

[18 May, 2006]

RAJYA SABHA

(d) Does not arise.

(e) and (f) Government wishes to see the emergence of a peaceful, stable and prosperous Nepal, that is free from the threat of violence. India, as a close and friendly neighbour, will contribute to this end to the best of its ability and resources, and looks forward to working together with the new Government in Nepal in this regard.

Withdrawal of troops from Siachen

3537. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Pakistan has come closer to an understanding on withdrawal of troops from Siachen with Islamabad inclined 'in-principle' to acknowledge current Indian troops positions on the glacier;

(b) if so, whether any agreement in this regard between these two countries have been reached and signed;

(c) if so, the details thereof and whether this agreement is a positive step and would help in solving other issues between two countries; and

(d) whether all the difference in this regard have completely been settled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) and (b) No agreement has been signed between India and Pakistan on the Siachen issue. India's position on this issue is that authentication of the presently held positions has to be the first step before any redeployment of troops is considered.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) No.

Agreement to fight terrorism

3538. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and US have agreed to jointly fight terrorism in India and other parts of the world;

(b) if so, whether any concrete decision in this regard were reached between the two countries;

(c) whether PM also discussed cross border terrorism with Afghanistan Prime Minister during his recent visit;

(d) if so, whether India also reached agreement with Germany and Uzbekistan on cross border terrorism;

(e) if so, the number of countries India has joined to fight terrorism globally; and

(f) whether any concrete programme of action has been formulated?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA): (a) and (b) India has a Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter Terrorism with the United States. During the visit of President George W. Bush in March 2006 to India both the sides noted the enhanced counter-terrorism cooperation between the two countries and stressed that terrorism is a global scourge that must be fought and rooted out in every part of the world. During the last meeting of the JWG held in Washington on 19-20 April 2006, the two countries decided to focus on capacity building, cyber terrorism, bio-terrorism and combating financing of terrorism.

(c) During the visit of President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai to India from April 8 to 13, 2006, the two countries condemned global terrorism as a threat to democracy and declared that there can be no compromise with its perpetrators. India expressed its support to the efforts made by Afghanistan in recent months in tackling the increased terrorism activities in certain provinces in Afghanistan.

(d) During the visit of Prime Minister to Uzbekistan in April 2006 India and Uzbekistan, while resolutely condemning international terrorism in all of its forms and manifestations, underlined their resolve, on a long term basis, to fight terrorism, which is one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. The two sides expressed satisfaction with the results of the Second meeting of the Joint Working Group on Combating International Terrorism held in October 2005 in New Delhi

and expressed the intention to continue consultations between the corresponding authorities of both States with the aim of coordinating their anti-terrorist efforts.

As regards Germany, India has a JWG on counter terrorism with it. During the visit of Prime Minister to Germany both sides agreed to continue close cooperation in the fight against terrorism, both through regular bilateral consultations and cooperation at the multilateral level.

(e) and (f) The issue of international co-operation is discussed with a broad range of countries bilaterally and in multilateral fora. India has Joint Working Groups with 23 countries and two regional groupings, *i.e.*, BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) and EU (European Union). These interactions have been useful and resulted in better information sharing, capacity building, enhanced inter-agency cooperation and development of mutual legal assistance in criminal matters.

Anti-Indian sentiments in Nepal

3539. SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken note of the growing anti-Indian sentiments among the Nepal people in the wake of pro-democracy movement in Nepal; and

(b) if so, the steps Government propose to take to safeguard country's interest in Nepal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) There have been no growing anti-Indian sentiments among the Nepali people in the wake of pro-democracy movement in Nepal.

(b) Does not arise.