

Signing of NPT

151. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether former US President expressed his desire that India should sign NPT;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard;

(c) to what extent his suggestions shall effect on India; if followed; and

(d) what shall be Indian position in view of North Korea nuclear test?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Former US President Jimmy Carter, during his recent visit to India on October 26-November 3, 2006, is reported in the media to have said that India should accede to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

(b) and (c) India's views on the NPT are well known and have not undergone any change.

(d) India's position on the NPT remains unchanged in the aftermath of the reported nuclear test by North Korea.

Trade through Nathula Pass

†152. SHRI SAMAN PATHAK: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether China and India are carrying out export-import through Nathula route;

(b) if so, the items being exported-imported and the amount of export-import carried out so far; and

(c) whether India is likely to benefit through this commercial route?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) Yes.

(b) The list of 29 items for export from India to China includes rice,

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

[23 November, 2006]

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textiles, agricultural implements, blankets, spices, cigarettes copper products, tea, coffee, barley, wheat, tobacco, vegetable oil, cycles and local herbs. The list of 15 items for import from China includes horses, goats, goat cashmere, sheep, yak tail, yak hair, goat skin, wool, China clay, butter and raw silk.

Border trade through Nathula, which was conducted between July 6 and September 30, 2006, yielded a trade turnover of Rs. 12 lakhs.

(c) Yes.

Train blast in Mumbai

153. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that country has furnished credible proof to Pakistan of involvement of Pakistani nationals trained by the ISI in Mumbai trains blasts on 11th July, 2006;

(b) if so, the details thereof and reaction of Pakistan Government thereto; and

(c) to what extent foreign Government have been informed of the findings and their reactions thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) While the Mumbai blasts have been discussed with foreign Governments, including Pakistan, no evidence has been shared since charge-sheets in the case are yet to be filed.

Strengthening of Legal and Treaties Division

154. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a need to expand, upgrade and strengthen the Legal and Treaties Division of Government;

(b) whether it is a fact that the lack of sufficient strength is adversely affecting the diplomatic initiative and diplomatic requirements and compulsions of the country;