

China seeking evidence against terrorists

503. SHRI. K.R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that China has sought concrete evidence about the role played by the terrorists of Jaish e-Mohammad in terror activities before seeking United Nations censure for them;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government has provided any convincing response in this regard; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH): (a) to (d) In February 2016, Government approached the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee established under Resolutions 1267/1989/2253 with the proposal to designate Masood Azhar under the 1267 sanction regime. It was emphasized that while the Pakistan based Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) had been designated by the 1267 Committee as far back as 2001 for its well known terror activities and links to the Al Qaeda, the Committee had not designated Masood Azhar who is the JeM's main leader, financier and motivator. The working procedures (guidelines) of the 1267 Committee stipulate that if an entity (organization) is designated by the Committee, its main leaders should also be designated. The requirement to designate Masood Azhar would, therefore, be self evident to the 1267 Committee.

Government has raised this issue with China, including at the highest levels, and has pointed out that China's position on listing of well known terrorists under the 1267 Sanctions regime should be in consonance with its stated positions on terrorism.

Security of Indians living in USA

504. SHRI K.R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that for Government the strategic partnership with United States of America (USA) is secondary to the welfare and security to the US based people of Indian origin;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Government is continuously in talks with USA and the country's missions are in contact with local Indian communities there; and

(c) whether Government had asked USA Government to investigate the racial angle in the recent killing of Indians there?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH): (a) Government of India attaches highest priority to safety and security of Indian Diaspora abroad, including in the USA. Strong people-to-people links are an important component of India-US strategic partnership.

(b) and (c) Government of India remains continuously engaged with the US authorities on all matters concerning the wellbeing of Indian Diaspora including in the US. The US authorities have responded promptly and positively to incidents involving members of the Indian Diaspora in the US. They have assured us that they are working with all concerned agencies to ensure speedy justice. Where applicable, the incidents have been investigated as possible hate-crimes.

Our Embassy and Consulates in the US are also in constant touch with local Indian community groups to address any emergent issue relating to the Diaspora. They conduct regular community outreach programmes and extend all possible support in any situation impacting the Diaspora. The Government remains vigilant to developments impacting the lives of Indians abroad and will do everything possible to safeguard their interests and welfare.

Fishermen in custody of Sri Lanka

505. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Indian fishermen who are in the custody of Sri Lankan authorities, as on date; and

(b) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by Government to bring such fishermen back and rehabilitate them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GENERAL (RETD.) V.K. SINGH): (a) The number of Indian fishermen in the custody of Sri Lankan authorities as on 17 July, 2017 is 81 (eighty one).