

Voting rights for NRIs

805. PROF. P.J. KURIEN:

SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR:

SHRI SABIR ALI:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to allow NRI's to have voting rights in India before the next general election scheduled in 2014;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard; and
- (c) by when a Bill on the subject is expected to be introduced in Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (c) The Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 2006 was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on the 27th February, 2006. The Bill seeks to amend section 20 of the Representation of the People Act, 1950 (43 of 1950) to enable Indian citizens who are absent from their place of ordinary residence in India owing to their employment, education or otherwise outside the country, to get their names registered in the electoral rolls of the constituency of their place of ordinary residence in India to be able to cast their votes in the Parliamentary/State elections, in case they happen to be in their constituency at the time of polls. The Bill was referred to the Department Related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, and Law & Justice on the 26th March, 2006 for examination and report. The Committee presented its 16th report on the subject to the Rajya Sabha/laid it in the Lok Sabha on the 4th August, 2006. In its report, the Committee, while agreeing with the letter and spirit of the proposed bill for amendment, had recommended the bringing of a comprehensive bill on the subject, containing all the details regarding the manner of enrolment of the Non-Resident Indians, the mode of voting and the conditionalities for contesting elections. The Legislative Department in the Ministry of Law and Justice is working on a draft bill, which will be presented to Parliament after approval by the Cabinet.

Pending Parliamentary Bills

806. SHRI RAHUL BAJAJ: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there are 15 bills pending with the Rajya Sabha which were introduced prior to 2005 including one from 1987; and
- (b) the reasons why they are in such a limbo?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Yes, 15 Bills introduced prior to 2005 including one from 1987 are pending with the Rajya Sabha; and