

(c) whether the lack of manpower is the reason behind these inefficiencies shown by Indian Missions/Posts abroad; and

(d) whether the Ministry has considered taking the help of local organisations/associations of Indians, in facilitation of better data collection?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GENERAL RETD. V. K. SINGH): (a) to (d) The collection of basic data about overseas Indians is being done by strengthening the online mechanism of 'E-Migrate'. This portal collects basic data about all Emigration Check Required (ECR) category emigrants before their departure. Other categories of emigrants are encouraged to voluntarily register on the online portal. Similarly, Overseas Indians are encouraged to voluntarily provide their basic data to Missions/Posts. In many countries, Missions/Posts obtain data of overseas Indians from host Governments. General Data Protection Regulations/Privacy Laws practiced in several foreign countries hinder Indian Missions/Posts abroad to collect data of overseas Indians through any Task Force or any Indian Associations. No manpower constraints have been felt in this endeavor so far.

#### **Increasing cases of fake visas**

†1447. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that cases of giving fake visas for other countries are increasing in the country;

(b) whether Government has received any complaint in this regard;

(c) whether any case of fraud in the name of getting visa for America, has come to the notice of Government;

(d) if not, the action taken thereon; and

(e) the steps taken by Government to check such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GENERAL RETD. V. K. SINGH): (a) and (b) The incidents of fake visas and fake visa rackets are occasionally reported to the Government authorities. The Ministry of External Affairs receives requests for verification of genuineness of foreign visas by various investigating agencies in India. These requests are taken up with the concerned foreign Missions in India for verification of authenticity of the visas. While in some cases the visas are found to be genuine, in some cases, the visas have been found to be fake. The results are communicated to the requesting agency for further action at their end. From the intermittent complaints

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

and references that are received, it cannot be concluded with certainty that incidence of such cases are increasing.

(c) to (e) As running a fake visa racket or cheating people on the pretext of getting them visas for foreign countries are illegal under the Indian laws, the Government authorities take all necessary steps to check and prevent such incidents, including police and legal action, under the provisions of law.

#### **Russian support for NSG membership**

1448. SHRI C. M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) how does the Ministry look at the recent strong statement by Russia supporting India's bid for membership of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG);

(b) whether Russia is talking to Beijing about India's membership at different levels;

(c) if so, the details thereof and to what extent the statement would help India to get the membership; and

(d) to what extent India's entry into Wassenaar Arrangement would be of help in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GENERAL RETD. V. K. SINGH): (a) to (d) The Russian Federation has been a long standing supporter of India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group. This support was also reflected in the Joint Statement that was adopted on the occasion of the visit of Prime Minister to St. Petersburg on June 1, 2017, and re-affirmed during the visit of Mr. Sergey Ryabkov, Deputy Foreign Minister, the Russian Federation to India on December 6, 2017. The Wassenaar Arrangement and the Nuclear Suppliers Group are two distinct export control regimes. The Government continues to engage with all members of the NSG at the appropriate levels for a positive decision on India's membership of the Group.

#### **Crisis in maldives**

1449. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has opted not to indulge in gunboat diplomacy over the recent crisis in Maldives but to wait for the crisis to abate to its advantages;

(b) whether Male's closeness to China and the socio-political clout of Islamic radicals in Male can jeopardize India interests in the region; and