

- (a) whether provision inserted *vide* the 81st Amendment to the Constitution is being followed in the Ministry for all groups *i.e.* Group A to Group D;
- (b) whether backlog vacancies are notified and filled up every year;
- (c) the reasons, if any, for not following the procedure; and
- (d) the details of backlog vacancies filled during the past five years?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI):

(a) Appointments or filling up of vacancies in various cadres in the Ministry, except Group-D, are done by the respective cadre controlling authorities like Department of Personnel and Training etc. In the case of Group D staff the recruitment has been made by the Ministry strictly based on the constitutional provisions relating to reservation and the provision inserted *vide* the 81st Amendment to the Constitution.

(b) So far there has not been any backlog vacancy in any year since the inception of this Ministry.

(c) Not applicable, in view of reply to part (b) of the Question.

(d) Not applicable as there has not been any backlog vacancy required to be filled up during the past five years.

Number PIO holders

2530. SHRI A.W. RABI BERNARD: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of Persons of Indian Origin Card issued till date;
- (b) the country that has the highest number of PIO cards holders;
- (c) the charges for the PIO cards;
- (d) whether the PIO cards be given free of charge; and
- (e) whether an initiative be taken by Government of India to identify the persons of Indian Origin in foreign countries?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI):

(a) The issuance of Person of Indian Origin (PIO) Cards is a subject matter concerning the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) (Foreigners Division). As stated by MHA, the total number of Persons of Indian Origin (PIO) Cards issued from the year 2002 to 2010 is 52,264.

(b) Since the year 2008, the highest number of PIO Cards were issued to PIOs in United Kingdom.

(c) A fee of Indian Rupees 15,000/- or equivalent in local foreign currency is required to be paid along with the application for obtaining a PIO Card. The fee for a PIO

Card for a child upto the age of 18 years is Indian Rupees 7,500/- (or its equivalent in local foreign currency)

(d) Gratis PIO Card may be issued to an exceptionally eminent Person of Indian Origin who plays an important role in building bridges between India and the country of his/her adoption, if he/she expresses a desire to apply for a PIO Card.

(e) No such initiative was taken by MHA to identify the Persons of Indian Origin in foreign countries.

Videography of Gram Sabha meetings

2531. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is planning to bring statutory provisions to mandate videography of gram sabha meetings;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government plans to make use of any of these videos thus made; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA DEO):
(a) and (b) Ministry of Panchayati Raj has issued the guidelines dated 8.12.2011 advising all States/UTs to make a full video-and-audiographic record of all Gram Sabha meetings and of the proceedings therein. It has also been advised to retain a copy of the video-and-audiograph of the Gram Sabha meetings in the Panchayat office and in the District Panchayat Secretary's office for record.

(c) and (d) Where necessary or if complaints or doubts arise that the process of consultation with the Gram Sabha was incompletely carried out or decisions contrary to the Gram Sabha's opinion were taken, the videograph would provide a means of verification of facts.

Provision of Panchayat Ghar in every village

2532. SHRIMATI VIPLOVE THAKUR: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has made a provision to provide each village a Panchayat Ghar in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any special funds has been disbursed to the State Governments for this purpose;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise, including Himachal Pradesh;