

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 KUMARAGARWALLA: 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. L.M. Singhvi, M.P. & 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 IFS Officer, Shri Beleshwar 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

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(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to tackle the problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIAJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Works for Multi-Polar World

758. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India together with China and Russia are working for a multi-polar world; and

(b) if so, how it would be advantageous for our country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIAJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) and (b) Both India and the Russian Federation have reiterated the importance of a multi-polar world. The joint statement issued after the visit to India by the President of the Russian Federation in October, 2000 stated that India and the Russian Federation have agreed to work together, and with others, towards a multi-polar world based on sovereign equality of all States, territorial integrity and non-interference in their internal affairs as the only sustainable basis for the emergence of a new equitable and just international order.

During his visit to India in January, 2001, the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress of the People's Republic of China stated that both India and China shared views on many major international issues such as multi-polarity. He added that the major task facing the world today was to promote the process of multi-polarity for world peace. Discussions during the visit indicated an agreement between India and China on the need to develop the international situation towards its natural trend of multi-polarity.

Illegal Indian migrants abroad

759. SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of illegal Indian migrants abroad;

(b) whether there is no law to check this illegal migration;

(c) if so, the details of the law; and