

India's foreign policy with Nepal and Maldives

1293. SHRI K. T. S. TULSI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the foreign policy of India with respect to Nepal and Maldives; and

(b) whether there is a need to rethink or restructure the said policy and if so, the steps if any, taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) and (b) India pursues a policy that encourages democracy, pluralism, stability and socio-economic progress of Nepal. We have multifaceted and comprehensive cooperation, with frequent high-level engagements and wide-ranging developmental assistance. India also supports addressing of Nepal's internal challenges through dialogue and in a spirit of reconciliation.

India's policy with Maldives is based on support for stability, political pluralism and development. Our bilateral cooperation with Maldives is diverse, and we maintain regular dialogue at various levels to safeguard our interests.

Both policies are long-standing and time-tested.

Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana for Indians going abroad

1294. SHRI C. M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry is planning to start Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana to provide skills to Indian workers who intend to go abroad, if so, the details of the scheme; and

(b) what are the reasons for delay in entering into MoU with Skill Development Ministry and by when the scheme would be on the ground?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) and (b) A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of External Affairs and the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship is being finalized towards implementation of the Pravasi Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PKVY) and is expected to be signed shortly. Implementation will follow soon thereafter.

The MoU details the broad parameters of cooperation and envisages collaboration for developing a robust skill training, assessment and certification system for workers who seek overseas employment. The PKVY would include pre-departure orientation training and language training and is aimed at enhancing the skills set of potential emigrants.