

Sl. No.	Name of Country	2011	2012	2013	2014	Total
113.	U.A.E.	2184	1578	1104	1346	6212
114.	UK	70	70	60	35	235
115.	Ukraine	0	0	0	0	0
116.	U.S.A	132	182	143	11	468
117.	Uzbekistan	0	0	0	270	270
118.	Venezuela	1	4	1	0	6
119.	Vietnam	0	0	0	0	0
120.	Yemen	10	0	17	6	33
121.	Zambia	5	10	5	3	23
122.	Zimbabwe	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL		17515	17848	14045	11198	60606

Vietnam offering oil blocks to India

1287. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Vietnam has offered two oil blocks in the South China Sea to India for exploration during the visit of Vietnamese PM's visit to India;

(b) if so, the details of the agreements signed in this regard;

(c) whether China has reacted sharply against signing of these agreements;

(d) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard; and

(e) the proactive steps Government is taking to counter any likely aggressiveness of China during exploration activities in these oil blocks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [(GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH)]: (a) and (b) India and Vietnam have been engaged in exploration activity in blocks off the coast of Vietnam since 1988. On 28 October, 2014 during the visit of the Prime Minister of Vietnam to India, ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) signed a Heads of Agreement with PetroVietnam for participation in agreed blocks, subject to due diligence and negotiations on the terms.

(c) to (e) Sovereignty over South China Sea is disputed between many countries in the region. India is not a party to this dispute. China, which is a party to the South China Sea dispute, has raised its concerns on India's hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation projects in the South China Sea off the coast of Vietnam. Government has clearly conveyed that such activity by Indian companies is purely commercial in nature. India's position on South China Sea issue is consistent and has been reiterated bilaterally and in multilateral fora on several occasions. India supports freedom of navigation in international waters while maintaining that sovereignty issues must be resolved peacefully by the countries which are parties to the dispute in accordance with accepted principles of international law, including United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, 1982.

Reviewing of ineffective MoUs

1288. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is proposing to review the ineffective MoUs signed by the Government of India with various countries, if so, the details thereof;

(b) the number of MoUs that were converted into agreement and the MoUs that were not converted into agreements; and

(c) the reasons for the status quo?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [(GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH)]: (a) It is understood that the Cabinet Secretariat is in the process of reviewing MoUs signed by the Government of India with foreign countries in consultation with line Ministries. As far as the Ministry of External Affairs is concerned, reviewing of MoUs is an ongoing exercise.

(b) None.

(c) There is no practice of changing the 'form' of an existing MoU.

Achievements of passport melas

1289. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether large number of applicants who have applied for issue of passports are facing lot of difficulties in getting their appointments in Passport Seva Kendras (PSKs) and also in getting their passports;