

Single permit among SAARC countries

354. SHRIMATI GUNDU SUDHARANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether SAARC countries have decided to have single permit for movement of people and goods across all SAARC countries, if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Pakistan and Bangladesh have agreed to this proposal, if so, the details thereon, if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) and (b) A "Motor Vehicle Agreement for the Regulation of Passenger and Cargo Vehicular Traffic among SAARC Member States" providing for free movement of cargo and passenger vehicles and their crew across the SAARC region was finalised at the meeting of SAARC Inter Government Group of Transport. This finalised Agreement was to be signed during the 18th SAARC Summit held in November, 2014 at Kathmandu. The draft Agreement covers the entire gamut of free movement of vehicular and passenger traffic.

Bangladesh and Pakistan had also agreed to the finalization of the draft Agreement. However, it could not be signed during the Summit as Pakistan wanted more time to conclude the process of its internal approvals.

Gain from visit of President of USA

355. DR. BHALCHANDRA MUNGEKAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the three major gains to India from the recent visit of the President of the USA; and

(b) in what manner the Ministry view continued military and financial support of the USA to Pakistan despite the commitment of the former to fight the terrorist activities of the latter *vis-a-vis* India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) The visit of US President to India has succeeded in aligning the India-US partnership firmly behind India's developmental needs and global aspirations.

Three documents which were jointly issued during the visit outline the outcomes from the visit and identify the way forward on bilateral cooperation. The three documents are as follows:

- (i) A Joint Statement titled "Saanjha Prayaas, Sabka Vikaas; Shared Effort, Prosperity for All" that outlines the substantial achievements and the several agreements that were signed in the four months since the first Summit between Prime Minister and President Obama in September 2014 and identifies the way forward in bilateral engagement;
- (ii) The India-US Delhi Declaration of Friendship to elevate the longstanding India-US Strategic Partnership and strengthen and expand bilateral relations;
- (iii) The India-US Joint Strategic Vision for the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region to promote peace, prosperity and stability in the region.

The visit saw landmark outcomes that included *inter alia*: (i) understanding reached on the issues related to civil nuclear liability and the Administrative Arrangement for civil nuclear cooperation (ii) US affirmation that India meets the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) requirements and is ready for Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) membership (iii) a decision to hold regular Summits with increased periodicity and to establish of hotlines between Prime Minister and President of the United States and National Security Advisors (iv) Finalization of the 2015 Framework for India-US Defense Relationship to guide the defence and strategic relationship for the next ten years (v) Announcement of four pathfinder defence co-development and co-production projects under the Defence Technology & Trade Initiative (DTTI) (vi) enhanced cooperation in counter-terrorism and internal security, including cyber security, money laundering etc. (vii) collaboration in the development of 3 Smart Cities - Vishakhapatnam, Ajmer and Allahabad (viii) Agreement to hold discussions on a Totalisation Agreement and a Bilateral Investment Treaty (ix) Collaboration in the Digital India Programme, development of Indian Railways, skill development and aviation partnership (x) Knowledge Partnership with Indian Institute of Technology(IIT) Gandhinagar and collaboration through India's Global Initiative of Academic Networks (GIAN), to facilitate short-term teaching and research programs by up to 1000 visiting U.S. academics in Indian universities (xi) Launch of a India-US dialogue on traditional medicine (xii) decision to elevate the bilateral Strategic Dialogue to a Strategic and Commercial Dialogue.

(b) Government has repeatedly conveyed to the United States that Pakistan is not ceasing support, or making significant efforts to dismantle terrorist bases of groups like the Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, Jaish-e-Mohammad and the Haqqani network that continue to target India. It has also been conveyed that the US Government should have proper benchmarks to prevent diversion of security assistance that it provides to Pakistan from being used against India. Government is firmly resolved to take all necessary steps to defeat the threat posed by these terror groups, and to ensure the territorial integrity of our nation.

Discussion with President of USA

356. SHRI BALWINDER SINGH BHUNDER:

SHRIMATI SASIKALA PUSHPA:

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister has held any discussion with the President of USA recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including agreements that are signed during his visit;

(c) the present status of the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Agreement; and

(d) the details of the negotiated agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) and (b) The President of the United States H. E. Barack Obama, accompanied by First Lady Michelle Obama, visited India from 25-27 January 2015 as the Chief Guest at India's 66th Republic Day celebrations. He held discussions with Prime Minister on bilateral, regional and global issues of mutual interest.

Prime Minister and the US President assessed the extensive bilateral strategic and global partnership between India and the United States and pledged to continue to enhance cooperation across a wide spectrum of human endeavour for the betterment of lives of their citizens and that of the global community.

The areas identified for further bilateral cooperation include trade and investment, defence and homeland security, energy (including clean energy), climate change, education, health, Science and Technology, Space etc. India and the US also agreed to strengthen cooperation on regional and global issues of mutual interest.