

The Government has emphasised that respective diplomatic Missions should be allowed to function normally in keeping with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, 1961 and the bilateral Code of Conduct signed by the two countries in 1992.

On 30 March 2018, India and Pakistan mutually agreed to resolve matters related to the treatment of diplomats and diplomatic premises, in line with the 1992 Code of Conduct for the treatment of diplomatic/consular personnel in India and Pakistan. The implementation of this understanding is regularly followed up through diplomatic channels.

#### **Role of BIMSTEC members**

1171. SHRI MANISH GUPTA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the Total population and combined Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the seven nations which constitute the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC);

(b) the manner in which this organization compare with the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), the details thereof;

(c) whether any BIMSTEC members are participating in China's Belt and Road Initiative, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the sectors in which inter-regional cooperation in BIMSTEC will be centered with details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) BIMSTEC region brings together 1.67 billion people and a combined GDP of around US\$3.71 trillion. It is a regional organization comprising seven member States around the Bay of Bengal region. These countries are Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand.

(b) South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) brings together 1.81 billion people and a combined GDP of US\$ 3.46 trillion. These countries are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

(c) As per available information, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Myanmar and Thailand are participating in the Belt and Road Initiative.

(d) BIMSTEC has identified 14 priority areas, in each of which a member country takes the lead. India is the lead country in Counter-terrorism and Transnational Crime; Transport and Communication; Tourism; and Environment and Disaster Management.

**Indo-Bangladesh meeting**

1172. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

SHRI VAIKO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Prime Minister of India and Bangladeshi counterpart had recently met in Delhi;
- (b) if so, the highlights of the talks held between the two heads of States;
- (c) the Memorandum of Understanding signed with details; and
- (d) whether concerns were raised over the rollout of National Register of Citizens (NRC) in Assam and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN): (a) to (d) H.E. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh paid an official visit to India, and held discussions with Prime Minister on 05 October, 2019. The leaders expressed satisfaction at the excellent state of bilateral relations that transcend a strategic partnership. The two leaders exchanged seven MoUs; the details are as follows:

- MoU for providing a Coastal Surveillance System.
- Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on the use of Chattogram and Mongla Ports for movement of goods to and from India.
- MoU on withdrawal of 1.82 cusec of water from Feni River by India for a drinking water supply scheme for Sabroom town in Tripura State.
- Agreement concerning implementation of the Lines of Credit (LoCs) committed by India to Bangladesh.
- MoU between University of Hyderabad and University of Dhaka.
- Renewal of Cultural Exchange Programme.
- MoU on Co-operation in Youth Affairs.