

regime against the Taliban. The Government of President Rabbani conveyed its appreciation to India for co-sponsoring the Resolution.

**Committee to study the role of NRIs**

756. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have constituted any Committee to study the role that people of Indian origin and NRIs can play in the economics, social and technological progress of the country;

(b) if so, the constitution and main function of the Committee; and

(c) whether the Committee would take all precautions to protect the interest of all Indians, who may have established themselves through skill, dedication and hard work in various countries in the world?

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

(b) The Committee is headed by Dr. I. M. Singhvi, MP. & former Indian High Commissioner to U.K., as Chairman and other Members include Shri R.L. Bhatia, M.P. & former MOS(EA), Shri J R . Hiremath, retired IPS Officer, Shri Balchshwar Agarwal, Secretary General, Antar Rashtriya Sahyog Parishad and Shri J.C. Sharma, Additional Secretary dealing with NRI issues in the Ministry of External Affairs as Member Secretary. Detailed terms of reference of the Committee are given in the Statement. (Refer to the Statement appended to the Answer to Unstarred Question No. 752 Part (b)]

(c) It is Government's constant endeavour to promote the welfare of Indians working abroad. As per the terms of reference, the Committee's task is to submit recommendations to the Government on all issues concerning NRIs/PIOs.

**Application pending with the Regional Passport Offices**

757. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of applications pending with the Regional Passport Offices in the country as on 31st December, 2000;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Regional Passport Office in Calcutta has largest number of pending cases; and