

Increase in Chinese activities around Arunachal and Doklam border area

†2248. CH. SUKHRAM SINGH YADAV:

SHRIMATI CHHAYA VERMA:

SHRI VISHAMBHAR PRASAD NISHAD:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that unprecedented rise is being witnessed in the Chinese activities along the border with Arunachal Pradesh and Doklam and it also includes espionage and increasing number of soldiers;

(b) the steps taken by Government in view of the Chinese activities near Indian border; and

(c) the factual position in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (c) Since the disengagement of Indian and Chinese border personnel in the Doklam area on 28 August, 2017, there have been no new developments at the face-off site and its vicinity. The *status quo* prevails in this area.

China disputes the international boundary between India and China. In the Eastern Sector, China claims approximately 90,000 square kilometers of Indian territory in the State of Arunachal Pradesh. The fact that Arunachal Pradesh is an integral and inalienable part of India has been clearly conveyed to the Chinese side on several occasions, including at the highest level.

Government is fully seized of the security needs of the country and remains prepared to deal with and counter all kinds of security challenges at our borders. Government regularly reviews the threat perception to secure our borders and protect national interest. Appropriate measures are taken from time to time to maintain and upgrade the country's defence preparedness to safeguard the sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of India.

Bhutan-China negotiations for exchange of Doklam area

2249. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that China has been negotiating with Bhutan for occupying Doklam area in view of some other border areas with Bhutan under their control;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

- (b) if so, the information available with the Government in this regard;
- (c) the likely impact of such dealing between China and Bhutan on India's safety and security;
- (d) whether Government has taken any step to prevent such dealings between China and Bhutan; and
- (e) if so, the details and outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (e) Boundary negotiations between Bhutan and China are matters of discussion between those two countries. India's relations with other countries stand on their own footing and are independent of their relations with third countries.

India and Bhutan share unique and exemplary ties of friendship and cooperation. Our bilateral ties are built on shared values and interests, utmost trust, mutual respect and close understanding. Government of India is committed to nurturing and advancing its historically close and enduring ties of friendship with Bhutan for common prosperity of the two peoples.

Government keeps a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's interests and security and takes all necessary measures to protect them.

Change in policy towards Pakistan

2250. SHRI KIRANMAY NANDA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that our diplomatic efforts have brought no change in Pakistan attitude;
- (b) if so, whether Government has any plan to change our foreign policy toward Pakistan;
- (c) if so, the details thereof; and
- (d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS [GENERAL (RETD) V. K. SINGH]: (a) to (d) 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 of terror, hostility and violence. Onus is on Pakistan to create such a conducive atmosphere.