

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GEN. (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (c) The Ministry has not received any representation from passport officials against the various initiatives taken by the Government with regard to issuance of passports.

Rejection of offer of talks by Pakistan

185. SHRI N. GOKULAKRISHNAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistan has repeatedly rejected the offer of talks made by the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is yet to hear from Pakistan why the offer made by India for talks was turned down by it; and

(d) whether Pakistan had become nothing more than a country that exports terrorism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GEN. (RETD.) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (d) No such offer was made by India which was rejected by Pakistan.

The Government has clear and consistent position that it desires normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan, and is committed to addressing all outstanding issues bilaterally and peacefully in accordance with the Simla Agreement and the Lahore declaration. However, any meaningful dialogue can be held only in an atmosphere free from terror, hostility and violence. The onus is on Pakistan to create such a conducive atmosphere.

Continued cross-border terrorism emanating from Pakistan remains a core concern for us. India has repeatedly called upon Pakistan to abide by its commitment not to allow any territory under its control to be used for terrorism against India in any manner. Pakistan has also been asked to take effective actions to end terrorism and dismantle terrorist sanctuaries and infrastructure on the territory under its control. Until such time, India will continue to take firm and decisive steps to respond to cross-border terrorism.