

(b) whether Konkan is considered as backward as Vidharbha and Marathwada; and

(c) whether Planning Commission has submitted a draft report for constitution of such a board for Konkan in the light of the experience of the existing three Development Boards in Maharashtra, and if so, what decision has since been taken for constitution of the Konkan Board in the light of the Planning Commission study?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MANIKRAO GAVIT): (a) Yes, Sir. A proposal has been received from the Government of Maharashtra for establishment of a separate Development Board for the Konkan region.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir. The Planning Commission had undertaken a performance evaluation study on the working of the three existing Development Boards in Maharashtra and submitted their report to the Government. The Planning Commission's study did not cover constitution of a Board for Konkan.

Special Task Force to contain Naxalism

2994. MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to set up a joint special task force among States to overcome the problem of State boundaries interfering with anti-Naxalite operations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the project would be funded by the Centre and forces would be operated under Central command to iron out any kind of differences among the State; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) to (d) A Task Force on naxalism constituted in the Ministry of Home Affairs in October, 2004 in its 2nd

meeting held on 10.1.2005 at Raipur, *inter-alia* asked the affected States to explore the feasibility of setting up of Joint Special Task Forces among themselves to overcome the problem of State boundaries. Some of the naxal affected States have now reported to have undertaken joint anti-naxalite operations across the State boundaries.

Dialogue with terrorists outfits

†2995. SHRI LEKHRAJ BACHANI:
PROF. R.B.S. VARMA:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to have dialogue with the terrorists outfits;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the progress made in this regard so far;

(d) whether it is a fact that intensity of the naxalite movement has decreased in some States; and

(e) if so, the State-wise details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) to (c) The Government has pursued a multi-pronged strategy to counter terrorism which *inter-alia* gives primacy to dialogue with any terrorist group that abjures violence. The Central Government has entered into peace dialogue with some insurgent groups active in the North-Eastern region. The Government of Andhra Pradesh initiated peace dialogue with naxal outfits last year. The first round of talks was concluded on October 15-18, 2004. However, before the second round of talks could resume, the naxal outfits on 17.1.2005 unilaterally withdrew from peace talks alleging State Police killing naxal cadres.

The State Government has, however, expressed its commitment to continue peace talks while taking necessary steps to maintain law and order.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.