

Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB). These reviews have found that Indian nuclear power plants are safe and have margins and features in design to withstand extreme natural events. Recommendations were made in these reviews to take the safety to a higher level, which have mostly been implemented.

#### **Talks between India and Japan**

\*398. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether India and Japan have met on enhancing the security and defence ties between the two countries, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the details of the areas and issues that have come up for discussion and mutual agreement?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHID) : (a) and (b) Defence Minister of Japan Mr. Itsunori Onodera visited India and held talks with Raksha Mantri on 6 January 2014. The two Ministers exchanged views on bilateral defence cooperation and exchanges as well as regional and global security challenges. They also shared ideas on issues relating to peace, stability and prosperity of the region. The two Ministers appreciated the progress on bilateral defence cooperation achieved in various fields and at various levels, including the holding of the third Defence Policy Dialogue and the second 2+2 dialogue in October 2012 and the second bilateral exercise between the Indian Navy and the Japan Maritime Self-Defence Force in December 2013. The two Ministers also shared views on conducting regular high-level and working-level consultations and deepening Services exchanges in order to further enhance mutual trust and mutual understanding.

#### **Degradation and loss of forest cover**

\*399. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA : Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether degradation and loss of forest cover and water and air pollution are the major causes of deficit of rain water causing drought, cyclone and