

(c) Government attaches the highest importance to the safety, security and welfare of Indian fishermen. Government is in constant touch with the Government of Sri Lanka, including at the highest level, to ensure expeditious release and repatriation of the apprehended Indian fishermen along with their fishing vessels from Sri Lanka.

Civil nuclear agreement with Australia

†2063. SHRI PRABHAT JHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a proposal of civil nuclear agreement between India and Australia is pending for last so many years, under which uranium has to be supplied to India by Australia, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the pending proposal of civil nuclear agreement is to be finalized shortly; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and whether it has been discussed during recent visit of Prime Minister to Australia?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH): (a) The Agreement between the Government of India and the Government of Australia on Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy was signed on 5 September 2014 during the visit of Australian Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Abbott to India.

(b) and (c) It was agreed during the visit of Prime Minister to Australia in November 2014 that both sides would expedite progress towards an early conclusion of the administrative arrangements to implement the Agreement. The process for ratification of the Agreement is under way in the Australian Parliament.

Look East Policy

2064. SHRI RONALD SAPA TLAU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the 'Look East Policy' of Government and when was it launched;

(b) the latest status of implementation of various components of the policy;

(c) the problems being faced with the speedy implementation of multi-modal road transport from Mizoram to Sittwe, Myanmar, the details thereof;

(d) whether there exist any mechanism whereby Government could speed up its process of implementation without compromising on quality; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(e) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH): (a) and (b) Look East Policy was enunciated in early 1990s, marking India's focus on the extended neighbourhood in the ASEAN. India's Look East Policy was originally conceived as an economic initiative and has gained political, strategic and cultural dimensions. We have upgraded our relations to strategic partnerships with Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Australia and with ASEAN. Apart from ASEAN, ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and East Asia Summit (EAS), India has also been engaging in regional fora like Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), Mekong Ganga Cooperation, Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) to advance our regional and global profile to further mutual stakes in peace, prosperity and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

(c) Due to change in the project parameters of the Kaladan Multi-Modal Transit Transport Project, there has been time and cost overrun.

(d) and (e) Once the Revised Cost Estimate of the Project is approved by the Competent Authority, a competent Project Management Consultant will oversee quality control of the road component of the project and ensure its expeditious implementation.

Pakistan writing to UN about Kashmir issue

2065. SHRI T. RATHINAVEL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that Pakistan, to internationalize the Kashmir issue, has written to UN Secretary General on the security situation along the Line of Control and the International Border, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government has taken any step to counter the said move by Pakistan, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH): (a) and (b) Government is aware of Pakistan's continued attempts to highlight the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in the United Nations.

Government continues to take all necessary measures to protect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the nation. The entire State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of the Indian Union. A part of the territory of the State is under the forcible and illegal occupation of Pakistan. Under the Shimla Agreement, India and Pakistan are committed to resolving all outstanding issues, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir, through a peaceful bilateral dialogue. There is no role whatsoever for a third party.