

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:47

ANSWERED ON:26.07.2000

C.T.B.T.

JAI PRAKASH;VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government feel the need of consensus in the country on the question of signing CTBT;
- (b) if so, the steps being taken by the Government in this regard;
- (c) whether India and US after several rounds of strategic talks are moving towards an agreement on CTBT;
- (d) if so, the details of talks held in this regard;
- (e) the total number of countries which have signed the treaty;
- (f) whether there is any move on the part of the Government to sign the treaty before the Prime Minister's proposed visit to America; and
- (g) if so, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

(a) Yes Sir.

(b) A number of steps to develop such a consensus have been undertaken, including through statements and discussions in Parliamentary Committee, as well as meetings with representatives of political parties. The Government intends to pursue this approach of consultation and dialogue.

(c), (d) Since June 1998, India has been engaged in discussions with the US, as also other key interlocutors, on a range of issues including the CTBT. This dialogue has been conducted on the basis of a set of comprehensive proposals put forward by India after the May 1998 tests. After the rejection of the CTBT by the US Senate, there is greater appreciation of the importance of building a national consensus on this issue in the countries concerned. While there is no deadline for the conclusion of these talks, it is the intention of the two countries that a stable understanding on the remaining issues should be reached at an early date.

(e) 155 countries have so far signed the treaty.

(f) & (g) Government's position on the CTBT has been and shall continue to be based on considerations of national security and national interest alone.