

authorized to facilitate online passport application service to citizens at a nominal charge not exceeding Rs. 100/-. These measures have, in fact, decreased the role of touts and middlemen.

#### **Establishment of Indo-Sri Lanka trade center**

1712. DR. E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of India is contemplating an agreement with Sri Lanka to establish “Indo-Sri Lanka Trade Center” in the Island “Katchatheevu”, to develop the Trade as MFN and to have permanent solution to solve the dispute; and

(b) if so, whether Island having no habitation should be used for day time alone as done during “barter system” which was in existence focusing on eco-tourism too?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH]: (a) No.

(b) Does not arise.

#### **Attack on Consulate in Herat, Afghanistan**

1713. SHRI RITABRATABANERJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there was an attack on the Indian Consulate in Herat, Afghanistan on 23 May, 2014, if so, was there any casualty;

(b) if so, was there any injuries sustained by the officials and the staff of the Indian Consulate; and

(c) whether the Afghanistan Government have been able to trace and capture the culprits behind the attacks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (c) The Consulate General of India in Herat province of Afghanistan was attacked by terrorists on May 23, 2014. Three terrorists were killed by Indian Embassy Security guards and Afghan security forces during a nine-hour long gun battle.

There were no losses of life or injury to Indian officials in the incident. Five Afghan security personnel sustained injuries during the gunfight. The Consulate buildings suffered heavy damage in the attack.