

cooperation between India and the US in peacekeeping and other areas of UN activities. As part of this process, the two sides have established a Joint Working Group on UN Peacekeeping Operations, which held its first meeting in New Delhi on 1-2 November 2000.

(b) and (c) At the meeting, the two sides discussed policy and functional aspects of United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and measures needed to strengthen the operational capabilities of such operations. The two sides agreed to deepen co-operation, and create better appreciation of each other's perspectives, on UN peacekeeping issues. The Group's activities may also contribute to the ongoing process of improving UN Peacekeeping Operations and procedures. This Joint Working Group is a reflection of the growing cooperation between India and the United States on international issues of mutual concern, including those relating to the UN.

Declaration of Pakistan-Based Outfit a Terrorist Organisation

1373. SHRI RUMANDLA RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

Xa) whether U.S. has failed to go ahead with its decision in principle to declare Pakistan-based outfit a terrorist organisation;

if so, whether the American establishment is attributing the inordinate delay to procedural factors;

if so, whether Government have already taken up the issue with the U.S. Government on the latest move of Lashkar-e-Tayyiba's defiant strike at the Red Fort in Delhi and its threat against the Prime Minister;

if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether India has been pressing hard for declaring the Pakistan-based outfit a terrorist organisation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) The U.S. has placed Harkat-ul-Mujahideen on the list of foreign terrorist organisations under its domestic law. The U.S. side has also indicated

that it is examining whether other terrorist organisations, including Lashkar-e-Tayyeba, should be placed on the list for foreign terrorist organisations.

The U.S. side has stated that, in accordance with the procedure prescribed under its domestic law, it is currently reviewing the legal basis for declaring Lashkar-e-Tayyeba as a foreign terrorist organisation.

and (d) Government of India uses every available opportunity to convey to the international community, including the United States, its information and assessment on the nature and source of terrorism and terrorist threats against India, including on the incident at the Red Fort and the threat issued against the Prime Minister.

(e) Government believes that the international community must strengthen cooperation to combat terrorism, including through the use of relevant domestic laws. India and the United States have institutionalised their cooperation to combat international terrorism through a Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism. The two sides use the Joint Working Group to share information, coordinate action and take appropriate measures to combat international terrorism.

Opening of Regional Passport Office at Dehradun

† 1374. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

whether Uttaranchal Government has submitted any proposal to Central Government for opening a Regional Passport Office in Dehradun;

if so, Government's reaction thereon;

whether Government have issued orders to open Regional Passport Office in Dehradun at the earliest; and

whether the efforts are being made to open other offices related to the Ministry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.