

sub-tropical fruits, bee-keeping etc. There is effective coordination between the two countries on these collaborations. 27 Centres of Excellence are at various stages of development across different States. Five of them have already been completed and commissioned.

Consensual solution to issue of Italian marines

2873. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN:

SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Italian Government has sought a consensual solution to the long pending issue of the two Italian marines facing murder charges in a case of killing of two Indian fishermen of the coast of Kerala in 2012; and

(b) if so, the status of case as of now and the reaction of the Indian Government to the proposal of the Italian Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ):

(a) Yes.

(b) The matter is currently *sub-judice* in the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India. The proposal of the Italian Government is at present under examination in the Government.

PM's meeting with Sri Lankan counterpart

2874. SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Prime Minister had met the Sri Lankan Prime Minister recently, if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the issues of Sri Lankan Tamils' rehabilitation and attack on Indian Tamil fishermen were taken up during the discussions; and

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

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ):

(a) to (c) Prime Minister met the President of Sri Lanka, Mahinda Rajapaksa for bilateral discussions on the sidelines of the 18th SAARC Summit in Kathmandu, Nepal on 26 November, 2014. The two leaders discussed all issues of mutual concern.

Government is constantly engaged with the Government of Sri Lanka on issues relating to the ongoing political reconciliation efforts in Sri Lanka and the India-Sri Lanka fishermen related issues.

Streamlining of foreign infrastructure investment

2875. SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether with an aim to streamline foreign infrastructure investment, Government has set up a new division in the Ministry called “Centre-State relations”;

(b) if so, whether several foreign dignitaries in the recent past have expressed their desire to visit cities other than Delhi to set up projects; and

(c) if so, to what extent the new division in the Ministry called “Centre-State relations” would address the various problems being faced by foreign companies for investments in States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [(GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH)] : (a) Yes. In keeping with the emphasis on coordination with States for further facilitation of their efforts to promote exports and tourism and attract more overseas investment and expertise, a separate Division named “States Division” has been set up in this Ministry.

(b) Mutual interest in strengthening bilateral economic relations is reflected by the inclusion of cities other than Delhi in the itinerary of foreign dignitaries during their visit to India.

(c) “States Division” will coordinate facilitation of efforts in promoting exports, foreign investment and expertise and tourism among Indian Missions/Posts abroad, Governments of States and Union Territories, foreign diplomatic and trade missions in India and concerned Government of India Ministries.

Encouraging of cultural/academic relation with China

2876. SHRI TARUN VIJAY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) in what manner Government plans to encourage academic exchanges, translation of books and information sharing regarding societies, arts and culture between India and China; and