00	8.75
(c)	Celebration of Pravasi Bhartiya Diwas	5.00	10.00	9.83	10.00	10.00	15.02	10.00	24.00	22.12
(d)	Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora	2.00	1.00	0.87	1.00	1.50	0.44	2.00	2.00	1.54
(e)	Awareness Campaign/Media Plan	5.54	5.00	4.72	2.50	12.00	11.69	11.00	14.50	13.00
(f)	Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PKVY)	11	10	9.99	11	3.5	0	5.5	0.51	0.20
	Total	20.04	27.00	24.19	18.40	36.06	39.59	35.00	56.50	53.11

I. Engagement with Indian Diaspora

5.2 About the constraints being faced in execution of the schemes and programmes related to Overseas India Affairs after the merger of erstwhile MOIA with MEA, the Ministry stated that the following schemes were closed between 2014- 2018:

1. India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI) was closed in March 31, 2018 to avoid duplication of work and to enhance the efficiency of other schemes.

2. Study India Programme (SIP) was closed in 2016 given the similarity of SIP with KIP (Know India Programme), it was decided to close SIP.

3. Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC): Following merger of MOIA with MEA, functions related to promotion of investments by overseas Indians have shifted to DPIIT, and OIFC was closed down on 30 March 2017 with Cabinet approval.

4. Tracing the Roots scheme was reviewed in 2016-17 and it was observed that performance of the scheme was unsatisfactory with only 18 applications in 8 years. The scheme has therefore been closed with EAM's approval.

5.3 On the Committee's query, the Ministry furnished a comparative analysis of the budget of the erstwhile MOIA with that of the budget demanded and the budget now earmarked for all the functions/schemes/Programmes which are now falling under the MEA, post-merger as under

(Rs. in crore)

Sl. No.	Name of the Scheme	2015-16 (MOIA)	2019-20 (MEA)		Proposed BE 2020-21	Comparative Analysis
			BE	RE		
(a)	Know India Programme (KIP)	1.94	6.00	6.00	8.00	In FY 2015-16, only two(02) Know India Programmes (KIPs) were organized whereas additional budget for FY 2019-20 is earmarked as 06 KIPs and 02 PTDYs are scheduled to be organized during this year.
(b)	Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children (SPDC)	6.50	12.00	10.00	10.00	Under SPDC Scheme, 150 scholarships are granted every year. In the FY 2015-16, only scholarships to students enrolled in previous batches were given and no new scholarships were granted, however, while demanding budget for FY 2019-20 the complete strength of scholarships of new and previous batches has been kept in mind.
(c)	Celebration of Pravasi Bhartiya	13.58	39.12	9.12	50.00	The Pravasi Bhartiya Divas (PBD) convention is a flagship event for

	Diwas (PBD)					engagement of the government with the overseas Indian community. The event has been organized every year by the erstwhile Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs. With the decision during the 13 th edition of PBD in January 2015 to organize the Convention once in two year, there is increased participation.
(d)	Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD)	0.45	2.00	2.00	2.00	It was decided to include more Missions and activities for Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD).
(e)	Awareness Campaign/ Media Plan	1.00	11.00	11.00	5.00	To provide further boost to the Media Awareness Campaign carried out and penetrate the intended message into far-flung areas in Hindi and regional language through private electronic & print media and other means.

5.4 When asked about the manner in which the Indian Diaspora is being urged to contribute time, expertise and investment in all the endeavors of their country of origin with the long term goal of strengthening the link between the Indian Diaspora and India, the Ministry replied that it is engaging with the diaspora by organizing biennial Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention in India, where the achievements of our diaspora are recognized and celebrated by conferring them with Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards (PBSA). Next PBD Convention is expected to be held in January 2021. MEA also organizes Diaspora Youth Conference ahead of PBD Conventions. From time to time MEA also organizes regional PBD. The last Regional PBD was held in January 2018 in Singapore. The next Regional PBD is proposed to be organized at Dubai (UAE) in 2020. MEA has also organized a PIO Parliamentarian's Conference with the sitting MPs and Mayors of Indian Origin from all over the world in 2018. State Governments have also organized specific events keeping Indian Diaspora in mind. All these flagship events are attended by top leadership of the country. PBD Conferences are held in the period between two PBD Conventions on topics that are of concern to our diaspora with the objective of involving the diaspora in the policy formulation of the country. In these PBD conferences, industry experts

from the diaspora community and India are invited to deliberate on these issues and give their recommendations on the way ahead. These expert recommendations further feed into the deliberations held over the thematic plenary sessions that are organized during the following Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention. Ten PBD conferences were held in 2016 which further fed in to the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas held in 2017. Seven PBD Conferences were held in the year 2017-18 which then fed into the seven thematic plenary sessions during the 15th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2019 held from 21-23 January 2019 in Varanasi. Similar conferences are proposed to be held abroad in 2020. These will feed into PBD Convention to be held in 2021. Indian Missions/Posts also celebrate PBD.

5.5 In addition, Mission and Posts continue to engage with Indian Diaspora Association by organizing special economic & cultural events during which presentation are made on Government's programme and policies. Hon'ble PM have during his overseas visits have regularly addressed and interacted with the Indian community. Hon. President, Vice President & EAM have also interacted with Indian community during their visits abroad.

5.6 Enlightening the Committee about the way in which the Ministry proposed to use the soft power of Indian Diaspora for facilitating India's development, the Ministry stated that it has adopted multi-pronged strategy to leverage the soft power of the Indian diaspora. In addition to above mentioned initiatives, Ministry of External Affairs has been working to design appropriate and well-calibrated institutional responses both for Diaspora engagement and migration management. Towards this end, the Ministry of External Affairs initiated the State Outreach Programmes under the banner "Videsh Sampark" in 2017, which is an in-depth dialogue between Ministry and the State Governments. MEA-State Outreach Conferences have already been organised at Maharashtra, Telangana, Kerala, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh. Under Videsh Sampark initiative, one day-long conference is held at the State capital to brief senior officials and stakeholders in the State about the steps taken by the Ministry to expedite passport services, e-Sanad, e-Migrate, Welfare and Protection measures for overseas Indians as also address other State-specific issues with regard to Indians abroad. Discussions are also held on Diaspora Engagement initiatives of the Ministry, including pre-departure orientation training (PDOT), Know India Program, Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana, Welfare of Indian students studying abroad, Speedy resolution of disputes related to NRI marriages and NRI Voting etc. During the

Conference, possibilities are explored for cooperation with the State Government in various areas especially enhancing delivery of consular services and effectively addressing illegal migration and Cooperation with the State Government in taking action against unscrupulous recruiting agents. The scope of the programme is being proposed to be expanded to cover state-specific foreign policy and trade and investment issues and it is planned to cover all the states.

5.7 The Ministry further stated that to provide the Diaspora an opportunity to reconnect with their Indian roots, culture and heritage, the Government of India has initiated programmes such as Know India Programme, Bharat ko Janiye quiz contest and Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children. Ministry of External Affairs supports the diaspora to organise cultural events under the Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD) scheme with an aim to showcase Indian culture and new initiatives & developments of modern India. The scheme aims to nourish and strengthen the cultural bonds between India and its diaspora. The projected outcome of the scheme is to reinforce the cultural identity of the persons of Indian origin. Under this scheme, the Ministry releases a grant to the Indian Mission abroad which then works together with Diaspora Associations in organising India-specific events aimed at strengthening the bonds of the Diaspora with India. Ministry of External Affairs runs a media awareness campaign with the objective of creating wider awareness among the general public about the processes of legal migration, cautioning people against the illegal processes followed by fraudulent recruitment agencies and to provide information to emigrants/ potential emigrants to ensure legal, safe and orderly migration.

5.8 As regards the new advances and ventures being explored to achieve variable objectives of engaging Indian Diaspora, the Ministry stated that from time to time the programmes are reviewed and changes made taking into account feedback received. MEA plans to hold a Regional PBD in 2020 in Dubai in 2020. This would be the first Regional PBB in Gulf Region, which is home to substantial number of Indian diaspora. Similarly, it has been decided to organize PBD Conferences overseas in 2020. The State Outreach Programmes under the banner “Videsh Sampark” has been enhance in scope and an element of trade & investment has been included in daylong conference. A Global Indian Students Portal is being developed to provide complete and comprehensive information on educational facilities abroad to Indian students wishing to pursue their studies abroad to enable them make an informed decision.

5.9 Regarding the steps taken for Welfare of Overseas Indians, the Foreign Secretary during evidence on 27 February, 2020 stated as under: -

“There are a number of programmes that I mentioned in my opening remarks, that are designed to enhance our outreach to these NRI communities, particularly the engagement of our leaders with the diaspora. Hon. Prime Minister, hon. President, hon. VicePresident, Hon. Minister of External Affairs make it a point to reach out to the communities wherever they go. I myself was the Ambassador to United States when the Prime Minister reached out to over 50,000 Indian Americans in the city of Whiston. It was an outreach which had not been done before. We are looking forward this sort of outreach in order to mobilise people, motivate them to take interest in India, to invest in India, to bring in returns to India that we expect from overseas communities. We are many other programmes, for example, Know India programme, Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana, Bharat Ko Janiye, Scholarships for diaspora children etc. which are important in reaching this goal. Then, of course, we have our one MEA network project which binds the Ministry with our Missions that are providing services to overseas communities. We have the Rishta portal which connects the overseas communities by facilitating and linking them with various new Government Schemes which are benefitting them in their areas of interest. This portal and App will assist during any crisis management and provide a helping hand to NRIs. We have a student portal. We have Mekong-Ganga portal which is relevant to South East Asian countries. So, there are a number of initiatives that we take in connecting, what we call the 4Cs – approach of Government of India and engage the diaspora to connect with India, care for the safety and security, celebrate with diaspora and contribute to India’s development. These are overall principles in our engagement with the communities. This is something on which we give priority and we will give further priority in order to try to encourage them to look at the economic aspects of our engagement.”

5.10 **The Committee are aware that various schemes and programmes are undertaken by the Ministry for protection and welfare of Overseas Indians. It is observed that schemes like India Development Foundation of Overseas Indians (IDF-OI), Study India Programme, Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre (OIFC) and Tracing the Roots Scheme have been closed between 2014 and 2018. The Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) acts as an effective instrument for engagement with our Diaspora. The Ministry has informed that in order to leverage the soft power of Indian Diaspora, it has been working to design**

appropriate and well-calibrated institutional responses. While tendering evidence before the Committee, the Foreign Secretary spelt out the ‘4 C’s approach of Government of India for engagement with the Indian Diaspora. These include Connect with India, Care for the safety and security, Celebrate with Diaspora and Contribute to India’s Development.

Keeping in mind the size, magnitude and depth of our Diaspora across the globe, the Committee feel that the allocations made to various schemes and programmes for the welfare of Overseas Indians is uneven and inadequate. The Committee were hopeful that following the merger of MoIA and MEA, the engagement with Overseas Indians would receive due impetus. Upon a close scrutiny of the schemes, programmes and activities relating to Overseas Indians, the Committee find that the Ministry’s assertion that highest priority has been given to Overseas Indian Affairs, post merger, does not find corresponding resonance in the budgetary allocation. The Committee, therefore, strongly recommend that the Ministry should constitute a working group to assess all schemes and programmes for welfare of overseas Indians and apprise them about its outcome within six months. The Ministry should ensure that requisite institutional, administrative and fiscal arrangements are made so that the objectives behind merger of the Ministries are achieved.

(Recommendation No. 32)

II. SCHEMES/PROGRAMMES RELATED TO OVERSEAS INDIANS

5.11 After merger with the MEA, the allocation for the schemes under the erstwhile MOIA in 2016-17 and 2017-18 for the selected schemes:-

(Rs. in crores)

	Name of Scheme	BE 2018-19	BE 2019-20	BE 2020-21
(i)	Know India Programme	5.00	6.00	8.00
(ii)	Scholarship Scheme for Diaspora Children	7.00	7.00	10.00
(iii)	Promotion of Cultural ties with	2.00	2.00	2.00

	Diaspora			
(iv)	Awareness campaign/media plan	11.00	11.00	5.00
(v)	Legal assistance to women facing problems in NRI marriages	0.01	0.12	0.12
(vi)	Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana	5.00	Nil	Nil

(i) KNOW INDIA PROGRAMME (KIP)

5.12 Know India Programme (KIP) is a flagship initiative of the Government to reconnect young persons of Indian-origin with their roots and give them an exposure to various aspects of Indian life, cultural heritage, art and contemporary India. The frequency of KIP has been increased from 2 to 6 editions in a year. The duration of the programme has been increased from 21 to 25 days and the age of participants increased from 18 to 26 to 18 to 30 years. More States can now be made partners in this programme with increased duration of the State leg from 7 to 10 days. In 2018-19, the GOI celebrated 50th edition of KIP as Golden Jubilee edition of KIP for which 50 participants were selected from alumni of KIP. So far, Ministry has already organized 59 editions of KIP in which 2061 PIOs youth have taken part.

5.13 The Ministry is making efforts to promote the KIP program and make it more dynamic. For branding purposes it was decided to have a logo of KIP. To select a logo, a KIP LOGO Design Contest was held all across our Mission/Posts wherein PIO Diaspora participated. The contest started from 01st September, 2019 and lasted upto 15th October, 2019. The total of 210 designs were received. Final selection of the logo has been done and approval of EAM has been obtained. The KIP logo will be launched in next Financial Year.

5.14 The objective of the Ministry's Know India Programme is to help familiarize Indian Diaspora youth, in the age group of 18-26 years, with developments and achievements made by the country and bringing them closer to the land of their ancestors. An allocation of Rs. 6 crore was made under this programme during BE 2019-20 which has been increased to Rs. 8 crore for BE 2020-21. The Committee wanted to know whether there is a proposal to increase the number of Know India Programmes and number of participants in these programmes. In a written reply, the Ministry submitted that The Know India Programme was revamped in FY 2015-16 where the number of editions was increased from 04 to 06 every year. Also, the duration

of the programme was increased from 21 to 25 days with a 10 days visit to one or two Partner states. Each group is to comprise of 40 PIO youth. Since its inception 2061 PIOs have participated in the KIP programmes. In FY 2018-19, Ministry had launched one new scheme “Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana” (PTDY) with the aim to provide the elder diaspora generation in the age group of 45-65 year an opportunity to reconnect with their Indian roots. 02 editions of PTDY was held in 208-2019 and 2 editions in 2019-2020 and the expenditure for PTDY has been incurred from the budget head of Know India Programme. At present, there are no immediate plans for revising the Know India Programme. In the 4 editions held so far 160 individuals have participated. Since the last review of KIP was held in 2015-16 and new programme was added in 2018-2019 a total of 8 programme is being held now.

5.15 On the Committee’s query, the Ministry provided details of the allocation and utilization of funds allocated under the KIP during the last three years along with the number of programmes projected and organized and the number of participants that took part in each programme as follows: -

S.No.	FY	No.of Programmes (KIP &PTDY)	Total no. of Participants	No. of Participants in each programme	Budget Allocation	Budget Expenditure
(a)	2016-17	06 KIPs	240	35 th KIP edition -40 36 th KIP edition -40 37 th KIP edition -40 38 th KIP edition -40 39 th KIP edition -40 40 th KIP edition -40	5.00	2.77
(b)	2017-18	06 KIPs	240	41 th KIP edition -40 42 th KIP edition -40	5.56	5.58

				43rd KIP edition -40 44 th KIP edition -40 45 th KIP edition -40 46 th KIP edition -40		
(c)	2018- 19	07 KIPs 02PTDYs	368	47 th KIP edition -40 48 th KIP edition -40 49 th KIP edition -40 50 th KIP edition -40 51 th KIP edition -40 52 th KIP edition -40 53 th KIP edition -40 01st PTDY edition -40 02 nd PTDY edition -40	7.00	7.00

5.16 The Committee further enquired about the plans on the anvil to improve the contents of KIP. The Ministry submitted that the improvement of the Know India Programme is an ongoing process. The Ministry had received inputs from all the Ministries/Departments for ideas/suggestions to re-invigorate the Know India Programme. Many of the practical ideas have been incorporated to enhance the KIP content while other suggestions are still under consideration of the Ministry. Some of the new elements added to the KIP programme include visit to scientific institutions such as BARC, ISRO, Nuclear Plants etc to give an exposure to scientific developments in India, visit to AYUSH, NITI Aayog, INVEST India, National Physical Laboratory etc. Partner State has an important role in connecting the diaspora

participants with their Indian roots. Besides arranging their visit to places of historic, cultural, industrial and tourist importance in the State, the State also arranges meeting with the leadership in the State Government. Participants also get exposure to the village/rural life as well as industrial tour in the states that they visit. Thus the state leg of the programme is essential in showcasing the federal structure of India and exposing the diaspora participants to the different political, economic and cultural diversity in the states. Regular feedback mechanism is in place to receive inputs from stakeholders. A dedicated website and alumni data base has been created, which is used by the Ministry/Mission to disseminate information. There is also a facebook page of KIP participants. Social media platform like twitter is also used to promote the KIP activities.

5.17 The Committee are aware that the Know India Programme (KIP) is a flagship initiative of MEA to reconnect young persons of Indian-origin with their roots and give them an exposure to various aspects of Indian life, cultural heritage, art and contemporary India. It is observed that with time, the frequency and duration of the programme has enhanced. An allocation of Rs. 6 crore was made under this programme during BE 2019-20 which has been increased to Rs. 8 crore for BE 2020-21. In order to make it dynamic and for a better connect, the Ministry is in the process of launching its logo in the next financial year. The Committee find it incomprehensible as to how within the limited finances, will the Ministry manage such ambitious plans for expansion and branding of KIP? The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of External Affairs should with a view to spread awareness about the programme allocate additional funds for Know India Programmes which have been received very warmly by the Indian Diaspora. Additional requirements for funds should be placed before the Ministry of Finance during the RE stage.

(Recommendation No. 33)

(ii) PROMOTION OF CULTURAL TIES WITH DIASPORA

5.19 Ministry of External Affairs supports the diaspora to organise cultural events under the Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD) scheme with an aim to showcase Indian culture and new initiatives & developments of modern India. The scheme aims to nourish and strengthen the cultural bonds between India and its diaspora. The projected outcome of the scheme is to reinforce the cultural identity of the persons of Indian origin. Under this scheme, the Ministry releases a grant to the Indian Mission abroad which then works together with Diaspora Associations in organizing India-specific events aimed at strengthening the bonds of the Diaspora with India. The scheme was started in 2005.

5.20 A token amount of Rs 2 crore is being provided for this scheme for the past three years. Elucidating about the objectives of the Scheme, MEA stated that it has adopted multi-pronged strategy for cultural & economic diplomacy and leverage the soft power of the Indian Diaspora. Promotion of culture is done by organizing various activities from the funding received from ICCR, ED & States Division of the Ministry, as well as through other Ministries such as Culture and Tourism. Ministry in addition supports Diaspora to organise cultural events under the Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD) scheme with an aim to showcase Indian culture and new initiatives & developments of modern India. The scheme aims to nourish and strengthen the cultural bonds between India and its diaspora. The projected outcome of the scheme is to reinforce the cultural identity of the persons of Indian origin. Under this scheme, the Ministry releases a grant to the Indian Mission abroad which then works together with Diaspora Associations in organising India-specific events aimed at strengthening the bonds of the Diaspora with India. The Scheme of PCTD has been able to attain its objective. The funds of Rs. 2 crore allocated to this Division are specifically given to the Missions and Posts abroad for Promotion of Cultural Ties.

5.21 Under Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora, 54 Indian Missions/Post abroad have been allocated an amount of Rs. 1,69,82,000/- during financial year 2019-20. A financial grant of Rs 18.58 lakhs as third installment for setting up Diaspora Research and Resources center (DRRC) to Antar-Rashtriya Sahyog Parishad in New Delhi is under process and the money would be released in current FY after financial concurrence.

5.22 The Committee note that Promotion of Cultural Ties with Diaspora (PCTD) scheme was launched in 2005 to nourish and strengthen the cultural bonds between India and its diaspora. Under this scheme the Ministry releases grant to the Indian Mission abroad which then works together with Diaspora Associations in organizing India-specific events. It is disheartening to note that for the past three years a token amount of Rs 2 crore is being provided for this scheme. The Ministry has apprised that an amount of Rs. 1,69,82,000/- has been allocated during the financial year 2019-20 to 54 Missions/Posts abroad under this scheme. Further, a financial grant of Rs 18.58 lakhs has been given as third installment for setting up Diaspora Research and Resources center (DRRC) to Antar-Rashtriya Sahyog Parishad in New Delhi. The Committee desire that the Ministry should impart necessary vigour to such a significant scheme through enhanced budgetary provisions and outreach to various Missions/Posts. The Committee also desire to be apprised about the progress made in setting up Diaspora Research and Resources Center (DRRC).

(Recommendation No. 34)

(iii) AWARENESS CAMPAIGN/MEDIA PLAN

5.23 Ministry was carrying out media campaign on safe and legal migration by showing ads on safe and legal migration on various TV Channels and newspaper ads. The ads were also disseminated on social media by using twitter and facebook. Upon observations of Standing Committee of Parliament, the ads were discontinued on Rajya Sabha TV and Lok Sabha TV. Thereafter, following a recent directive, the ads were sent to the Advertisement Approval Cell (AAC) who had observed that ads could be prepared by involving prominent personalities in regional languages and disseminated through social media at minimum expenditure. Division is accordingly approaching various prominent personalities for their support on gratis basis.

5.24 An allocation of Rs. 11 crore was made under 'Awareness campaign/Media Plan' during BE 2019-20 which has been decreased to Rs. 5 crore during BE 2020-21. When asked about the steps taken by the Ministry to spread awareness about the various schemes and programmes relating to Overseas Citizens of India, the Ministry stated that it is carrying out media awareness campaign on safe and legal migration by showing ads on various TV Channels and newspaper ads. Ministry has also informed that it already started informing/educating people by disseminating the ads on social media by using twitter and facebook. These have also been uploaded on Youtube.

5.25 On the Committee's further query, the Ministry provided the details of the campaigns on electronic/print media and the advertisement firms hired for the purpose. Media awareness programme was run on various channels of Doordarshan in the month of August 2019. This was done free through bonus airtime worth Rs. 2 crore given to the Ministry for the campaign it ran during financial year 2018-19. The Ministry published advertisements on "Safe and Legal Migration" in Hindi and regional languages through Bureau of Outreach and Communication (BoC – previously known as DAVP) during months of September and October 2019 at a cost of Rs. 7.50 Lakh only. Upon observations of Standing Committee of Parliament, the ads were discontinued on Rajya Sabha TV and Lok Sabha TV. Thereafter, the ads were sent to the Advertisement Approval Cell (AAC) which had observed that ads could be prepared by involving prominent personalities in regional languages and disseminated through social media at minimum expenditure. Division accordingly approached various prominent personalities for their support on gratis basis. Five prominent personalities namely Shri Amitabh Bachchan in Hindi; Shri Shikhar Dhawan in Punjabi; Shri Punet Rajkumar in Kannada; Shri Sudarshan Pattnaik, Padma Shree Awardee, Sand Artist in Odia and Shri Sivakarhikeyan, a prominent film personality in Tamil Cinema, have already agreed to give for media awareness campaign, on gratis basis. The Ministry is in the process of identifying agency/producer for shooting of the campaign. The Division is likely to make ads for greater outreach during financial year 2020-21.

5.26 **The Committee are displeased to note that the allocation under this head has been reduced from Rs. 11 crore in 2019-20 (BE) to Rs. 5 crore in 2020-21 (BE). The budget under this sub-head has been almost halved at a time when renewed efforts are**

required to spread awareness about safe and legal migration. The Committee express their strong disapproval of the reduction being effected in such an important area of emigration. The Committee note that various personalities have been approached for greater outreach of media awareness campaigns and shooting of the ads will commence during financial year 2020-21. The involvement of famous personalities in the ad campaigns is a welcome step and the Ministry should seek funds at the RE stage for the advertisements. The Committee also urge that the Ministry carry out an impact assessment study of the awareness campaign and in the light of its findings, establish a formal mechanism for continuous monitoring and evaluation of these campaigns. The Committee also recommend that the Ministry proactively engage with the State Governments to deepen the impact of information and awareness campaigns.

(Recommendation No. 35)

(iv) NRI MARITAL DISPUTE

5.27 The Ministry has been receiving large number of petitions and complaints about marital issues faced by Indian nationals mostly women who are married to overseas Indians and are deserted or harassed by their Non-Resident Indian (NRI) spouses. The rising incidence of fraud and marital disputes in NRI marriages is because most parents and relatives do not undertake due background checks on prospective NRI (Non-Resident-Indian) grooms such as his marital status, income and salary, family background etc. The NRI spouse escapes abroad, conveniently avoiding the criminal and civil proceedings. Most complaints pertain to:-

- the harassment and ill treatment of Indian women by the NRI spouse, loss of communication with the spouse after going abroad,
- request for assistance in serving judicial summons/warrants for court proceedings in India,
- assistance in obtaining maintenance and child support from the spouse,

- request for impounding or revoking passport of overseas Indian spouse,
- request for extradition and deportation of spouse to India, and
- Child custody issues.

5.28 Between 1st January 2016 and 31st October 2019, this Ministry has addressed **5298** complaints of distressed Indian women deserted by their NRI spouses. Ministry has addressed these complaints of distressed Indian nationals deserted by their NRI spouses by way of providing them counseling, guidance and information about procedures, mechanisms for serving judicial summons on the Overseas Indian spouse, filing a case in India, issuing Look Out Circulars, impounding and revocation of Indian passport of the spouse, getting access to lawyers and NGOs empanelled with Indian Missions.

5.29 There is no separate budget allocated by the Ministry to provide legal assistance to woman facing problems in overseas marriages. An Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) has been setup in all the Missions and Posts abroad to assist Overseas Indian nationals in times of distress and emergency in the „most deserving cases“ on a „means tested basis“. In view of its immense utility the ICWF guidelines were revised in September, 2017 to expand the scope of welfare measures which inter-alia includes financial and legal assistance upto US\$ 4000, to distressed Indian women married to NRI or a foreigner. The ICWF has become self-sustaining in all Missions and Posts abroad with a global corpus of around 500 corers. This fund is sufficient to carry out onsite welfare activities including assistance to distressed NRI spouses.

5.30 On being asked about the number of petitions seeking assistance have been received during 2019-20 and the number of women who got assistance till date and the nature of assistance provided to them, the Ministry replied that for the Financial Year 2019-20, 1057 grievances on NRI marital Disputes were received in the Ministry. MEA has addressed these grievances by the way of providing them counseling, guidance and information about procedures, mechanisms for serving judicial summons on the Overseas Indian spouse, filing a case in India, issuing Look Out Circulars, impounding and revocation of Indian passport of the spouse, getting access to lawyers and NGOs empanelled with Indian Missions etc. 18 cases have been provided financial assistance as per the ICWF guidelines on case merit basis so far in FY 2019-20.

5.31 Enumerating the steps taken to protect Indian Women from exploitation in the fraudulent marriages and the outcome thereof, the MEA stated that it has addressed the complaints of distressed Indian nationals deserted by their NRI spouses by way of providing them counseling, guidance and information about procedures, mechanisms for serving judicial summons on the Overseas Indian spouse, filing a case in India, issuing Look Out Circulars, impounding and revocation of Indian passport of the spouse, getting access to lawyers and NGOs empanelled with Indian Missions etc. In addition, with an aim to provide financial and legal assistance to distressed India nationals married to NRI spouses by all Missions and Posts, the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) Guidelines were revised in September, 2017. The amount of legal & financial assistance to distressed Indian nationals has also been increased to US\$ 4000 per case. The assistance is released to the empanelled legal counsel of the applicant or Indian Community Association / Women's Organisation/NGO concerned to enable it to take steps to assist the woman in documentation and preparatory work for filing the case. Besides, shelter homes for distressed Indian nationals; have been set up in many Missions/posts to provide boarding and lodging until they are repatriated to India. Many Indian mission and consulates have begun "Open House" session, during which any distressed Indian national can meet the designated officials in the mission to seek assistance and information. 24x7 Emergency Telephone numbers of missions are also available on Ministry's website.

5.32 Besides, an Expert Committee was set up in May 2017 to identify legal and regulatory challenges faced by Indian nationals married to overseas Indian nationals and to suggest amendments in existing Acts/legislations or new policies /laws / regulations. Upon the Recommendations of Expert Committee Integrated Nodal agency (INA) has been set up. The INA is headed by Secretary, Women & Child Development. The other members of the INA are a) Joint Secretary (Judicial) & Joint Secretary (Foreigners), Ministry of Home Affairs, b) Joint Secretary (OIA-II), Ministry of External Affairs, and c) Joint Secretary (Legal), Ministry of Law & Justice. The INA is functioning as an effective body and providing a single window timely solution to the problems of Indian citizens married to overseas Indian spouses.

5.33 The Committee are aware about the rising incidence of frauds and marital disputes in NRI marriages. In the absence of a separate budget head for providing legal assistance to woman facing problems in overseas marriages, the Committee observe that the Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) to assist Overseas Indian nationals in times of distress and emergency in the ‘most deserving cases’ on a ‘means tested basis’ is being utilized for the purpose. For the Financial Year 2019-20, 1057 grievances were received in the Ministry on NRI marital Disputes. The Committee note that MEA has addressed these grievances by way of providing them counseling, guidance and information about procedures, mechanisms for serving judicial summons on the Overseas Indian spouse, filing a case in India, issuing Look Out Circulars, impounding and revocation of Indian passport of the spouse, getting access to lawyers and NGOs empanelled with Indian Missions, etc. 18 cases have been provided financial assistance as per the ICWF guidelines on case merit basis so far in FY 2019-20. The Integrated Nodal Agency (INA) under the Ministry of Women and Child Development has also not got much success in providing timely solution to the problems of Indian citizens married to Overseas Indian spouses. The Committee are dismayed to see the casual attitude of the Ministry toward such a sensitive issue and hope that the problems faced in NRI marriages will engage more attention of the Ministry henceforth. Adequate budgetary allocation will be provided to each Indian woman in distress due to disputes in marriages and an awareness drive should be launched to ensure that such a gender specific scheme does not get lost under the ICWF which caters to multiple issues.

(Recommendation No. 36)

CHAPTER VI

AUTONOMOUS BODIES & INSTITUTIONS

6.1 A new minor head has been opened w.e.f. FY 2019-20 that caters to grants-in-aid by MEA to autonomous bodies and various other institutions by shifting these heads from „Other Expenditure“. Allocation under this head is towards Aid to Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA), Society for Research and Information System for Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries (RIS) and other institutions such as International society for International Law.

A. INDIAN COUNCIL OF CULTURAL RELATIONS (ICCR)

6.2 The primary objective of the Council is to establish, revive and strengthen cultural relations and mutual understanding between India and other countries in order to promote awareness and appreciation of India’s soft power and cultural diplomacy. The Council has been running 37 full-fledged Indian Cultural Centres (ICCs) in different parts of the world.

6.3 An allocation of Rs. 290 crore has been made in BE 2020-21 for ICCR. On being asked the Ministry specified the Major activities where enhanced allocations have been made are:-

- (i) ICCs abroad and opening of 3 ICCs at Washington, Tel Aviv and Paris
- (ii) Expenditure on deployment of Hindi Chairs abroad
- (iii) Conference & Seminars
- (iv) Celebration of IDY

6.4 The details of allocation sought, made and actual for the last three years under as given by the Ministry are:

Year	BE		RE		Actual Expenditure
	Demand	Allocation	Demand	Allocation	
2017-18	273.38	233.14	242.02	233.14	233.14
2018-19	309.94	255.00	286.18	235.00	235.00
2019-20	330.79	250.00	310.83	250.00	232.50*

* Upto January 2020.

6.5 The Committee were curious to know whether in the opinion of the Ministry the allocated amount is sufficient to meet the expanding activities of ICCR. In a written reply, the Ministry

submitted that the budgetary demand and allocation for ICCR is done in close coordination with the various territorial Divisions as well as Plan of Action received from Missions and Post. ICCR does a detailed exercise based on realistically achievable objectives in line with overall priorities of the government for effective cultural diplomacy. Demands of ICCR for increased budgetary allocation are considered within the overall budgetary constraint of the Ministry. The BE 2020-21 has been provisioned higher at Rs 290 crore (as compared to Rs. 250 cr. in 2019-20) in line with increasing significance of soft power projection of the country and ICCR's central role in it.

6.6 Providing the reason for gap in budgetary demands and allocations to ICCR, the Ministry submitted that budgetary allocation is made as per a realistic assessment of the Council's capacity, including available human resources, to utilize funds as per on-going and planned programmes and initiatives. Demands of ICCR for increased budgetary allocation are considered within the overall budgetary constraint of the Ministry. The BE 2020-21 has been provisioned higher at Rs 290 crore (as compared to Rs. 250 cr. in 2019-20) in line with increasing significance of soft power projection of the country and ICCR's central role in it.

6.7 In light of the gap between budgetary demand and actual allocation to ICCR, the Committee desired to know the possibility of ICCR generating its own funds. In a written reply the Ministry illustrated that ICCR is 100% grantee organization under the MEA. In the direction of resource generation, mobilization of resources by levying fees from classes conducted for dance, language, music, yoga and rental charges from the space given on rent being undertaken. In addition to above, for resource pooling, Ministry is exploring the possibility of Partnership and PPP Models for ICCR where the partners also put in resources for executing projects. In addition, ICCR undertakes agency work in the form of scholarships etc. on behalf of the Ministry and other Departments. ICCs abroad generate nominal revenues through fees collected from students attending courses. ICCR would be exploring avenues for generating additional resources in future.

6.8 ICCR's Cultural Centres are the principal instrument of India's institutional outreach. The Committee were keen to know whether ICCR is in the process of opening more Indian Cultural Centers abroad during the financial year 2020-21. The Ministry responded that ICCR is in the process of opening its Cultural Centres in Washington and Paris. The Centres are expected to be operational by the middle of next financial year 2020-21.

6.9 On Committee's query about any objective criterion for setting up of new cultural centres, the Ministry stated that the concerned Mission is required to provide detailed reasons and justification for opening of a new Cultural Centre such as local formalities for opening of new Cultural Centre, background information of Mission, information about city where Cultural Centre is proposed, details of Foreign Cultural Centres set up by other major countries, interest of general public about India in terms of art, culture, Bollywood, other Art forms and India-centric activities proposed for Cultural Centre etc. On the basis of all such information, the Council seeks the views/approval of Territorial Division, MEA for clearance, allocation of space norms, creation of posts (local and India based) and its budgetary provisions.

6.10 On being asked the Ministry also provided an update on establishment of ICCR Cultural Centres in Washington and Paris.

Renovation of U- Street Property, Washington

Being a heritage building, permission of local authorities is required for undertaking renovations in the property. The Architect-Consultant has submitted necessary documents to the local authority. Permit is expected within next month (March-2020). Simultaneously, the Architect-Consultant is finalising the tender documents. Tender documents would be sent to the Ministry for approval. The revised estimate for the project has been submitted by the Architect-Consultant. Since the variation in the revised estimate is more than 20% of the estimate prepared at the time of acquisition, the revised estimate was examined by Revised Cost Committee (RCC) and submitted for approval of Competent Authority.

Pending activities & expected timeline:

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Submission of tender documents by Consultant: | April 2020 |
| 2. Approval of tender documents by Ministry: | April 2020 |
| 3. Publication of tender notice: | May 2020 |
| 4. Closure of acceptance of tender bids: | June 2020 |
| 5. Approval of L1 bidder by Ministry: | July 2020 |
| 6. Award of work: | August 2020 |
| 7. Completion time: | 10 months |
| 8. Completion of work: | June 2021 |

Renovation of SVICC, Paris

The renovation work was to be undertaken through 10 separate contractors for various works. The works were awarded in May 2018. However during the construction phase, one of the contractors, M/s. Lacroix, entrusted with civil works was declared bankrupt. Since other contractors' work would follow the civil works, in absence of civil works, the work at the site stopped. The proposal is under examination of Ministry for completion of the balance work.

6.11 In light of lack of desired resources to enhance India's soft power, the Committee categorically wanted to know whether the plan of ICCR for opening of new Cultural Centres abroad is sustainable. The Ministry responded that opening of new Cultural Centres abroad is reflected in the budgetary demand, and allocation for ICCR is done in close coordination with the various territorial Divisions as well as Plan of Action received from Missions and Post. ICCR does a detailed exercise based on realistically achievable objectives in line with overall priorities of the government for effective cultural diplomacy. Demands of ICCR for increased budgetary allocation are considered within the overall budgetary constraint of the Ministry. Ministry pays increasing significance of soft power projection of the country and ICCR's central role in it.

6.12 The Committee are aware that ICCR is the nodal organization for the projection of India's soft power abroad, and ever since its establishment in 1950, it has emerged as the principal governmental organization for our cultural engagement with the world and for promoting our culture in all its magnificence through various activities. The Committee are pleased to note that in BE 2020-21, Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) has been provided with an enhanced allocation of Rs. 290 crore. The Ministry has specified that the increased allocation has been provisioned for opening of 3 Indian Cultural Centres at Washington, Tel Aviv, and Paris, expenditure on the deployment of Hindi Chairs abroad, Conference & Seminars and Celebration of IDY. It is heartening to discern that there has been efficient utilization of funds by ICCR for the past three years. On a query raised by the Committee, the Ministry has informed that it is exploring the possibility of Partnership and PPP Models for ICCR where the partners also put in resources for executing

projects. As a pre-eminent organization of the Ministry of External Affairs, ICCR's activities are spread across the globe ranging from providing scholarships to organizing exhibitions to performing arts and visual arts programme. In the opinion of the Committee, even the increased budgetary allocation provisioned to ICCR is not in consonance with its wide-ranging activities. It is understandable that as a not for profit and 100 percent grantee organization under the Ministry of External Affairs, there exist limits for ICCR's ability to raise extra-budgetary resources to cater to its expansive activities.

Given the increasing salience of soft power projection in our Foreign Policy and the ICCR's critical role in it, the Committee are of the considered view that the latter should have augmented financial and manpower resources. It is, therefore, recommended that the Ministry should prepare an annual roadmap for activities/programmes to be organized by ICCR along with the enhanced number of scholars and the role of ICCR within MEA in the pursuit of the \$5 trillion economy and on the basis of it seek additional financial allocation at the RE stage. The Committee also desire that the Ministry should revisit the necessity of having ICCR Regional Offices when Zonal Cultural Centres are in existence.

(Recommendation No. 37)

6.13 The Committee observe that with the larger objective of promoting awareness and appreciation of India's rich cultural heritage, the ICCR currently operates 37 Indian Cultural Centres across the globe. These Centres are instruments of India's cultural outreach abroad and project our soft power through a wide range of cultural, academic and intellectual activities. The Committee are satisfied to learn that after the much delayed establishment of cultural Centres in two significant places like Washington and Paris both

the Centres are expected to be completed and become operational by the middle of financial year 2020-21. The Committee would therefore like that the Cultural Centres in Washington and Paris are operationalized positively this year and a Cultural Centre of ICCR should be opened in Gulf region. The Committee would like to be apprised about the developments in this regard.

(Recommendation No. 38)

B. INDIAN COUNCIL OF WORLD AFFAIRS (ICWA)

6.14 An outlay of Rs. 16.50 crore has been provided for ICWA during 2020-21 which is slightly higher than the budgetary allocation during BE 2019-20 and RE 2019-20. Elaborating on the objectives of ICCR, the Ministry stated that it has been extending the necessary administrative assistance to the ICWA so that it may work as an autonomous body towards meeting its seven basic objectives listed as per Section 13 of the ICWA Act: study of Indian and International Affairs; promote India's relations with other countries ; to serve as a clearing house of information and knowledge; to publish books and journals, review papers; to establish contacts with organisations promoting objects mentioned earlier; to arrange conferences and seminars; and to undertake such other activities for the promotion of ideas and attainment of the objectives listed above.

6.15 The Ministry further stated that the Council has undertaken numerous programmes and initiatives towards the fulfillment of its mandated objectives. For example, the research faculty of ICWA has written above 350 web-based commentaries, including special reports, policy briefs, view points and issue brief in the last three years; regularly hosts conference (national and international), conducts bilateral track II dialogues with international MoU partners, think-tank forums in collaboration with counterpart institutions, book discussion programmes, addresses by the prominent political leaders, Heads of Government, Heads of State and Foreign Ministers of various countries visiting New Delhi; organised more than 200 events in the various areas listed above in the last three years; published 23 books/ monographs and Sapru House papers (including some in Hindi) in the last three years. The

Ministry remains committed towards guiding and assisting the ICWA to meet its objectives within the broad framework of financial autonomy provided to it by the Parliament.

6.16 The Ministry furnished details about the conferences organized by ICWA and the tangible policy outcomes emerging out of them that were beneficial in framing foreign political agenda. During the period April 2019- Feb 2020 the Council has organized a total of 87 Seminars/ Conferences/ Panel discussions/ Talks and Book discussions. This includes some major national seminars on Myanmar, Sri Lanka, European Union, North East Region, Latin America and Africa. 18 international interactions in the form of Seminars and Bilateral Dialogues have been organized. Some of the important interactions held were on Afghanistan, Oman, Israel, Turkey and Syria, major dialogues on Indian Ocean, SCO and bilateral dialogues with our MoU partners in Vietnam, New Zealand, UAE, Iran, Egypt, China, Russia, Germany, Poland, Uzbekistan,

6.17 The Council, in its conferences, seminars and bilateral dialogues gave priority to engage a more diverse set of voices in the discussion and debates. At the national level, experts and scholars were invited from various think tanks, universities and research institutes across the country, to participate as resource person in Council's conferences and seminars. In our bilateral dialogues the Council brought together a cross section of Indian analysts and experts from various universities, research institutes, to interact with the counterpart delegation on range of areas of mutual interest at the bilateral and regional level.

6.18 Specifying the research and academic activities on which the higher allocation provided in BE 2020-21 will be utilized, the Ministry responded that the Research Activities include research and publications in form of commentaries, books and Sapru House Papers. Before publishing, the manuscripts are sent for blind refereeing in order to ensure the rigour and quality of research.

Book projects

For the period 2019-20 11 new additional book proposals have been approved under the Council's Book Project Grant scheme. 14 book projects are in various stages of progress. In addition to Council book Projects there are 22 approved book projects by Research

faculty which are in different stages of progress. For these book projects the authors are provided research support in terms of field visits and conducting interactions

The approved book projects, in the period under review, undertaken under Council are related to the following areas of study: Super power Dynamics in South Asia and North East Asia, Nehru and China, India – Portugal Relations, The Geo-political and Environmental factors in the Indian Sub-continental History, India's Foreign aid, India and Central Asia, A Master Catalogue of the Works of Mirza Abdul Qader Bidel, Gilgit , India Africa Economic Partnership,

Book Project by Research faculty are on following areas: Asian Emerging Powers and Africa, China under Xi Jinping, Iran's foreign Policy, India Kazakhstan Relations; India-EU Relations, Russia's Foreign Policy, India -US: Nuclear energy Cooperation, Sri Lanka and External Actors, Civil-Military Leadership in Pakistan, Bangladesh and Its Neighbours, India- ASEAN Maritime Cooperation, India's Strategic Autonomy.

Translation of Research Publications

In addition, ICWA has made a conscious attempt to reach out to the public through translation of its academic products. Accordingly, it will be carrying out translations in Hindi and regional languages Viewpoints and Issue Briefs uploaded on Council's website, books and Sapru House papers. The Council has also initiated the process for Hindi translation of articles of India Quarterly and the Oral History project.

The Council has revived the Project given the contribution that it can make to the shaping of Indian diplomatic history. The resumed Oral History Project has the following two formats:

- (i) Written reminiscences about key events from the diplomat's career
- (ii) Interview of retired Ambassadors by a suitably competent individual, to be vetted before publication by the Interviewee.

These will be printed in the form of booklets of upto 30,000 words and would also be put on the ICWA website.

Internship

ICWA has devised new guidelines for promoting Research Internship for students. Ten slots have been created for young scholars. Currently 5 Research Interns are working at the Council.

Planned activities

ICWA, in the coming months, will be organizing seminars on Arctic, Africa under the IAFS initiative, Myanmar, the Western Indian Ocean, Iran, the Persian Gulf and India, Gandhi and the World, Hindi Sangosthi, Sinology / Indology conference, Korean Peninsula, A century of India's Multilateralism, and on Pacific Island countries. Some of the important dialogues it would hold are with its MoU partners in China, Russia, Azerbaijan, Saudi Arabia, Iran and Central Asian Republics;

Outreach activities

In order to create awareness about India's Foreign Policy, under the ICWA's scheme to widen awareness about India's role in international affairs, ICWA would widen and expand its outreach conferences in various universities across the country even further. The Council has extended its support to Madurai Kamaraj University to build their Centre on Area Studies by providing help in curriculum development. It has plans to send members of its Research Faculty for a specific time period, as per the requirements of the proposed Centre, to train scholars.

To create awareness about foreign policy issues among the youth, ICWA has undertaken three National Level Essay writing contests among school going students(10-12 standard), and undergraduate and postgraduate students. The Council also plans to selectively expand this essay competition to all regional languages for which consultation are underway with its partner institutions across the country.

Research Faculty Emoluments

The emoluments given to the Research Faculty has not been revised since 2015, which is almost five years now, while the work profile of Research faculty has diversified with increase of programmes and research activities in the Council. The salary revision note has been pending since long. The higher allocation also includes the salary aspect of Research Fellows.

Renovation of Library, Research Wing & other minor works

Major renovation work of Library and building is undergoing under the supervision of CPWD. Funds were not transferred to CPWD since 1.4.2016. The allocated funds to CPWD are on the brink of exhaustion, a major installment of Deposit (Approx 3.00 crore) is due to be transferred to CPWD (Electrical & Civil). Minor repair / renovation work of lecture hall is also being undertaken which will be finalized in next financial year 2020-21.

Translation of Books and all research papers

Translation of books is undertaken from English to Hindi & vice versa and other regional languages like Malayalam & Urdu. During next financial year, translation of English books in other regional languages like Tamil and other scheduled languages is proposed for which tender is being called. All research papers, issue briefs, newsletters, viewpoints, policy briefs, Sapru House paper, guest column, special reports are also being translated in Hindi and published on ICWA website.

Transcription & Live webcast.

Transcription of all the lectures, seminars, events is being done regularly which is also proposed to be continued in next financial year 2020-21 also. The budget also includes live webcast of lectures, seminars, events on facebook, tweeter, ICWA website and youtube.

Hindi website

ICWA website is Bilingual and its Hindi version has been launched recently. Charges for its maintenance are also included in the budget. In addition to above, the budget also includes expenditure on better quality design and printing of all literature, newsletters, brochures, programme booklets & flyers etc.

6.19 The Committee are aware that Section 13 of the ICWA Act enlists seven basic objectives of ICWA namely study of Indian and International Affairs; promote India's relations with other countries ; to serve as a clearing house of information and knowledge; to publish books and journals, review papers; to establish contacts with organisations promoting objects mentioned earlier; to arrange conferences and seminars; and to

undertake such other activities for the promotion of ideas and attainment of the objectives listed above. The Committee also note that the Ministry's role is to guide and assist ICWA to meet its objectives within the broad framework of financial autonomy provided to it by the Parliament. With such an enormous mandate of undertaking research activities across the spectrum of international affairs, ICWA has been organizing conferences, Sapru House Lectures conferences and conducting track-two interactions. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the Ministry of External Affairs should accord requisite importance to research activities undertaken by ICWA by provision of adequate funds and channelizing the inputs emanating from their research activities in the formulation of foreign policy agenda.

(Recommendation No. 39)

CHAPTER VII

POLICY PLANNING & RESEARCH

7.1 Highlighting the exact role of Policy Planning Division, the Ministry stated that Policy Planning and Research Division of the Ministry along with its network of autonomous of autonomous bodies (Indian Council of World Affairs and Research and Information Systems), think tanks and academic collaborations provide a well organised mechanism for the purpose of Policy Planning and Research in foreign affairs. As the nodal Division of the ministry, the PP&R Division undertakes a continuous analysis of our principle foreign policy objectives as well as provides research based perspectives to the Ministry on various regional and global developments. It performs this function in the following ways:

(1) Interfacing with the strategic community by organizing collaborative conferences and seminars with various think tanks, as well as supporting and facilitating India's participation in major international conferences. The Raisina Dialogue, which is the Ministry's flagship geo-political and geo-strategic conference, is organized by the PP&R division. Other major annual conferences organized by the Division which have gained international prominence are the Indian Ocean Conference, the Global Technology Summit, the India-US Forum and the West Asia Conference.

In addition to these, the Division also organizes national level seminars in collaboration with prominent academic think tanks and universities in different locations in the country to aid in the dissemination of foreign policy awareness.

(2) Conduct of policy planning dialogues with our diplomatic partners, and organizing Track 1.5 dialogues with our important diplomatic partners.

(3) Preparing research papers, policy briefs and situation reports pertaining to global developments and international affairs in general and India's foreign policy in particular; These reports are disseminated within the Ministry.

(4) The Division is also mandated to prepare and publish the Annual Report of the Ministry which is tabled in Parliament. This is an intensive, three-month-long process

during which this Division collates and synthesizes inputs from all our Divisions; and, presents a comprehensive overview of the Ministry's activities on an annual basis.

2. Over the years, PP&R Division has been able to play a substantial role in the formulation of foreign policy through its research papers policy briefs and situation reports which look at issues which have both immediate as well as long term consequences for India's national interest. These reports while mostly focusing on geo-political, strategic and security issues, also examine issues in the international trade, investment, geo-economics and frontier technologies domains. As a result, the output of the division is able to provide a holistic view of global events and trends, which then feeds into the policy making of the ministry. The division's interlocution with the strategic community both by organising national flagship conferences as well participating in international conferences have also been an useful source of inputs in foreign policy making. The division remains constantly engaged in strengthening its capacities for research and analysis.

7.2 When asked about the details of the research organizations/ think tanks which are collaborating with the Division, the Ministry provided the following information

Name of Research Institute	Remarks
ICWA	ICWA was established in 1943 as a think tank and was registered as a non-official, non-political and non-profit organization under the Registration of Societies Act, 1860. By an Act of Parliament in 2001, the Council has been declared an institution of national importance. The Hon'ble Vice President of India is ICWA's ex-officio President. ICWA is administered as per the provisions of the Indian Council of World Affairs Act, 2001. The budget for ICWA is provided by the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)
RIS	The RIS was established in 1983 as a registered society. The Society was envisaged to serve as a national focal point to identify and discuss priority areas of research concerning multilateral issues, primarily on economic, social, scientific and technological matters. It was decided that the society will undertake research activities or may assign areas of research to specified national institutions. The society will also

	forge effective links between research institutions of other Nonaligned and developing countries. It would also organize discussions, seminars and workshops and involve research institutions of other countries in these undertakings. It would also advise the Government of India on all matters pertaining to multilateral economic and social issues as may be referred to it from time to time. The Budget for RIS was also provided as a grant in aid by MEA.
IDSAs	The Institute for Defence and Strategic Analysis is an autonomous body under the Ministry of Defence. PP&R Division collaborates with IDSAs for carrying out West Asia Conference and special projects pertaining to POK and Bangladesh.
Gateway House	The Ministry collaborates with Gateway House for the organisation of the India Canada Track 1.5 Dialogue. In the past Gateway House has organised two editions of Geo-Economic Dialogue and one edition of T 20 Think Tank Dialogue.
Institute of Chinese Studies	The Division had provided grant in aid for the functioning of this institute.
Observer Research Foundation	The Division collaborates with ORF for the organisation of the Raisina Dialogue. So far four editions of the Raisina Dialogue have been successfully organised. Raisina Dialogue is the ministry's flagship conference relating to international strategic affairs and geo politics. In the past, ORF has also collaborated with the ministry for activities connected to BRICS.
India Foundation	The division collaborates with India Foundation for the organisation of the Indian Ocean Conference. So far 4 editions of the Indian Ocean Conference have been held since 2016.
Ananta Centre	The Division collaborates with Ananta Centre for the organising of the India US Forum and the India Korea Track 1.5 Dialogue.
Delhi Policy Group	The division collaborates with DPG for the organisation of the India Japan Track 1.5. In 2019 the second edition of this Dialogue was organised.
Carnegie India	The division collaborates with Carnegie India for organising the Global Technology Summit. The 3 rd Edition of this summit was organised in December 2019.
Pune International Centre	The Ministry collaborates with PIC for various foreign policy related outreach conferences.

Chennai Centre for Chinese Studies	The ministry provides grants in aid to this institute for funding its academic activities.
China Centre for Analysis and Strategy	The ministry provides grants in aid to this institute for funding its academic activities.
National Institute for Advanced Studies	The ministry collaborates with this institute directly for commissioning thematic research as well as for inputs on scientific subjects.
Kolkata University	The division collaborates with this university for supporting the establishment of an Institute for Foreign Policy Studies.
Others	The division has collaborated with Symbiosis International University, Vidyaprasarak Mandal (Mumbai), Jadavpur University, Gujarat National Law University, Madurai Kamraj University and Yonsei University, Korea for numerous foreign policy outreach conferences.

7.3 Regarding the existence of research collaboration with other countries on issues pertaining to Foreign Policy. The Ministry replied that currently there are no established research collaborations with other countries on issues pertaining to foreign policy. However, it may be pointed out that the ICWA maintains a regular programme of interactions and academic collaborations with its partner institutions in several countries. Similarly the RIS has a comprehensive programme of research collaboration with international organisations and academic bodies of other countries. The ASEAN-India Centre located within the RIS is specifically mandated for research collaboration on issues of mutual interest for India and ASEAN countries. The outcome of such collaboration is usually in the form of academic research which are published in various index academic journals.

7.4 The Committee were keen to know about the mechanism for incorporating academic expertise into policy formation process. The Ministry responded that currently, it has been utilising external expertise in the form of subject specialist consultants for the purpose of research and policy planning. These consultants are used for producing research papers, policy briefs, coverage of strategic conferences and seminars as well as daily analysis of significant global events. Apart from PP&R Division, other divisions in the ministry are also utilising the services of consultants. Currently, these consultants are being hired at a level equivalent to the scale of an Under Secretary for a duration of two years with a provision for extension. The practice of inducting external expertise as contractually appointed consultants has been initiated

in the ministry since FY 2015-16. Based on the experience of the ministry in utilising the services of these consultants, a policy would be drawn up for using their expertise on a long term basis. Ministry accords a higher priority to engaging academics based in universities and think tanks and utilising their expertise in preparation of research papers and policy briefs for use in the ministry. There are multiple mechanisms of engaging with academics. For example, the division funds universities for the conduct of national/international seminars and thematic conferences on a regular basis. Recently the division has funded the Madurai Kamraj University for a conference on the Indo Pacific. Ministry also engages with academia through its autonomous bodies – ICWA and RIS – which have a systematic programme of academic events as well as collaborations with corresponding institutions in other countries. The research output of the academic activities is compiled into reports and compendiums which are utilised by the ministry. Another channel through which the ministry utilises academic expertise is by commissioning of research projects through think tanks like the IDSA and the RIS. Apart from these formal channels, the officers of the Ministry maintain close links with academics and researchers working on areas of interest to the ministry and frequently interact with them in order to exchange views and gain insights from them.

7.5 When asked whether the Ministry has explored the idea of having a grand strategy that clearly spells out coherent foreign policy objectives, goals and strategy for the long run, the Ministry replied that the Government of India follows long term foreign policy objectives. The long term objectives, as is appropriate in a democracy, are formulated through a process of democratic discourse and consultation as per the rules and practice of parliamentary democracy. The process of articulation of these long term objectives for domestic and international audiences by this Ministry follows both international norms and domestic practice as established. Indian diplomatic strategy is articulated in, accordance with custom, precedent, law and parliamentary rules, in documents that are available in the public domain. The Annual Report of the Ministry that contains a comprehensive statement of policies followed in the diplomatic sphere and their implementation is tabled in Parliament. Replies to Parliamentary Questions, submissions to Parliamentary Committees and Ministerial statement also articulate diplomatic strategy in accordance with the rules of parliamentary democracy. Public statements by the Minister of External Affairs, the Ministers of State in the Ministry and officials of the Ministry of External Affairs which are collated on the website of the Ministry of External Affairs are also utilized to

articulate Indian diplomatic and foreign policy objectives. This is supplemented by other diplomatic documents which contain public expression of foreign policy priorities. This is in accordance with international practice as followed by the foreign offices of major powers. It has to be kept in mind that the practice of diplomacy requires to be flexible. The current global foreign policy environment is characterized by rapid shifts and unexpected developments. Agility, in policy terms, is required to respond to these swift developments. It is submitted that the current practice of articulating strategies as described above allows the articulation of foreign policy within the parameters set by law, practice and the rules of parliamentary democracy while allowing clarity, consistency and, where necessary, the required flexibility.

7.6 When asked about the key principles shaping and guiding Indian foreign policy making in the changed international order, the Ministry illustrated that there have been clear and definite indications that the US led multilateral world order which had emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 is currently undergoing significant changes. The recent developments pertaining to the trade dispute between US and China, imminent changes in the governance structure of the WTO and the tendency of the US to act unilaterally on issues of global importance like climate change have put a stress on multilateral arrangements which have worked well in the recent past. At the same time, the increasingly ambitious role played by China in the South China Sea, military modernisation, advances in space technology and other frontier technologies, connectivity initiatives like the BRI (Belt and Road Initiative) have positioned China as a possible competitor to the US and a successor/replacement of the former USSR in these areas. However, the situation is still developing and a definitive structure to the world order is yet to emerge. The preliminary assessment of the ministry is that while China has made significant advances both in terms of military power as well as frontier technologies like digital technology, bio technology, manufacturing etc., its actual capacities in these areas are not of the order that can put China in the position of principle competitor to the US. Nevertheless the emergence of China and its approach to international issues does create an alternative viewpoint in the international world order. The impact of the US China trade dispute and the growing competition between western countries and China in the field of international finance, development cooperation and multilateral fora is likely to accentuate the differences between the US led western world and the Chinese viewpoints. Given the rapidly changing international scenario and the evolving international order, India will continue to pursue its pragmatic and

outcome oriented engagements to enhance security, upholding its territorial integrity and promote economic transformation. India will continue to pursue these goals through strengthened bilateral, regional and multilateral partnerships. While India will continue to build its influence in key global forums, it will also offer to the world its own unique solutions to global issues, like the ISA and the CDRI. Our neighbourhood and the Indian Ocean Region will continue to be accorded the highest priority, where the focus will be on creating mutually beneficial people oriented regional frameworks for stability and prosperity. With respect to the major powers of the world, India will maintain strategic autonomy and continue taking independent decisions in the national interest. Domestic transformation has become integral to India's foreign policy and the goal of our diplomatic engagements continue to bring visible economic benefits like foreign investments, technology and jobs to our people. Finally, a key principle guiding India's foreign policy is strengthening the bonds of Indian diaspora with their homeland and leveraging their capabilities and resources to promote India's interests abroad.

7.7 Elucidating on the steps taken by the Ministry to provide gendered perspective to various schemes/programmes and policies of the Ministry, the Ministry responded that the PravasiBharatiyaBima Yojana (PBBY), a mandatory insurance scheme for Emigration Check Required (ECR) category workers going to ECR countries for overseas employment, provides an insurance cover of 10 lakhs in case of accidental death or permanent disability and some other benefits at a nominal insurance premium of Rs. 275/ Rs. 375 for a period of two/three years. Under the scheme, towards empowerment of women, there exists Maternity expenses benefit to women emigrants available upto Rs. 50,000/-. Indian Community Welfare Fund (ICWF) was established in all the Indian Missions & Posts abroad for carrying out various on-site welfare activities for overseas Indian Citizens who are in distress, on a means tested basis in the most deserving cases. ICWF has also been a critical support in emergency evacuation of Indian nationals from conflict zones, countries affected by natural disasters and other challenging situations. The revised guideline on ICWF, operational since September 2017 provides Legal/financial assistance to Indian women abandoned/ cheated / abused by their NRI/PIO or foreign spouses (up to seven years after their marriage). In addition, Government has taken several steps to safeguard the interests of Indian female emigrants to the Gulf countries, such as:

- Age restriction of 30 years has been made mandatory in respect of all women emigrants (Except Nurses) emigrating on ECR passports to ECR countries irrespective of nature/category of employment;
- Since August 2016, emigration clearance of all female workers having ECR passports, for overseas employment in 18 ECR countries has been made mandatory through six State-run recruiting agencies only.
- Every Foreign Employer desirous of directly recruiting a female ECR worker is required to deposit a Bank Guarantee equivalent to US \$2500 in the respective Indian Missions.
- Embassy attestation has been made mandatory in respect of direct recruitment of all ECR passport holder women workers in respect of all ECR countries;
- For the safety, security and welfare of Indian Domestic Service Workers (DSWs), Agreement on Labour Cooperation for Domestic Sector Workers Recruitment was signed with Saudi Arabia in January 2014. In case of United Arab Emirates, there is a Protocol on Domestic Workers annexed to the Memorandum of Understanding with the United Arab Emirates in the Field of Manpower that was signed in February 2018. An MOU on Cooperation in recruitment of Domestic Workers with Kuwait was initialed in 2018; and
- Shelter Homes for distressed Indian nationals including women workers have been set up in Bahrain, Kuwait, Malaysia, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.

7.8 In the light of our deepening bilateral, regional and multilateral engagements, the Committee feel that the absence of a formalized policy document covering all aspects of our foreign policy is surprising. The Ministry has asserted that the practice of diplomacy requires flexibility in order to respond to rapid shifts and unexpected developments in the global foreign policy environment. The Committee note that the Policy Planning and Research Division of the Ministry along with its network of autonomous bodies like Indian Council of World Affairs and Research and Information Systems, think tanks and academic collaborations provide a well organized mechanism for the purpose of Policy Planning and Research in foreign affairs. Over the years the Committee has been exhorting

the Ministry to spell out India's grand strategy encapsulating the dynamism in short term, medium term and long term objectives of our foreign policy. The Committee are of the considered view that the grand foreign policy strategy will also bolster the case for enhanced allocation by the Ministry of Finance. The Committee, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Ministry of External Affairs take all requisite institutional as well intellectual steps to spell out a coherent and balanced Grand Foreign Policy strategy for India on priority basis.

(Recommendation No. 40)

**NEW DELHI
2 March, 2020
12 Phalguna 1941 (Saka)**

**SHRI P.P. CHAUDHARY
Chairperson,
Committee on External Affairs**

*APPENDIX-I***MINUTES OF THE FOURTEENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (2019-20) HELD ON 27 FEBRUARY, 2020**

The Committee sat on Friday, the 27 February, 2020 from 1100 hrs. to 1550 hrs. in Room No. 62, Parliament House, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri P.P. Chaudhary – Chairperson

MEMBERS**LOK SABHA**

2. Shri Ritesh Pandey
3. Shri K.C.Patel
4. Shri Manoj Tiwari
5. Shri N.K. Premchandran

RAJYA SABHA

6. Shri K.J. Alphons
7. Smt. Misha Bharti
8. Shri Swapan Dasgupta
9. Shri Chunibhai Kanjibhal Gohel
10. Shri Shamsher Singh Manhas
11. Shri Abdul Wahab

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|----|------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. | Shri P.C. Koul | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Dr. Ram Raj Rai | Director |
| 3. | Shri Paolienlal Haokip | Additional Director |

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

S.No.	Name	Designation
1.	Shri Harsh Vardhan Shringla	Foreign Secretary
2.	Shri Raj Kumar Goyal	Additional Secretary (FA)
3.	Shri Manoj K. Bharti	Additional Secretary (AD)
4.	Shri Amrit Lugun	Additional Secretary (OE) & PGE
5.	Shri Dinesh Patnaik	DG, ICCR
6.	Shri P. Harish	Additional Secretary (ER)

7.	Ms. Nagma M. Mallick	Additional Secretary (Africa)
8.	Dr. Virander Paul	Additional Secretary (BSN)
9.	Dr. Neena Malhotra	Additional Secretary (IP)
10.	Shri Arun K. Chatterjee	Joint Secretary (PSP) & CPO
11.	Shri Naveen Srivastava	Joint Secretary (East Asia)
12.	Shri Harish Kumar Jain	Joint Secretary (GEM)
13.	Dr. Anupam Ray	Joint Secretary (PP&R)
14.	Shri Sandeep Arya	Joint Secretary (EW)
15.	Shri Yogeshwar Sangwan	Joint Secretary (OIA-I)
16.	Shri Manish Prabhat	Joint Secretary (ERS)
17.	Shri Sanjay Rana	Joint Secretary (UNP)
18.	Shri Manish	Joint Secretary (OIA-II)
19.	Shri Piyush Shrivastava	Joint Secretary (North)
20.	Dr. Deepak Mittal	Joint Secretary (PAI)
21.	Shri G. Balasubramanian	Joint Secretary (AD)
22.	Shri Vishvas Vidu Sapkal	Joint Secretary (South)
23.	Shri Gourangalal Das	Joint Secretary (AMS)
24.	Dr. Devyani Khobragade	Joint Secretary (DPA-II)
25.	Shri R. Ravindra	Joint Secretary (C&WA)
26.	Ms. Namgya Khampa	Joint Secretary (DPA-III)
27.	Ms. Gloria Gangte	Joint Secretary (LAC)
28.	Shri Amit Narang	Joint Secretary (IOR)
29.	Shri A. Ajay Kumar	Joint Secretary (DPA-I)
30.	Shri Robert Shetkingtong	Joint Secretary (Parl & Coord)
31.	Dr. Adarsh Swaika	Joint Secretary (CPV)
32.	Shri Nikhilesh Giri	Joint Secretary (WANA)
33.	Shri Sajeev Babu Kurup	Joint Secretary (RBB, I & T)

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members of the Committee and the representatives of the Ministry of External Affairs to the Sitting of the Committee convened to take evidence of the representatives of the Ministry on Demands for Grants of the Ministry for the year 2020-21. He also drew attention of the representatives of the Ministry to Direction 55 (1) of Directions by the Speaker, Lok Sabha. In his opening remarks, the Chairperson delved upon the overall budgetary allocations made to the Ministry of External Affairs during BE 2020-21 as well as RE 2019-20. Expressing serious concerns about the reduction in budgetary allocations to MEA, the Chairperson emphasized that the budget allocated to MEA was highly incommensurate with our expanding global engagement and footprint.

3. Thereafter, the Foreign Secretary provided a broad overview of the Ministry's budget, milestones achieved in the ongoing Fiscal and the challenges faced in project implementation abroad. The Members raised pertinent questions on various issues related to the mandate of the

Ministry which *inter-alia* included role of MEA in achieving 5 trillion dollar economy; reduction in the MEA's budget *vis-a-vis* the Government's overall budget; inability of the Ministry to take up the issue of lower budgetary allocations with the Ministry of Finance in a convincing manner; fluctuating nature of demands and allocations to various countries under developmental cooperation; insufficient budgetary allocation for the Diaspora functions of the Ministry; mismatch between the demands made and actual allocations to MEA; under-staffing in vital departments & Missions/Posts abroad: criteria for project selection under ITEC programmes; increasing Chinese connectivity projects in our neighbourhood and MEA's response; status of the construction of Nalanda University and South Asian University Projects; and articulation of a grand strategy for India's Foreign Policy etc

4. Responding to the queries raised by the Committee, the Foreign Secretary apprised them about rationalization of expenditure, closer coordination with the Ministry of Finance, effective implementation of international projects re-structuring of organizational structure of MEA, creation of New and Emerging Technologies Division and due prioritization of welfare schemes and programmes dealing with Indian Diaspora. The Committee desired the Ministry to furnish written replies to the various points raised by the Members during discussion at the earliest.

The witnesses then withdrew.

The Committee then adjourned.

A verbatim record of the proceedings has been kept.

APPENDIX II

**MINUTES OF THE FIFTEENTH SITTING OF THE COMMITTEE ON
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (2019-20) HELD ON 2 MARCH, 2020**

The Committee sat on Monday, 2 March, 2020 from 1000 hrs. to 1050 hrs. in Committee Room No. 2, Parliament House Annexe Block A, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri P.P. Chaudhary – Chairperson

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Jayadev Galla
3. Shri Dileshwar Kamait
4. Smt. Preneet Kaur
5. Smt. Meenakshi Lekhi
6. Smt. Poonam Mahajan
7. Dr. K.C. Patel
8. Shri Achyutananda Samanta
9. Shri Ram Swaroop Sharma
10. Shri Manoj Tiwari
11. Shri Rebati Tripura
12. Shri N.K. Premchandran

Rajya Sabha

13. Shri K.J. Alphons
14. Shri Swapan Dasgupta
15. Shri Chunibhai Kanjibhai Gohel
16. Shri Shamsheer Singh Manhas
17. Shri Abdul Wahab

Secretariat

- | | | | |
|----|-----------------|---|-----------------|
| 1. | Shri P.C. Koul | - | Joint Secretary |
| 2. | Dr. Ram Raj Rai | - | Director |

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the Sitting of the Committee.

3. The Committee took up for consideration the draft Report on Demands for Grants of the Ministry of External Affairs for the year 2020-21.
4. The Chairperson invited the members to offer their suggestions, if any, for incorporation in the draft Report. The Members suggested some minor modifications. After deliberations, the Committee adopted the draft Report with these minor modifications.
5. The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to finalize the Report incorporating the suggestions made by the members and present the same to Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

*ANNEXURE- I***Programmes/projects by India in African countries**

Sr No	Country	Date of signing of LOC	Amount of Credit (USD million)	Purpose
1	Cote d'Ivoire	22-May-17	71.40	Upgradation of Military Hospitals
2	D.R.Congo	17-Mar-19	33.29	Financing installation of 15 MW solar photovoltaic power project
3	D.R.Congo	17-Mar-19	25.27	Financing installation of 10 MW solar photovoltaic power project
4	D.R.Congo	17-Mar-19	24.55	Financing installation of 10 MW solar photovoltaic power project
5	EBID, West Africa	25-Mar-18	500.00	Development Projects
6	Ghana	5-Apr-19	150.00	Strengthening of Agriculture Mechanization Services Centres
7	Ghana	5-Apr-19	30.00	Rehabilitation and Up-gradation of Potable Water System
8	Ghana	22-Nov-16	24.54	Sugarcane development and irrigation project
9	Kenya	11-Jan-17	100.00	Agriculture Mechanization project
10	Kenya	11-Jul-16	15.00	Development of various small and medium enterprises
11	Kenya	11-Jul-16	29.95	Upgrade of Rift Valley Textiles Factory
12	Madagascar	29-Jun-17	2.50	Completion of unfinished fertilizer plant project
13	Malawi	5-Aug-16	23.50	Construction of a new water supply system from Likhubula river in Mulanje

				to Blantyre
14	Mozambique	31-Dec-18	95.00	Procurement of railway rolling stock including locomotives, coaches and wagons
15	Mozambique	20-Mar-19	38.00	Construction of 1600 Borewells with Hand pumps and 8 Small Water Systems in Mozambique
16	Rwanda	24-May-17	81.00	Establishment of 10 Vocational Training Centres and 4 business incubation centres in Rwanda
17	Rwanda	23-Jul-18	100.00	Development of two SEZs & expansion of the Kigali SEZ
18	Rwanda	23-Jul-18	100.00	Three Agriculture Project Schemes i.e. (i) Warufu Multipurpose Irrigation Project, (ii) Mugesera Irrigation Project, and (iii) Nyamukana Irrigation Project
19	Rwanda	15-May-18	66.60	Base-Butero-Kidaho road project
20	Senegal	15-Jul-16	26.00	Acquisition of buses
21	Senegal	20-Aug-18	24.50	Up-gradation and rehabilitation of Health Care System.
22	Sierra Leone	11-Aug-16	78.00	Transmission Line and Substation in Sierra Leone
23	Sudan	27-Apr-17	19.61	Capitalization of Interest under operative LOCs for change in terms of the existing LOCs
24	Tanzania	10-Jul-16	92.18	Rehabilitation and improvement of water supply system in Zanzibar
25	Tanzania	10-May-18	500.00	Water Supply scheme in 17 towns
26	Zambia	25-Jan-18	18.00	Pre-fabricated health posts
27	Zimbabwe	27-Oct-15	87.00	Renovation/Up-gradation of Bulawayo Thermal Power Plant

28	Central African Republic	16-Aug-18	7.00	Capitalisation of all interest, penal interest and commitment fees overdues under the LOC of USD 29.50 million and future interest and other dues falling due under the LOC of USD 29.50 million till September 15, 2024 Capitalisation of all future interest and other dues falling due under the new LOC of USD 20.00 million till January 16, 2023
29	Chad	27-Apr-18	6.12	Capitalisation of all interest, penal interest and commitment fee overdues under the LOC of USD 50 million and future interest and other dues falling due under the LOC of USD 50 million till June 2020, into new LOC of USD 6.12 million. Capitalisation of all future interest and other dues falling due under the new LOC of USD 15.90 million till December 23, 2023, into new LOC of USD 6.12 million
	Total		2,369.01	

B. LoCs approved but yet to be implemented

Sr No	Country	Date of approval	Amount of Credit (USD million)	Purpose
1	Sierra Leone	26-Feb-19	30.00	Land and infrastructure development including Hydraulics, water management system (irrigation) and provision of Tractors.
2	Malawi	21-Jan-19	215.68	Drinking water supply schemes under Southern region Water Board
3	Burundi	01-Oct-18	161.36	Construction of new Parliament in Gitega and two ministerial Buildings in Bujumbura, Burundi
4	Zimbabwe	16-Aug-18	23.00	Up-gradation of Bulawayo Thermal Power Plant

5	Zimbabwe	13-Jul-18	19.50	Completion of Phase II : Up-gradation of Deka Pumping Station and River Water Intake System in Zimbabwe
6	Ethiopia	06-Jul-18	133.70	New 230 kV interconnection between Ethiopia and Djibouti, 230 kV Combolcha II – Semera Transmission Line along with associated substations extension at Semera, Nagad and Combolcha II
7	Uganda	29-May-18	64.50	Development of Infrastructure for Agriculture and Dairy sector
8	Uganda	29-May-18	141.50	Grid reinforcement and extension project
9	Ethiopia	18-Apr-18	147.43	Mekele Industrial Park 400 kV Power Transmission Project
10	Niger	18-Apr-16	72.00	Social Housing Project for Urban Development
11	Zambia	10-Feb-16	40.00	Agricultural Mechanisation
12	Gambia	13-Apr-15	92.00	Expansion of Banjul Port
13	Burkina Faso	18-Dec-14	184.00	Hydro-electric Power Plant and Transmission network Project in Burkina Faso
14	Mauritania	13-Aug-14	65.68	Solar Diesel Hybrid Rural Electricity Project
15	Sierra Leone	16-Jan-14	15.00	Expansion of the ongoing projects for rehabilitation of existing potable water facilities in four communities in Sierra Leone
	Total		1,405.35	

Sr No	Country	Date of approval	Amount of Credit (USD million)	Purpose
1	Mauritius	19-Apr-18	100.00	Defence Procurement

2	Mauritius	07-Nov-14	200.00	Equity participation in a SPV being created for implementing a Light Rapid Transit (LRT) project
	Total		300.00	

C. Projects/LoCs announced, including solar projects

Sl. No	Country	LOC (\$ million)	Project value (\$ million)	Project Details
1.	Benin	21.00 (under EBID)	21.00	Electrification by photovoltaic solar system of 550 social community infrastructures (health centers, high schools and hand-pumped boreholes) in rural areas (under EBID)
2.	Burkina Faso	36.50 (under EBID)	36.50	Solar powered water stations for semi-urban water supply. EBID is preparing the feasibility report.
3.	Chad	27.45	27.45	Establishment of a solar photovoltaic module manufacturing plant at N'djamena
4.	Democratic Republic of Congo	25.27 (32.43)	25.27 (LoC was reduced to this amount)	•Installation of 10 MW solar photovoltaic power project at Lusambo, Sankuru province
5.	Democratic Republic of Congo	24.55 (56.82)	24.55 (LoC was reduced to this amount)	•Installation of 10 MW solar photovoltaic power project at Mbandaka, Equator province
6.	Democratic Republic of Congo	33.29 (58.94)	33.29 (LoC was reduced to this amount)	•Installation of 15 MW solar photovoltaic power project at Karawa, North Ubangi province
7.	Ghana	34.80	34.80	Solar powered street lighting project. PPF in process.
8.	Ghana	6.30 (EBID)	6.30	Solar powered mini-grids for island and forest zone communities. (under

				EBID)
9.	Guinea	14.40	14.40	Solar project for supply of electricity an drinking water for 7 public universities. PPF in process
10.	Guinea	5.82	5.82	Solar project for electrification and refrigeration in 200 health infrastructures. PPF in process.
11.	Mali	22.00	22.00	Setting up a sustainable village and use of solar photovoltaic technology for irrigation of 2500 ha of agricultural land.
12.	Mali	120.00	120.00	50 MW solar power plant in Fana.
13.	Mali	8.00 (under EBID)	8.00	Construction of 2 MWc solar photovoltaic plant in Mopti. EBID is preparing the feasibility report. This project has been included under the umbrella LOC of EBID of USD 500 million.
14.	Mauritania	65.68	65.68	Solar diesel hybrid rural electricity project
15.	Niger	38.20 (under EBID)	38.20	Electrification of 250 villages through solar photovoltaic systems. (under EBID)
16.	Nigeria	8.36	8.36	Solar photovoltaic renewable micro-utility (REMU) in six political zones.
17.	Nigeria	66.60	66.60	50 MW solar power plant in Bauchi state
18.	Rwanda	90.00	90.00	30 MW (2*15MW) solar power project with storage capacity for supplying power to the national grid. Project
19.	Rwanda	32.00	32.00	Solar mini-grids for 50 centralized off-grid areas, 200 public institutions and 200 business centers.
20.	Tanzania	385.00	385.00	Development of 150 MW solar photovoltaic farm at Shinyanga

				region, Kishapu district.
21.	Togo	40.00 (under EBID)	40.00	Electrification of 350 villages through solar photovoltaic systems (under EBID)
22.	Madagascar	80.72	80.72	Agriculture Development in Madagascar through Irrigation, Farm Mechanization and Food Processing Plant in Bongolava, Betsiboka, Menabe and Analamanga Regions
23.	Malawi	215.68	215.68	Drinking Water projects under Southern, Central Water Boards.
24.	Swaziland	10.40	10.40	Construction of Disaster Recovery Sites (DRS) of Data National Centre. Total cost of the project is US \$ 21 million.
25.	Zimbabwe	310	310	Repowering of Hwange Thermal Power Station.
	Total		2212.02	

Sl. No.	Country	LOC (US\$ million)	Project value (\$ million)	Project Details
1	Mauritius	500.00 (already counted)	10.00	8 MV solar photovoltaic farm at Henrietta (Phase II)
2	Seychelles	1.24	1.24	Solar LED street lighting project in Mahe, Praslin and La Digue
3.	Seychelles	3.05	3.05	Solar rooftop photovoltaic project for government buildings
4.	Seychelles	4.62	4.62	2 MW (1MW*2) solar power plant with battery storage in Praslin and La Digue.
	Total		8.91	

D. LOC projects completed after October 2015

Sr No	Country	Amount of Credit (USD million)	Purpose	Completion date
1	Benin	15.00	(A) Railway equipment (USD 10.25 mn) , (B) agricultural equipment (USD 4.25 mn) and (C) feasibility study for setting up a cyber city (USD 0.50 mn)	Nov-2015
2	Burkina Faso	25.00	Rural electrification	Dec-2018
3	Cameroon	37.65	(i) Maize Farm Plantation Projects (US\$ 18.77 mn), (ii) Rice Farm Plantation Projects (US\$ 18.88 mn)	Sep-2017
4	D.R. Congo	42.00	Execution of Kakobola Hydroelectric Power Project	Oct-2016
5	Ghana	21.72	(i) Improved fish harvesting & fish processing project and (ii) Waste management equipment and management support project	Nov-2016
6	Ghana	35.00	Sugar Plant	May-2016
7	Malawi	50.00	Cotton Processing Facilities, Green Belt Initiative and One Village One Product Project	Jul-2016
8	Malawi	76.50	Irrigation Network and Sugar processing equipments and fuel storage facility	Sep-2016
9	Mauritania	21.80	Potable water project (USD 4.896 mn) and Milk Processing Plant (USD 11.30 mn)	Sep-2016
10	Mozambique	25.00	Rural Electrification of Cabo Delgado, Manica, Niassa Provinces	Nov-2016
11	Mozambique	20.00	Enhancing productivity of rice, wheat, maize cultivation	May-2018

12	Mozambique	19.72	Rural drinking water project extension	Aug-2017
13	Niger	25.00	Potable Water for Semi-Urban and Rural Communities	Sep-2018
14	Sierra Leone	30.00	Rehabilitation of existing facilities and addition of new infrastructure to supply potable water	Apr-2016
15	Swaziland	20.00	Information technology park	Sep-2016
16	Swaziland	37.90	Agricultural Development and Mechanization of Agriculture in Swaziland	Nov-2017
17	Togo	13.10	Farming and cultivation of Rice, Maize and Sorghum in Togo	Sep-2017
18	Zambia	29.03	Itezhi-Tezhi Hydro power project	Apr-2016
	Total	544.42		

Sr No	Country	Amount of Credit (USD million)	Purpose	Completion date
1	Mauritius	18.00	To finance the acquisition of Waterjet Fast Attack Craft	Sep-2016
	Total	18.00		

E. LoC projects announced before Oct 2015 and under implementation

Sr No	Country	Amount of Credit (USD mn)	Purpose
1	Angola	30.00	Industrial park
2	Angola	15.00	Setting up a textile project (cotton Ginning & spinning)
3	Benin	42.61	Upgradation of Water Supply Schemes in 69 villages

4	Burkina Faso	22.50	Low cost housing and economical buildings project
5	Burundi	80.00	Kabu Hydro Electric Project
6	Burundi	4.22	Farm Mechanization
7	Burundi	0.17	Preparation of Detailed Project report for an Integrated Food Processing Complex in Burundi
8	Cameroon	42.00	Cassava Plantation Project
9	Central African Republic	29.50	Setting up a modern dry process cement plant of 400 TPD capacity and procurement of 100 buses for internal transport
10	Central African Republic	20.00	Development of Mining Project
11	Central African Republic	39.69	Two hydro-electric projects
12	Chad	15.90	For financing Extension of spinning mill [addition of weaving and processing capacities] [USD 15.90 million] in Chad
13	Comoros	41.60	For installation of an 18 MW power project in Moroni, the capital city of Comoros
14	Cote d'Ivoire	30.00	Transmission line between Cote d'Ivoire and Mali
15	Cote d'Ivoire	30.00	Rice production programme
16	Cote d'Ivoire	24.00	Electricity Interconnection Project between Cote d'Ivoire and Mali
17	D.R.Congo	168.00	Katende Hydro-electric Project
18	D.R.Congo	82.00	Completion of Katende Hydro-electric Project
19	D.R.Congo	34.50	Development of Power Distribution Project in Bandundu Province

20	D.R.Congo	109.94	Financing transmission and distribution project in Kasai province of Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) for evacuation of electricity from Katende Hydroelectricity Power Project
21	Djibouti	14.57	Completing Cement Plant Project in Djibouti
22	Djibouti	15.13	Ali Sabieh Cement Project, Djibouti
23	Ethiopia	166.23	Development of sugar industry (Fincha Sugar Factory project has been completed)
24	Ethiopia	213.31	Development of sugar industry (Fincha Sugar Factory project has been completed)
25	Ethiopia	91.00	Development of sugar industry (Fincha Sugar Factory project has been completed)
26	Ethiopia	47.00	Development of sugar industry
27	Gambia	22.50	Replacement of Asbestos water pipes with UPVC pipes project
28	Ghana	24.54	Sugarcane development and irrigation project
29	Ghana	30.00	Rehabilitation and Up-gradation of Potable Water System in Yendi, Ghana
30	Ghana	150.00	Strengthening of Agriculture Mechanization Services Centres
31	Guinea	35.00	Strengthening of Health System
32	Kenya	61.60	Power Transmission Lines (1st tranche of USD 102.08 mn)
33	Kenya	100.00	Agriculture Mechanization project
34	Lesotho	4.70	Vocational training center for empowerment of youth and women
35	Mali	15.00	Agriculture and food processing projects
36	Mali	100.00	Power Transmission Project Connecting Bamako and Sikasso via Bougouni
40	Mozambique	250.00	Improving the quality of power supply in Mozambique

41	Mozambique	149.72	Rehabilitation of Road between Tica, Buzi and Nova Sofala in Mozambique
42	Mozambique	47.00	Construction of 1200 houses in Mozambique
43	Niger	34.54 (Project valued USD 26.84 mn got completed in Nov** 2018.)	Solar electrification of 30 villages and solar photovoltaic system of 5 MW – Project valued USD 26.84 million got completed in Nov- 2018.
44	R. Congo	70.00	Rural Electrification
45	R. Congo	89.90	Development of Transport System
46	R. Congo	55.00	Setting up a Greenfield 600 tpd rotary kiln Cement Plant Project
47	Rwanda	120.05	[i] Export Targeted Modern Irrigated Agricultural Project (USD 60.22 million); and [ii] Extension of Export Targeted Modern Irrigated Agricultural Project (USD 59.83 million)
48	Senegal	27.50	Rural electrification
49	Senegal	19.00	Fisheries Development Project
50	Senegal	41.96	Setting up a Modern Abattoir, Meat Processing, Cold Storage, Rendering and Tannery Plant and Market Place in Senegal
51	Senegal	62.95	Rice Self Sufficiency programme in Senegal
52	Senegal	26.00	Acquisition of buses
55	Sudan	125.00	Mashkour Sugar Project (IInd tranche of US \$ 150 mn)
56	Tanzania	178.13	Water supply schemes to Dar-es-Salam
57	Tanzania	268.35	Extension of Lake Victoria Pipeline to Tabora, Igunga and Nzega
58	Togo	30.00	Rural Electrification Project to cover 150 localities
59	Togo	52.00	Setting up of 161 KV Power Transmission Line
60	EBID, West	100.00	Financing exports of various equipment, goods and

	Africa		services
61	EBID, West Africa	150.00	Export of goods and services and project exports
62	Zambia	50.00	Pre-fabricated health posts
63	Zimbabwe	28.60	Up-gradation of Deka Pumping Station and River Water Intake System in Zimbabwe
64	Zimbabwe	87.00	Renovation/Up- gradation of Bulawayo Thermal Power Plant
	Total	4,041.91	

Sr No	Country	Amount of Credit (USD mn)	Purpose
1.	Mauritius	46.00	Purchase,upgradation and maintainance of defence related equipment and vehicles for the Mauritius Police Force (MPF)
2	Mauritius	52.30	Project Trident
3	Mauritius	500.00	Equity Participation for financing various Infrastructure Projects
4	Seychelles	10.00	Import of goods and services from India for specific projects funded by Development Bank of Seychelles (DBS)
5	Seychelles	10.00	Procurement of goods and projects as per the specified needs of the Government of the Republic of Seychelles
	Total	618.30	

ANNEXURE II**Training Programmes for Indian diplomats/officials for the year 2020-21**

1.	Training Programme for Interpreters	6-17 April 2020
2.	Mid Career Training Programme-I for Deputy Secretary/Under Secretary level IFS Officers	1-20 June 2020
3.	Training module for Defence Attaches	22-26 June 2020
4.	Mid Career Training Programme-III for Joint Secretary level IFS Officers	6-24 July 2020
5.	Mid Career Training Programme-II for Director level IFS officers	24 August-18 September 2020
6.	Induction Training Programme for IFS Officer Trainees of 2020 Batch	7 December 2020-2 June 2021
7.	Promotion related Training Programme for ASOs and PAs	13-17 April 2020
8.	Accounts Module	20-21 April 2020
9.	76th IMAS	22 April – 20 May 2020
10.	Promotion related Training Programme for JSAs, SSAs and Stenographers	11-15 May 2020
11.	Stenography Test for PAs/Stenographers	21-22 May 2020
12.	Typing Test for ASOs	27 May 2020
13.	76th IMAS Retest	29 May 2020
14.	IVFRT	08-12 June 2020
15.	Accounts Module	09-10 July 2020
16.	77th IMAS	13 July- 07 Aug 2020
17.	77th IMAS Retest	18 Aug 2020
18.	Typing Test for ASOs	16 Sep 2020

19.	IVFRT	12-16 Oct 2020
20.	Accounts Module	2-3 Nov 2020
21.	78th IMAS	04 Nov - 02 Dec 2020
22.	78th IMAS Retest	14 Dec 2020
23.	Stenography Test for PAs/Stenographers	17-18 Dec 2020
24.	Typing Test	22 Dec 2020
25.	IVFRT	1 st quarter of 2021
26.	Induction Training Programme for DR ASOs (TBC)	1 st quarter of 2021
27.	Promotion related Training Programme for SOs and PSs	1 st quarter of 2021

Training Programmes/Courses for Foreign Diplomats

1.	3 rd Special Course for Pacific Island Countries	13-25 Apr 2020
2.	2 nd Special Course for Kenya	27 Apr to 9 May 2020
3.	1 st Special Course for Ethiopia	27 Apr to 9 May 2020
4.	1 st Special Course for Zambia	27 Apr to 9 May 2020
5.	1 st Special Training Course on Protocol for Surinamese Diplomats	May-Aug 2020
6.	1 st Annual Fellowship Programme on Environment and Climate Change	31 Aug to 18 Sept 2020
7.	70 th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats	Sept-Oct 2020
8.	6 th Special Course for ASEM Diplomats	Last quarter of 2020
9.	14 th Special Course for ASEAN Diplomats	Last quarter of 2020
10.	3 rd India-China Joint Capacity Building Programme for Afghan Diplomats	Last quarter of 2020
11.	5 th Special Course for Bangladeshi Diplomats	Last quarter of 2020
12.	2 nd Annual Disarmament & International Security Affairs Fellowship Programme	1 st quarter of 2020

1.	3 rd Special Course for Pacific Island Countries	13-25 Apr 2020
13.	70 th Professional Course for Foreign Diplomats	Mar-April 2021