

As part of a step-by-step, graduated and forward-looking approach to expanding dialogue to cover all issues of mutual interest and concern, EAM expressed our willingness to have further interaction on pressing humanitarian issues, particularly early release and repatriation of prisoners and fishermen in jails in both countries; promotion of trade and commerce; streamlining and strengthening cross-LoC Confidence Building Measures for the welfare of the people of Jammu and Kashmir; and greater people-to-people contacts/friendly exchanges.

The detailed and frank discussions held during the visit enabled both the countries to develop a better understanding of each others' position and point of view on various issues. Despite differences of opinion on the way forward on a few issues, there was a broad understanding on a number of other issues. PFM accepted EAM's invitation to visit Delhi at a suitable date to be decided through diplomatic channels.

Surrendering of Indian passports

1227. SHRI B.S. GNANADESIKAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has recently directed People of Indian Origin (PIO) in US to surrender their Indian passports within ninety days;

(b) whether this notification has created a big hindrance in getting visas for them for travelling to India and they have requested Government to reconsider the direction; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the stance of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Dual citizenship is not allowed under the Citizenship Act. Indian passports are therefore required to be surrendered by all Persons of Indian Origin after acquisition of foreign nationality in accordance with the Citizenship Act and the Passports Act, to prevent its misuse.

(c) Does not arise.

Theft of documents from missions abroad

1228. SHRI PARSHOTTAM KHODABHAI RUPALA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps that has been taken by the Ministry to prevent theft of sensitive and crucial documents and information related to security of our nation from our missions abroad; and

(b) the steps that have been taken by the Ministry to monitor statistical data of visa sticker and passport from our missions abroad to avoid misuse?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): (a) Procedures already exist and are implemented for the security and custody of sensitive and crucial documents and