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	that representatives of Fishermen Associations of the two countries would meet soon.	
	During the visit of the Prime Minister, the following agreements were signed:	
	(i) Agreement on waiver of visa requirements for holders of diplomatic and official passports,	
	(ii) Agreement on Customs Cooperation,	
	(iii) MoU on Youth Development; and	
	(iv) MoU on construction of Rabindranath Tagore Auditorium in Ruhuna University in Matara.	

Request of China for linking of silk route with other projects

799. SHRI RAJ BABBAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chinese Government has asked India to link its Silk Road with India's Spice Route and Mausam Projects as part of Indo-China cooperation, if so, the details thereof and the reaction of Government thereto; and

(b) whether Government proposes to accept this proposal of the Chinese Government, and 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) The Government of India is aware of the Chinese initiatives of the Silk Road Economic Belt and the 21st Century Maritime Silk Road. The ancient trade routes in Asia included the Silk Route, the Spice Route and many other such routes. These were the channels of vibrant trade in the region and beyond and anchor of Asia's prosperity. They promoted exchange of ideas, cultures, art, religion and spiritualism. India, historically was at the centre of several of these trade routes and shared its age-old wisdom with societies along these routes.

There is no formal proposal to expand the Spice Route and the Mausam Project by linking these with economic and strategic infrastructure and connectivity projects of other countries.