

Tharoor says India needs migration policy

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Senior Congress leader Shashi Tharoor today called for India having a migration policy to look after the needs of Indian diaspora across the world. Dr Tharoor said NRIs are 'National Reserves of India' and the government must look at leveraging PIOs and NRIs for strengthening the country's economy. "India lacked a refugee policy and law and needs a migration policy, codified in a law to attend to the needs of its Diaspora," he said here, during a panel discussion on 'Evolution of a Diaspora Engagement Strategy'. The discussion followed the release of the book 'The Politics of Migration: Indian Emigration in a Globalised World' by Minister of State for Statistics and Programme Implementation (Independent Charge), External Affairs, and Overseas Indian Affairs VK Singh. Speaking on the occasion, Dr Singh said the Indian Diaspora has generally done well and contributed significantly to various fields in destination countries. Besides, the Diaspora has tried to assimilate with the host countries, while retaining their cultural values and links back home. "This approach has served well and now the need for the government is to utilise the Diaspora to invest in their homeland," he said. During the panel discussion, Mr Nadir Patel, High Commissioner of Canada to India, said Canada houses 1.2 million Indians who are contributing to the country's economy by engaging in all fields.

Citing the example of the new Canadian government, he said four cabinet ministers were of Indian origin. Canada was leveraging its diverse and multi-faceted population as an asset for policy-making, which was helping in understanding the issues of people. Dr Sanjaya Baru, Director for Geo-economics and Strategy, International Institute for Strategic Studies, said human migration has been a natural phenomenon and the control on this movement came in the 20th century. However, this control cannot sustain and the 21st century will force the countries to allow free movement of people. He added that India, with its strong Diaspora, must call for Right to Migration at the UN Convention. The Book 'The Politics of Migration: Indian Emigration in a Globalised World' is authored by Dr A Didar Singh, Secretary General, FICCI and Dr Irudaya Rajan, Professor, Centre for Development Studies (CDS), Kerala. The book was launched at the meeting, organised by FICCI, in association with the International Labour Organisation (ILO). UNI NY CJ RJ 2134.