

Government of India  
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO. \*71**  
To be answered on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2009

**PRAVASI BHARTIYA DIVAS**

\*71. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:  
izoklh Hkkjrh; dk;Z ea=h

- (a) the details of Pravasi Bhartiya Divas held in Chennai;
- (b) the decisions arrived at; and
- (c) the response of various countries, so far?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS**  
**(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)**

(a) to (c): A statement is placed on the Table of the House.

\*\*\*\*\*

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a) TO (c) OF RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. \*71 BY SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN FOR ANSWER ON 19.2.2009 REGARDING PRAVASI BHARTIYA DIVAS.**

- (a) to (c): The 7<sup>th</sup> Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Convention was held at the Chennai Trade Centre, Chennai, from 07.01.2009 to 09.01.2009. Tamil Nadu was the State Partner and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) was the Institutional Partner.

The tagline for the Convention was 'Engaging the Diaspora: The Way Forward'. Four plenary sessions, six concurrent sessions and seven regional sessions, besides six state sessions, were held as part of the convention.

The Convention had separate sessions on 'Preservation of Language and Culture', 'Reflections on Current Economic Crisis', 'The diaspora factor in India's emergence as an Economic Power', 'Diaspora Philanthropy', 'Education and Diaspora Knowledge Network', 'Health for All: Role of Diaspora', 'Trade and Investment', and 'Increased Interaction with Diaspora Women'. Distinguished scholars and others from various disciplines, both from India and abroad, participated in the deliberations. There was also a plenary session for interaction with State Governments attended by Chief Ministers and Ministers of some of the States.

The Convention was inaugurated by the Prime Minister on 08.01.2009. The valedictory address was delivered by the President on 09.01.2009. The President also conferred the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award on 13 distinguished PIOs/NRIs.

H.E. Mr. Ramdien Sardjoe, the Vice President of Suriname, was the Chief Guest.

1,769 participants from 52 countries took part in the Convention. The Vice President of Mauritius and Cabinet Ministers from Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and State Ministers from Canada, South Africa and Members of Parliament from different countries were among those who participated in the Convention.

Malaysia had the largest number of delegates (247) from other countries, followed by USA (96), Reunion Islands (47), South Africa (45), UAE (40), Sri Lanka (38), Canada (36), Mauritius (34), Singapore (34), and Australia (31).

The Prime Minister launched a 'Global Knowledge Network', to serve as a 'virtual think-tank' and generate new ideas on issues such as development, education and health care. A comprehensive e-governance project on migration was also launched by the Prime Minister, under which a 'Smart Card' would be issued to every emigrant

worker. The card would contain vital data on his work-contract, details of his employer, his insurance etc. to help him out in difficult situations.

Contd...2/-

::2::

The Prime Minister also announced that qualified professional among the Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) would be treated at par with Non-resident Indians in pursuing their respective professions in India. These would include doctors, dentists, nurses, pharmacists, engineers, architects and chartered accountants.

Nineteen (19) journalists of Indian origin from 17 countries were, for the first time, invited to cover the Convention. Thirty four (34) Diaspora youth from different countries who had come to India under the 'Know India Programme' also took part in the Convention.

The Convention gathered overwhelmingly positive response from participants from different countries.

\*\*\*\*\*

Government of India  
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 496**  
To be answered on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2009

**ORGANIZATION OF OVERSEAS INDIANS**

496. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:  
(OIH) SHRI BALAVANT ALIAS BAL APTE:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:  
izoklh Hkkjrh; dk;Z ea=h

- (a) the names of the countries where organizations of Overseas Indians have been set up;
- (b) the names of countries from where reaction against Mumbai attacks has been received either directly or through embassy;
- (c) whether any plan directing against Mumbai attacks and favouring India (direct action) is being formulated; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS**  
**(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)**

- (a): Concerned Indian Diplomatic Missions have reported existence of organization of Overseas Indians in the countries given in the list placed at Annexure I.
- (b): As given in the list placed at Annexure II.
- (c) & (d): The statement at Annexure III gives the requisite details.

\*\*\*\*\*

**ANNEXURE –I REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (a ) OF THE RAJYA  
SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 496 FOR ANSWER ON  
19.2.2009 BY SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS AND SHRI BALAVANT  
ALIAS BAL APTE**

**List of 39 Countries**

- |     |                |     |                         |
|-----|----------------|-----|-------------------------|
| 1.  | Austria        | 21. | Oman                    |
| 2.  | Botswana       | 22. | Papua New Guinea        |
| 3.  | Cambodia       | 23. | Peru                    |
| 4.  | Canada         | 24. | Philippines             |
| 5.  | Chile          | 25. | Russia                  |
| 6.  | Czech Republic | 26. | Singapore               |
| 7.  | Egypt          | 27. | Slovakia                |
| 8.  | Ethiopia       | 28. | Sri Lanka               |
| 9.  | Finland        | 29. | Sudan                   |
| 10. | Germany        | 30. | Suriname                |
| 11. | Ghana          | 31. | Switzerland             |
| 12. | Guyana         | 32. | Tanzania                |
| 13. | Jordan         | 33. | Thailand                |
| 14. | Kazakhstan     | 34. | Trinidad and Tobago     |
| 15. | Malaysia       | 35. | Turkey                  |
| 16. | Mauritius      | 36. | United Arab Emirates    |
| 17. | Morocco        | 37. | Uganda                  |
| 18. | Myanmar        | 38. | United Kingdom          |
| 19. | Netherlands    | 39. | United State of America |
| 20. | Nigeria        |     |                         |

\*\*\*\*\*

**ANNEXURE –II REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (b ) OF THE RAJYA  
SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 496 FOR ANSWER ON  
19.2.2009 BY SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS AND SHRI BALAVANT  
ALIAS BAL APTE**

**List of 149 Countries**

- |     |                           |     |                    |
|-----|---------------------------|-----|--------------------|
| 1.  | Azerbaijan                | 44. | Democratic Peoples |
| 2.  | Armenia                   |     | Republic of Korea  |
| 3.  | Belarus                   | 45. | Argentina          |
| 4.  | Georgia                   | 46. | Aruba              |
| 5.  | Kazakhstan                | 47. | Bahamas            |
| 6.  | Kyrgyz Republic           | 48. | Bolivia            |
| 7.  | Russian Federation        | 49. | Brazil             |
| 8.  | Tajikistan                | 50. | Chile              |
| 9.  | Turkmenistan              | 51. | Colombia           |
| 10. | Ukraine                   | 52. | Cuba               |
| 11. | Uzbekistan                | 53. | Dominican Republic |
| 12. | Albania                   | 54. | Ecuador            |
| 13. | Austria                   | 55. | El Salvador        |
| 14. | Bosnia & Herzegovina      | 56. | Guatamala          |
| 15. | Bulgaria                  | 57. | Guyana             |
| 16. | Croatia                   | 58. | Jamaica            |
| 17. | Cyprus                    | 59. | Mexico             |
| 18. | Czech Republic            | 60. | Nicaragua          |
| 19. | Denmark                   | 61. | Paraguay           |
| 20. | Estonia                   | 62. | Peru               |
| 21. | Finland                   | 63. | St. Kitts & Nevis  |
| 22. | Greece                    | 64. | Suriname           |
| 23. | Holy See                  | 65. | Trinidad & Tobago  |
| 24. | Hungary                   | 66. | Uruguay            |
| 25. | Iceland                   | 67. | Venezuela          |
| 26. | Latvia                    | 68. | Mauritius          |
| 27. | Liechtenstein             | 69. | Madagascar         |
| 28. | Lithuania                 | 70. | Seychelles         |
| 29. | Macedonia                 | 71. | Comoros            |
| 30. | Moldova                   | 72. | Ethiopia           |
| 31. | Norway                    | 73. | Kenya              |
| 32. | Poland                    | 74. | Tanzania           |
| 33. | Romania                   | 75. | Uganda             |
| 34. | Serbia                    | 76. | Rwanda             |
| 35. | Slovak Republic           | 77. | Burundi            |
| 36. | Slovenia                  | 78. | Eritrea            |
| 37. | Sweden                    | 79. | Botswana           |
| 38. | Switzerland               | 80. | Lesotho            |
| 39. | Turkey                    | 81. | Mozambique         |
| 40. | Peoples Republic of China | 82. | Malawi             |
| 41. | Japan                     | 83. | Namibia            |
| 42. | Republic of Korea         | 84. | Swaziland          |
| 43. | Mongolia                  | 85. | South Africa       |

- |      |   |      |                   |
|------|---|------|-------------------|
| 86.  | Zambia  | 118. | Belgium           |
| 87.  | Zimbabwe                                      | 119. | France            |
| 88.  | Algeria                                       | 120. | Germany           |
| 89.  | Egypt   | 121. | Ireland           |
| 90.  | Israel  | 122. | Italy             |
| 91.  | Jordan  | 123. | Luxembourg        |
| 92.  | Lebanon                                       | 124. | Netherlands       |
| 93.  | Libya   | 125. | Portugal          |
| 94.  | Morocco                                       | 126. | Spain             |
| 95.  | Syria   | 127. | United Kingdom    |
| 96.  | Tunisia                                       | 128. | Yemen             |
| 97.  | Nepal   | 129. | Iraq              |
| 98.  | Bhutan  | 130. | Qatar             |
| 99.  | Bangladesh                                    | 131. | Kuwait            |
| 100. | Sri Lanka                                     | 132. | Bahrain           |
| 101. | Maldives                                      | 133. | Oman              |
| 102. | Myanmar                                       | 134. | Saudi Arabia      |
| 103. | Republic of Ivory Coast                       | 135. | UAE               |
| 104. | Republic of Senegal                           | 136. | Australia         |
| 105. | Republic of Cape Verde                        | 137. | New Zealand       |
| 106. | Republic of Togo                              | 138. | Philippines       |
| 107. | Burkina Faso                                  | 139. | Vietnam           |
| 108. | Republic of Liberia                           | 140. | Singapore         |
| 109. | Republic of Sierra Leone                      | 141. | Malaysia          |
| 110. | Republic of Nigeria                           | 142. | Indonesia         |
| 111. | Republic of Ghana                             | 143. | Fiji              |
| 112. | Republic of Gabon                             | 144. | Brunei Darussalam |
| 113. | Democratic Republic of<br>Sao tome & Principe | 145. | Cambodia          |
| 114. | Democratic Republic of<br>Congo               | 146. | Lao PDR           |
| 115. | Mali  | 147. | Pakistan          |
| 116. | USA   | 148. | Iran              |
| 117. | Canada  | 149. | Afghanistan       |

Similar messages have also been received from the following:

1. Palestine
2. The League of Arab States
3. European Union

\*\*\*\*\*

**ANNEXURE –III REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PART (c ) & (d) OF THE  
RAJYA SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 496 FOR ANSWER  
ON 19.2.2009 BY SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS AND SHRI  
BALAVANT ALIAS BAL APTE**

The Government remains fully committed to combat the menace of terrorism. The policy of the Government is to counter the challenge posed by these menace by way of a multi-pronged strategy. In pursuance of this strategy, the Government has taken various measures on political, security and development fronts. On the security front, the counter terrorism measures include effective border management to check infiltration across the borders, deployment of central forces to aid the State Police Forces in areas prone to terrorist violence, heightened vigil and security arrangements in vulnerable areas and around vital installations, strengthening of intelligence gathering and sharing capabilities, particularly at the cutting edge level, augmentation and modernization of police forces and raising of India Reserve Battalions, ensuring improved technology, weaponry and equipment with the Central and State Police Forces and steps taken to achieve bilateral and multilateral cooperation to deal with the global imperatives of terrorism. On the development front, a variety of measures have been taken to accelerate developmental activities in the areas affected by terrorism/ extremism.

Apart from the above, the recent measures taken by the Government, inter-alia, include setting up Regional Centres of NSG, setting up of 20 Counter Insurgency & Anti-Terrorism Schools in different parts of the country; constitution of National Investigation Agency; enactment of Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Amendment Act, 2008 to reinforce the punitive provisions to combat terrorism; enactment of National Investigation Agency Act, 2008, notification of CISF (Amendment) Ordinance, 2009 to enable the CISF to provide security to establishments /undertakings in the joint and private sectors; further streamlining of sharing of intelligence amongst various agencies and also with the State Governments, as well as strengthening of Coastal Security.

\*\*\*\*\*

Government of India  
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 497**  
To be answered on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2009

**PROBLEMS OF NRIS**

497. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:  
izoklh Hkkjrh; dk;Z ea=h

- (a) whether NRIs are facing many problems;
- (b) if so, the details thereof; and
- (c) the steps Government is taking to help NRIs when they die outside the country especially the people of Andhra Pradesh?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS**  
**(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)**

- (a) to (c): The requisite details are being collected and would be laid on the table of the House.

\*\*\*\*\*

Government of India  
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 498**  
To be answered on 19<sup>th</sup> February, 2009

**INDIANS LANGUISHING IN JAILS**

498. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI:

Will the MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:  
izoklh Hkkjrh; dk;Z ea=h

- (a) whether it is a fact that a number of Indian nationals are languishing in jails in Gulf countries who are victims of recruitment agencies in the country;
- (b) if so, the number of cases reported;
- (c) the details of the steps taken for the release of these people; and
- (d) the details of steps taken against the fraud agencies and to ensure the safety of the emigrants?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS**  
**(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)**

- (a) to (d): As reported by the Indian Missions in the Gulf countries, cases of Indian nationals who are victims of Recruitment Agencies being in jails have not come to their notice.

Government of India  
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO. \*147**  
To be answered on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2009

**PROTECTION OF MIGRANT LABOURERS**

\*147. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA:

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

- (a) whether it is a fact that thousands of migrant labourers in middle east countries are not getting their wages and legal dues and many of them are still inside jail on false fabricated cases; and
- (b) if so, the action taken by Government of India till today to protect the migrant labourers in middle east countries?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS**  
**(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)**

(a) & (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

\*\*\*\*

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. \*147 FOR ANSWER ON 26.2.2009 REGARDING PROTECTION OF MIGRANT LABOURERS**

Missions are in receipts of complaints from time to time in respect of non-payment or reduced and delayed payments of salaries, non-deployment on promised jobs, adverse working conditions etc. Missions take up such matters immediately with the concerned employer and local authorities for redressal.

There are cases of emigrants landing up in jails; though they go abroad legally and take employments. This happens because, on arrival of the emigrants some foreign employers take custody of their passports but do not renew visas in time, thereby making their stay illegal. Further, lured by unscrupulous agents or employers, many people go on visit visas and take up employment, which becomes illegal and when detected are jailed. People are in jails for violating local laws. However, many foreign Governments declare Amnesty Schemes from time to time giving scope to emigrants whose stay has become illegal to either regularize their stay or get deported without penalty. This Ministry coordinates the same with the Missions, Home Ministry, Civil Aviation Ministry and State Governments to facilitate smooth regularization or deportation.

With a view to protect the interests of the Indian workers going abroad, the following steps have been taken: -

- Attestation of employment documents by the Indian missions concerned in respect of six countries viz. Yemen, Lebanon, Libya, Jordan, Sudan and Kuwait for all categories of workers (skilled & unskilled) has been made mandatory whereas for vulnerable categories, i.e. housemaids/ domestic servants and unskilled labour, attestation of employment documents by the Indian missions has been made mandatory for all ECR countries.
- All demands for 500 or more workers is verified for the genuineness of the demand as well as the Foreign Employer by the concerned Indian mission.
- All demands from Recruiting Agents in the Watch List of the Ministry are attested by the Indian mission concerned before grant of clearance.
- Protectors of Emigrants have been asked to conduct appropriate checks and exercise abundant caution while granting emigration clearance, while taking into account the extant instructions of the Ministry.
- The Ministry has been negotiating bilateral labour MOUs with important destination countries to secure their cooperation in ensuring protection and welfare of Indian workers. MOUs have been signed with Malaysia, Kuwait, UAE and Oman. An Additional Protocol has been signed with Qatar to supplement the existing bilateral labour agreement. MOU has been negotiated with Bahrain. Negotiations with other major destination countries are being attempted.

::2::

- Special measures being taken for better protection and welfare of vulnerable sections of emigrants including women emigrants are: -
  1. Age restriction of 30 years for all women emigrating on ECR passports.
  2. Gradual opening of Overseas Indian Workers Resource Centre in host countries to serve as a one stop service outlet for addressing the information and assistance needs of emigrants.
  3. A 24x7 helpline viz. Overseas Workers Resource Centre (OWRC) has been set up to enable emigrants/ prospective emigrants to seek information and file complaints against Recruiting Agents/ Foreign Employers.
- A comprehensive insurance scheme, viz. Pravasi Bharatiya Bima Yojana, 2006, is in place, which makes it mandatory for every emigrant worker to be covered under the Scheme while seeking emigration clearance. The Scheme, inter-alia, provides workers with life insurance, medical expenses and legal expenses cover and also the deportation expenses wherever needed. With effect from 01.04.2008, the scheme has been upgraded by providing additional benefits at reduced premium rates. Workers now have life insurance coverage of Rs. 10 lakhs (in place of Rs. 5 lakhs), Medical Expenses coverage of Rs.75,000/- (in place of Rs. 50,000/-), Family Hospitalization coverage of Rs.50,000/- (in place of Rs. 25,000/-), Maternity Expenses coverage of Rs. 25,000/- (in place of Rs. 20,000/-), Legal Expenses coverage of Rs. 30,000/- (in place of Rs.25,000/-) etc. The insurance premium has been reduced to Rs. 275 for 2 years policy period and Rs. 375 for 3 years policy period.
- A vigorous campaign in the print and electronic media to educate potential emigrants including labourers and other vulnerable sections like women emigrants has been launched to propagate the benefits and hazards of legal and illegal migration respectively.
- Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs co-ordinates redressal of such grievances. Indian Missions immediately take up the matter with local government and foreign employer to sort out the problem. In case of need the help of the Indian community organizations is also arranged by the Mission. Missions also hold open house meeting from time to time so as to afford a chance to the emigrants to bring their grievances to the notice of the Missions.

\*\*\*\*\*

Government of India  
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO. \*159**  
To be answered on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2009

**INDIANS LANGUISHING IN FOREIGN JAILS**

\*159. SHRI AVTAR SINGH KARIMPURI:  
(OIH)

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

- (a) the number of Indians languishing in jails abroad, along with the details of the charges against them;
- (b) the details with regard to their names, addresses etc., State-wise and district-wise; and
- (c) the steps taken by Government to get them released from jails and the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS**  
**(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)**

(a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

\*\*\*\*\*

Government of India  
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1106**  
To be answered on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2009

**CASES OF LURING UNEMPLOYED PERSONS**

1106. SHRI AVTAR SINGH KARIMPURI:  
(OIH)

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

- (a) whether some agents lure the unemployed persons in the country by promising them good job and high salary in foreign countries and abandon them after reaching the foreign countries;
- (b) if so, the total number of cases which have come to the notice of Government so far;
- (c) the details thereof;
- (d) whether Government proposes to make or bring any rule or law to control such cheats; and
- (e) if so, the time by which such rule or law would be enacted?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS**  
**(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)**

(a) Complaints are received from time to time regarding non deployment on promised jobs, non-payment or reduced/delayed payment of salaries, adverse working conditions, denial of appropriate medical facilities, abandoning the emigrants after reaching the foreign countries and poor living conditions, etc.

(b)&(c) During the last three years, the number of complaints received are as under:

**COMPLAINTS AGAINST UNREGISTERED RECRUITING AGENTS**

Year	No. of complaints	Prosecution Sanctions issued	Cases referred to State Governments/ POEs for action
2006	78	21	57
2007	41	7	34
2008	93	58	35

**COMPLAINTS AGAINST REGISTERED RECRUITING AGENTS**

Year	No. of complaints	Show Cause Notices issued	No. of Registration Certificates suspended/ cancelled	No. of complaints dropped/ resolved	Cases pending and being followed up
2006	167	167	80	87	Nil
2007	98	94	12	51	35
2008	118	118	19	45	54

Besides the above, 340 foreign employers have been placed under prior approval category based on such complaints.

(d)&(e) To strengthen the regulatory system and protect the rights and welfare of the Indian emigrants, comprehensive amendment of the Emigration Act, 1983 is underway.

\*\*\*\*\*

Government of India  
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1107**  
To be answered on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2009

**PROTECTION OF OVERSEAS INDIANS**

1107. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA:

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

- (a) the total number of doctors, technocrats and migrant labour working in overseas countries; and
- (b) whether the Indian Overseas Ministry has formulated National Policy or entered into any bipartite agreement with any country for the proper protection of Indians in Overseas?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS**  
**(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)**

(a) During 2006 and 2007, 6.76 lakhs and 8.09 lakhs Indian workers were granted emigration clearance for the purpose of employment overseas. The number of doctors and technocrats working overseas is not available since they are not required to seek emigration clearance for employment overseas.

(b) Overseas employment of Indian citizens is governed by the Emigration Act, 1983. The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs has entered into Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with the major countries of destination such as the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Jordan and Malaysia for protection and welfare of Indian workers. Bilateral Social Security Agreements have been signed with Belgium, France and Germany and are also being pursued with other countries of destination to protect the interest of Indian professionals.

\*\*\*\*\*

Government of India  
Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs

**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1108**  
To be answered on 26<sup>th</sup> February, 2009

**SCHEMES FOR NRIs AND PIOs**

1108. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:  
SHRI BALAVANT ALIAS BAL APTE:

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

- (a) the number of schemes being run for NRIs and Person of Indian Origin Citizens in different countries;
- (b) whether any get-together programme for them is organised in Embassies;
- (c) if so, the names of the countries where such programmes are organised; and
- (d) the names of the festivals which are organized in the Embassies for said purpose?

**ANSWER**

**MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS**  
**(SHRI VAYALAR RAVI)**

(a) The following schemes are the major schemes in operation for NRIs and PIOs in different countries.

1. Overseas Citizenship of India;
2. PIO cards;
3. Know India Programme;
4. Tracing the Roots;
5. Scholarship Programme for Diaspora Children;
6. Scheme for giving legal assistance to Indian women deserted by their overseas Indian spouses;
7. Indian Community Welfare Fund.

(b) to (d) All Indian missions/posts organize get togethers on national days and some other Indian festivals. The overseas Indians take part in such functions. Deepawali, Holi, Id-ul-fitr and Christmas are among the festivals organized by the Indian missions/posts abroad. In addition, get togethers of overseas Indians are also organized from time to time during visits of important dignitaries from India.

\*\*\*\*