

[27 July, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

be worked out in a meeting of technical experts in August, 2006. The meeting would also discuss the options for delimitation of the maritime boundary.

Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)

314. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a forum for regional co-operation among the Republic of China, Russia and some of the Central Asian countries and Iran have been formed under the title of Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO);

(b) whether India is a member of the Organisation;

(c) what are the advantages for our country becoming a member of SCO; and

(d) to what extent such a membership would affect the present Indo-US relations in view of the keen interest taken by Iran in SCO?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) The six Member countries of the Shanghai Co-operation Organisation (SCO) are China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. The four SCO Observer countries are Mongolia, India, Iran and Pakistan.

(c) The SCO provides an opportunity for India to cooperate with members and observers to increase economic interaction, cultural exchanges and work jointly on counter-terrorism and against illegal trafficking of narcotics.

(d) India's association with the SCO does not affect its relations with any country.

Police verification for passport

315. DR. VIJAY MALLYA:

MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a move to do away with police verification in the matter of issue of passports to certain selected categories of Indian citizens;

(b) in doing so, whether security considerations been taken into account to ensure that this facility is not misused; and

(c) what are the details thereof; and what are the categories of citizens who are being proposed to be exempted from police verification?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) Certain categories such as reissue/renewal cases, minors, if either of their parents are holding valid passports, senior citizens, if any one of their adult children is holding a valid passport, Government servants who submit proper no objection certificate from their respective Offices and holders of Diplomatic and Official passports are exempt from police verification.

As part of further simplification of passport issuing procedures, the currently prevailing procedures to establish the identity of an applicant are also under review.

(b) Yes, Sir. Security considerations shall be fully taken into account.

(c) The matter is still under review and no decision has been taken.

Revival of NAM

316. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA.

SHRIMATI SYEDA ANWARA TAIMUR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to revive the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) through closer economic co-operation; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) As one of the founder members, India continues to be actively involved in Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), which provides a valuable forum for developing countries to articulate their views on a wide range of issues in a collective manner, and to find ways and means to further strengthen their cooperation. With rapid changes in the international environment, there has been a growing realization among the member countries of the NAM to revitalize the Movement, making it a more effective voice of the