

**Discussion over Kashmir issue in UK**

2071. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the UK House of Commons has debated political and humanitarian situation in Kashmir in the recent past, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether Government has registered its protest with Government of the UK in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the UK Government thereto; and

(d) the steps Government is taking so that internal issues of the country are not debated in the foreign parliaments/any other international fora?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH: (a) to (d) A debate on the “Political and humanitarian situation in Kashmir” was held in the UK House of Commons on Sep 11, 2014. Around 20 MPs attended/participated in the debate.

The Government of India has expressed its concern on the issue at different levels with the UK Government, which has stated that this is part of the Parliamentary process where Parliamentarians express their views on any matter.

Government’s consistent and principled position is that the entire State of Jammu and Kashmir is an integral part of the Union of India. 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.

**PMs visit to Japan**

2072. DR. PRADEEP KUMAR BALMUCHU: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has recently visited Japan, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the matter of Japanese assistance to create smart cities in India has been come for discussion and the details thereof; and

(c) the bilateral ties and trade discussions and other matters focused in the meeting, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH: (a) to (c) Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid an official visit to Japan from August 30 to September 03, 2014 for the annual summit meeting. Prime Minister visited Kyoto and Tokyo in Japan. In Tokyo, the two PMs had a restricted meeting followed by delegation level talks. PM had an audience with the Emperor. A number of Japanese Ministers and leaders of political parties called on Prime Minister Modi. During the visit 6 agreements were signed, which also included 'Confirmation of the intention regarding the Partner City Affiliation between City of Varanasi (Republic of India) and City of Kyoto (Japan)'. Prime Minister Modi briefed Prime Minister Abe on his initiative for Smart Cities and renewal of heritage cities, including the city of Varanasi. Prime Minister Abe expressed Japan's willingness to support this objective. The two Prime Ministers welcomed the progress in the ongoing flagship projects of India-Japan economic partnership, such as the Western Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC), Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC), Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC) and committed to accelerate their implementation. Prime Minister Modi invited Japanese investments in the development of new smart cities and industrial parks along these corridors.

During the visit, the bilateral relationship was upgraded to Special Strategic and Global Partnership and a new India-Japan Investment Promotion Partnership was launched, under which Japan conveyed its intention to invest 3.5 trillion yen of public-private investment in India over five year period as well as to double the number of Japanese companies operating in India. Defence equipment and technology was identified as a new major area of cooperation. During the visit, the Japanese side also agreed to removal of six Indian entities from the Japanese foreign-end user list. The two sides agreed to strengthen their cooperation and collaboration in several areas including in energy, LNG, railways, infrastructure, smart cities, science and technology and in promoting people to people exchanges.

#### **Organising of Festival of India by ICCR**

2073. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is organizing 'Festival of India' in various parts of the world;
- (b) if so, the details of the countries in which 'Festival of India' was organized by the Indian Council for Cultural Relation (ICCR); and
- (c) the details of funds spent on this festival during the last five years?