

change, the global financial crisis and UN reform among other issues. EAM and Secretary Clinton broadly discussed implementation of the 123 Agreement.

(c) Secretary Clinton reiterated that depending of the Indo-US relationship was a priority for the US Government and a personnel priority for her. External Affairs Minister reciprocated the commitment of the US Government to the bilateral relationship and conveyed the importance India attaches to Indo-US strategic partnership.

(d) During the visit, the two sides agreed to a formulation on End Use Monitoring (EUM) to be included in letters of offer and acceptance for acquisition of defence articles and equipment to be acquired by Government of India from the US Government. No document on nuclear sites was signed.

SAARC Food Bank

3549. SHRI P.R. RAJAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the current status of SAARC food bank initiative; and
- (b) the details of the initiative?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR) : (a) The current status of the Food Bank initiative is that the Agreement to set up the SAARC Food Bank was signed during the 14th SAARC Summit (3-4 April 2007, New Delhi). India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Maldives have ratified the Agreement. Meetings of the SAARC Food Bank Board in Colombo from 15-16 October, 2008 and 10-11 February 2009 have made the Bank operational and ready to transact business.

(b) The details of the initiative are as follows : With the assessed share of Afghanistan to the Food Bank at 1420 metric tonnes, the total reserves of the Food Bank are 2,43,000 tones. The assessed share of reserves of each SAARC Member State is as follows :-

Sl.No.	Member States	Share (in Metric Tonnes)
1.	Afghanistan	1,420
2.	Bangladesh	40,000
3.	Bhutan	180
4.	India	1,53,200
5.	Maldives	200
6.	Nepal	4,000
7.	Pakistan	40,000
8.	Sri Lanka	4,000
TOTAL :		2,43,000

Member States have conveyed details of locations where assessed reserves are maintained and also storage methods and quality control measures, enabling finalization of guidelines. A member State can draw on the reserve of the requested member State based on mutually agreed financial terms.

American experts inspecting defence equipments

†3550. SHRI PRABHAT JHA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government proposes to ink a deal with America whereby American experts would be empowered to inspect defence equipment sold to India;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the justification for providing such a power to America; and
- (d) whether this deal is likely to derail India's defence policy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR) : (a) and (b) During the visit of US Secretary of State Mrs Hillary Clinton to India from 17-21 July 2009, India and the US agreed on a new standard End Use Monitoring clause that will be included in letters of Offer and Acceptance for acquisition of defence articles and equipment to be acquired by Government of India from the US Government. No blanket agreement has been signed. The agreed formulation provides that when the US Government desires to undertake the end use monitoring of specific equipment, they shall undertake consultations with India and that it shall be pursuant to such consultations and mutual agreement that the relevant articles would be made available for verification at an agreed date, place and time.

(c) As per the stipulations of the US Arms Export Control Act of 1976, the US Government is required to undertake end use verification of transferred defence articles. The joint verification arrangement that India has entered into does not give a unilateral right or power to the US Administration. The key advantage is that by putting in place a joint verification arrangement that Government of India finds acceptable, India now has the option of purchasing high end defence technology from the United States Government if it requires such articles.

(d) No. The End Use Monitoring arrangement in no way dilutes India's defence policy-but rather enhances India's access to the best technology required to meet her security requirements.

Diversion of flow of Brahmaputra River

†3551. SHRI BALBIR PUNJ : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether China proposes to divert the flow of Brahmaputra river for hydro-electricity project;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.