

decentralized sewage treatment plants in rural areas, unauthorized colonies and unsewered areas is planned by DJB.

**Indian land in possession of China**

†819. SHRI ISHWARLAL SHANKARLAL JAIN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether despite 25 years of discussions and meetings Government of India so far has failed to regain 38 thousands sq. km area of its land in the border areas of India from the possession of China and resolve any of the border issues, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether efforts were made to resolve the issue of occupation of Indian territory by China and the incidents of intrusion by Chinese troops in the Indian border areas in the Indo-China meeting held from 29-30 September, 2013 in Beijing; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) to (c) India and China have appointed Special Representatives (SRs) to explore from the political perspective the framework for a boundary settlement. There have been sixteen meetings of the SRs till date. The 16th round of SR Talks took place in Beijing on June 28-29, 2013. During this round, the two sides continued their discussions on a framework for a resolution of the Boundary Question. They also discussed the maintenance of peace and tranquility in the India-China border areas including possible additional confidence building measures, ways and means of strengthening existing mechanisms for consultation and coordination on border affairs and methodology to enhance the efficiency of communications between the two sides. The 4th meeting of Working Mechanism for Consultation and Coordination on India-China Border Affairs was held in Beijing on 29-30 September, 2013. Both sides reviewed recent developments in the India-China border areas and discussed further measures to maintain stability on the border, building on existing understandings and arrangements.

**Asia Europe Meeting (ASEM)**

820. SHRI THAAWAR CHAND GEHLOT:

DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether meeting of Foreign Ministers of Asia Europe (ASEM) countries has taken place recently, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the details of the deliberations that have taken place in regard to economic collaboration and socio-economic cooperation between the members countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) Yes. India hosted the 11th ASEM (Asia-Europe Meeting) Foreign Ministers' Meeting (ASEM FMM11) from November 11-12, 2013 in Gurgaon. ASEM FMM11 was chaired by External Affairs Minister of India. All 51 ASEM members were represented in ASEM FMM11, which included 34 Foreign Ministers and 11 Deputy Foreign Ministers.

(b) Ministers, *inter-alia*, exchanged assessments on economic and financial issues and sustainable development challenges. They agreed that Asia and Europe need to intensify cooperation across the three pillars of political dialogue, economic collaboration and socio-cultural exchanges.

#### **Vacant post at diplomat level**

821. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of vacant posts at diplomat's level in the Ministry and the reasons therefor;

(b) whether Government would be able to achieve the target of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) Expansion Plan by 2018;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government in this regard alongwith the achievements made so far; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to attract the brightest and best talent to foreign service?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR): (a) Vacancies in Indian Missions/Posts abroad, under the various MEA cadres, are regularly computed and officers appointed thereto from time to time. Generally, gaps between the departure of the incumbents and arrival of their successors are kept to the minimum. However, as the posting chains often involve several officers, on some occasions, the Missions/Posts abroad do have to