

(b) if so, the details of the steps taken, so far, by Government to take back this illegally and forcibly occupied Indian territory by these two countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) and (b) Pakistan is in illegal and forcible occupation of approximately 78,000 sq. kms of Indian Territory in Jammu and Kashmir. China continues to be in illegal occupation of approximately 38,000 sq. kms of Indian territory in Jammu and Kashmir. In addition, under the so-called Sino-Pakistan Boundary Agreement of 1963, Pakistan illegally ceded 5180 sq. kms in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir to China.

Under the Simla Agreement of 1972 India is committed to resolve all outstanding issues with Pakistan including the issues of Pakistan's forcible and illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir through a peaceful bilateral dialogue. India and China have appointed Special Representatives (SRs) to explore from the political perspective the framework for a boundary settlement, who have been meeting regularly.

The entire State of Jammu and Kashmir is and will remain an integral part of India. Government remains continually vigilant and is firm in its resolve to take all necessary steps to effectively safeguard India's security and territorial integrity.

#### **Indo-Israel working group on counter terrorism**

2379. SHRI N.K. SINGH:

DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting of the Indo-Israel working group on counter terrorism was held in the recent past at New Delhi, if so, the details of the discussions held in the meeting and outcome thereof;

(b) whether Israel has offered its services to fight terrorism and if so, details thereof; and

(c) in what manner Government is going to utilise the services of the Israeli experts in countering terrorism?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID): (a) Yes. The last meeting of the India-Israel Joint Working Group (JWG) on Counter Terrorism was held in New Delhi on 20 February, 2013. During the JWG, both sides

exchanged perceptions of threat emanating from terrorism and emphasised their determination to fight the menace. They also discussed elements of regional and global terrorist threats, respective national counter terrorism strategies, state sponsored terrorism and need to strengthen bilateral and international cooperation to counter this threat.

(b) and (c) India and Israel agreed to enhance dialogue and co-operation in the area of counter terrorism and agreed to work towards finalisation of agreements on Cooperation in Homeland and Public Security Issues, Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters and Protection of Classified Materials and Information.

#### **Permanent observers in Arctic Council**

2380. SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India along with China and Japan has asked to be Permanent Observers in the Arctic Council of eight countries that have Arctic Territory; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) and (b) Yes. India, alongwith China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Italy and Singapore, was granted Observer status in the Arctic Council during its Ministerial Meeting held in Kiruna, Sweden on May, 15 2013.

The Arctic Council now is composed of 8 member states (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden and USA), 6 Permanent Participants, 12 Observer states (France, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, UK, China, India, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea and Singapore). In addition, 9 inter-governmental and inter-Parliamentary organizations and 11 non-governmental organisations have been accorded Observer Status.

#### **PSKs in Andhra Pradesh**

2381. SHRI C.M. RAMESH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) existing in the State of Andhra Pradesh; and