

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) In his meeting with the Prime Minister of Pakistan on May 27, 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi reiterated India's long standing policy of working to build a peaceful, friendly and cooperative bilateral relationship with Pakistan, and commitment to resolve outstanding issues with Pakistan through a peaceful bilateral dialogue within the framework of the Simla agreement. In this context Prime Minister underlined the importance of maintaining an environment free from terrorism and violence, to ensure peace and tranquillity along the international border and ensure the sanctity of the Line of Control. Concern was also expressed at the glacial pace at which the Mumbai terror attack trials are proceeding in Pakistan.

The Prime Minister of Pakistan recalled the Lahore process, which reaffirms the Simla Agreement and the commitment to abjure violence and resolve all outstanding issues through peaceful bilateral dialogue, and conveyed his willingness to pick up the threads from where it had been left off in October 1999.

India-USA agreement to develop monsoon forecast model

*425. SHRI BAISHNAB PARIDA: Will the Minister of EARTH SCIENCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and USA propose to enter into an agreement to develop the monsoon forecast model, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether it is also proposed to improve weather systems in India under the above agreement; and

(c) whether the above cooperation would help Indian farmers to increase productivity and enhance climate and crop forecasting to avoid losses, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF EARTH SCIENCES (DR. JITENDRA SINGH): (a) No Sir. Recognizing the importance of scientific and technical cooperation in Earth Observations and Sciences a MoU was signed on the Earth Sciences and Observations by the Ministry of Earth Sciences (on behalf of Government of India), and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (on behalf of US Government) on 16th April, 2008 to establish an enabling mechanism for undertaking joint activities between the two countries to use the combined scientific and technical skills in enhancing the observations of the Earth and use the information most effectively for the benefit of the society.

Under this MoU, various Implementation Agreements (IAs) were undertaken with specific strategy involving Indian and US groups with well defined objectives, deliverables, individual as well as joint roles and monitoring/evaluating mechanism. For overall monitoring and integration of the various activities, a mechanism, is being put in place in the form of Joint Committee (JC) having members from both the countries.

(b) Yes Sir. One of the IAs - Dynamical Seasonal Prediction of Indian Summer Monsoon Rainfall (Establishment of Monsoon desk) was signed during the visit of President Obama in November, 2010 under which Indian and US scientists are working jointly. A "Monsoon Desk" along with a dedicated scientist has been established in this regard. **The Government of India has committed to provide \$480,000 over a period of five years (₹ 2.4 crores approximately) for activities associated with establishment and maintenance of the "Monsoon Desk". So far an amount of ₹ 1.53 crores (US \$284668) has been released to NCEP, USA for the purpose.** Indo-US scientists are currently sharing the knowledge and skills to improve the Climate Forecast System (CFS) for long-range forecasts of the monsoon and a first variant of Indian Earth System Model has already been developed as a part of overall joint efforts to improve the climate forecasting system.

(c) Yes Sir. The main objective of the agreement is to develop dynamical weather prediction models with a full understanding of the Indian monsoon and associated rainfall characteristics as India's dependence on monsoon rains for the major share of agricultural production.

Allotment of land on concessional rates for public utility services

†*426. DR. VIJAYLAXMI SADHO: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether land on concessional rates is provided by Government to private institutes/individuals which is meant for public utility services;

(b) if so, the purpose for which land is given in this manner and the details of the terms and conditions thereof;

(c) whether terms and conditions regarding allotment of land are followed strictly; and

(d) if not, the action Government takes against those who violate these terms and conditions?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU):

(a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Questions do not arise in view of the reply at (a) above.

Census of birds and animals of endangered species

*427. SHRIMATI JAYA BACHCHAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the number of birds and animals of endangered species is decreasing rapidly;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.