

(d) and (e) As a continuous process, steps are being taken for improvement of Coal technologies for exploration and scientific exploitation of coal deposits, beneficiation and utilisation of coal etc. Further, with a view to improving the quality of coal despatches particularly to the power houses, a plan has been drawn to set up coal washeries by inviting private sector investment in accordance with the recently amended Coal Mines (Nationalisation) Act, 1973. Coal India Limited (CIL) had invited global tenders for setting up of washeries on "Build-Own-Operate" basis. The finally accepted offers in respect of 4 non-coking, coal washeries (total capacity 21.2 mtpa) are presently under negotiation. CIL has issued another global tender seeking bids for setting up of more washeries in the second phase of its plan.

(Translation)

Forged Visas

*80. SHRIMATI KRISHNENDRA KAUR (DEEPA):
SHRI PANKAJ CHOWDHARY:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a large scale increase in the cases of preparation of forged visas;

(b) if so, the number of such cases unearthed by the Government during the last three years;

(c) the number of persons arrested in this regard during the said period indicating the action taken against them; and

(d) the corrective measures taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to check this illegal practice?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S.B. CHAVAN): (a) to (c) Cases of forged visas detected by Immigration authorities are referred to the local police for investigation. As per available information in respect of four International Airports at Delhi, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta, the figures of detection of forged visas and arrests made from 1992 to 1994 are as under:-

	1992	1993	1994
Detection	307	335	273
Arrests	492	1108	330

The above data does not indicate any definite trend. Figures of detection of forged visas by State police authorities at other airports/land checkpoints and arrests are not centrally maintained.

(d) The following steps are being taken to prevent forgery of visas:

- (i) Strict vigil to curb the undesirable activities of unauthorised recruiting agents.
- (ii) Immigration staff at the air-check posts are being trained and have been equipped with modern/sophisticated devices.
- (iii) Airline staff are being trained to detect forged visas before issuing boarding passes to the passengers.
- (iv) It has been decided to replace the existing visa

stamp used by our Missions abroad with Visa stickers with inbuilt security features to prevent forgery of visas.

[English]

Closure of Karachi Consulate

82. SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN:
SHRI MRUTYUNJAYA NAYAK:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government had to close down its consulate located in Karachi at the behest of the Government of Pakistan;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the Government have expressed willingness to resume bilateral discussion with Pakistan on the issue of Indian consulate in Karachi and Pak consulate in Bombay;

(d) if so, the reaction of Pakistan thereto and the further steps being taken by the Government to resolve the issue;

(e) whether the people of both the countries have been adversely affected due to the closure of Indian consulate in Karachi; and

(f) if so, the detail thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) In response to the demand made by the Government of Pakistan on 26 December, 1994, the Consulate General of India in Karachi was closed down on 4 January, 1995. Government are of the view that Pakistan's decision in this regard is based on propagandistic considerations, it is without justification and is yet another manifestation of its consistently negative approach towards bilateral ties with India.

(c) and (d) Government have urged Pakistan to reconsider the unilateral closure of its Consulate in Bombay and its decision to close down the India Consulate General in Karachi. However, Pakistan has not yet responded favourably.

(e) and (f) These unilateral Pakistani decisions could adversely affect people-to-people contacts and consular, commercial and cultural relations between the two countries.