

Checking of Indians for TB

2959. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the UK Government proposes to test check all the Indian visitors planning to visit UK henceforth for screening for Tuberculosis (TB);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether such a condition has also been laid down by other countries;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the action plan of Government to control such an irritant move that tarnishes the image of India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) to (d) The Government of the U.K. announced in May, 2012 that applicants from certain countries who wish to visit the UK for more than six months are required to submit a certificate that they are free from infectious TB before they make their visa application. India has been included in the list of 67 countries which have been added to the existing list of 15 countries having incidence of TB. This new pre-entry screening requirement is applicable only to those who apply for visas to enter the UK for longer than 6 months, with only few exceptions.

As per information available, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States have also laid certain conditions with respect to TB Screening.

(e) India's concerns regarding this issue have been raised with the Government of UK, during the last round of India-UK Foreign Office Consultations held in New Delhi on June 1, 2012.

Release of Sarabjit Singh from Pakistan's jail

2960. DR. KANWAR DEEP SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has recently taken up the issue of Indian citizen Shri Sarabjit Singh's release with Government of Pakistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the progress made so far; and