

[1 March, 2001]

RAJYA SABHA

(b) Government has always maintained that all unilateral restrictions against India are unjustified and counter-productive and should be completely lifted.

**Committee to go into the problems faced by PIOs**

752. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high-level Committee headed by the former Indian High Commissioner to Britain Mr. L.M. Singhvi has been constituted to go into the problems being faced by the Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs);

(b) if so, the broad objectives of the Committee; and

(c) by when the Committee is likely to give its report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI KRISHNAMRAJU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Detailed terms of reference of the Committee are given in the Statement. (See below)

(c) The Committee is likely to give its report by 31st August, 2001.

**Statement**

*The terms of reference of the High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora*

(1) Review the status of Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Non Resident Indians (NRIs) in the context of constitutional provisions, laws and rules applicable to them both in India and the countries of their residence;

(2) Study the characteristics, aspirations, attitudes, requirements, strengths and weakness of Indian Diaspora and their expectations from India;

(3) Study the role that the PIOs and NRIs may play in the economic and social and technological development of India;

(4) Examine the current regime that governs the travel and stay of PIOs in India and investments by PIOs in India, and recommended measures to resolve the problems faced by NRIs in these areas;

(5) Recommended a broad but flexible policy framework and country specific plans for forging a mutually beneficial relationship with the region or PIOs and NRIs, and for facilitating their interaction with India and their participation in India's economic development.

**Bus service between Dhaka and Calcutta**

753. SHRI BACHANI LEKHRAJ: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a bus service has been provided from Dhaka to Calcutta;

(b) if so, the progress of the bus service;

(c) whether it was earlier proposed to extend its route up to Ajmer and whether the proposal has been abandoned;

(d) whether a draft Motor Vehicles Agreement was handed over to Bangladesh; and

(e) if so, the details to the agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. A bus service between Calcutta and Dhaka, which was inaugurated in June, 1999, continues to be in operation.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. India has repeatedly proposed a comprehensive Motor Vehicles Agreement with Bangladesh, to facilitate movement of passengers and goods between the two countries

**Harassment of Indians working abroad**

754. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) The official data of complaints pertaining to harassment of Indians working abroad for the last three years;

(b) the action taken by Government in this regard; and

(c) The number of Indian workers repatriated to India during these years?