

Prime Minister's visit to Bern

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

- (a) whether the Prime Minister has recently visited Bern and if so, the details thereof; and
- (b) the details of discussions with regard to Indian Membership in Nuclear Suppliers Group?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M.J. AKBAR): (a) No, the Prime Minister has not so far visited Bern, the capital of Switzerland. However, he visited Geneva, another city of Switzerland, during 5-6 June 2016. During the visit, the Prime Minister held discussions with the President of Swiss Confederation. The Prime Minister also attended a Business Roundtable with the CEOs of leading Swiss companies.

- (b) During his discussions there, Prime Minister thanked Switzerland for their understanding and support for India's membership of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.

Visa norms by USA for Indians working in Libya, Iraq and Syria

494. SHRIMATI VIJILA SATHYANANTH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that Indian workers in Iraq, Libya and Syria would not be able to get US Visa as per the strict visa norms introduced by the Government of United States of America (USA);
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government has taken up this issue with the USA; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH): (a) and (b) No. There is no ban on Indians working in Iraq, Libya and Syria or in any other country to obtain US visa.

- (c) and (d) Do not arise.