

(c) The Bill does not have any provision restricting or affecting entry of IT professionals into the US including from India.

Official level talks between India and Pakistan

2437. SHRI MOOLCHAND MEENA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state.

(a) whether India and Pakistan have agreed to hold official level talks in the month of August, 2004;

(b) if so, main points that have been discussed so far;

(c) whether many of the problems have been solved;

(d) if so, what are the issues still outstanding; and

(e) by when, final decision is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) to (e) Bilateral discussions on a number of subjects have been held between India and Pakistan within the framework of the Composite Dialogue. President Musharraf's reassurance in the Joint Press Statement of January 6, 2004, not to permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner, allowed the process of the Composite Dialogue to be initiated in February 2004. An agreed schedule of meetings was worked out during the Foreign Secretary level talks between India and Pakistan on 18 February, 2004. Accordingly, meetings were held between the border security forces (March 24—27, 2004), and the drug control authorities (June 15-16, 2004) of the two countries, and issues related to drug trafficking and smuggling of contraband, border management, illegal border crossing, and repair and maintenance of border pillars, were, *inter alia*, discussed. Expert Level talks on Nuclear Confidence Building Measures were held in New Delhi on June 19-20, 2004. The two sides agreed to improve communication links between the two DGMOs, establish a hotline between Foreign Secretaries and to work towards MoU on pre-notification of flight testing of missiles. The Foreign Secretaries of the two countries met in New Delhi on June 27-28, 2004 and discussed "Peace and Security including CBMs" and "Jammu and Kashmir", within the framework of the Composite Dialogue. The two sides proposed a comprehensive framework for CBMs aimed at initiating and

enhancing communication, coordination and interaction, and exchanged views on carrying the process forward in an atmosphere free from terrorism and violence. Talks on the remaining six subjects of the Composite Dialogue / i.e. Siachen, Sir Creek, Tulbul Navigation Project, Economic and Commercial Cooperation, Terrorism and Drug Trafficking, and Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in various fields, were held in the last week of July and first half of August, and views were exchanged on these issues. During discussions on Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in various fields, wide-ranging proposals were made for promoting friendly exchanges and cooperation in the fields of art, culture, archaeology, education, science and technology, youth affairs and sports, media and tourism. India also made a series of proposals for trade promotion, transit, cooperation in the fields of agriculture, petroleum and natural gas, banking, information technology, telecommunications, postal services, civil aviation, shipping, capital market, etc. between the two countries. A meeting between the Foreign Ministers of the two countries, to review the overall progress, is scheduled to be held in India on September 5-6, 2004. It would be preceded by a meeting between the Foreign Secretaries on September 4, 2004.

Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

2438 SHRI DATTA MEGHE Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state.

(a) whether Government intend to control the proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs) which damage law and order and political stability,

(b) if so, whether the Customs Officials lack awareness and training because of highly sensitive nature of the technology;

(c) whether the United States, under directions of the UN Security Council, has started to organise workshops and train Indian Custom officials in detecting WMDs to check its transnational smuggling and proliferation,

(d) if so, the details thereof, and

(e) who is going to fund the training programmes, the US or the UN?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Government attaches the