

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3032
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2003
TREATIES WITH USA AND UK
AKBOR ALI KHANDOKER

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

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- (a) the details of treaties/agreements signed by the Union Government with the Government of United States of America and United Kingdom during the last three years;
- (b) the nature, area and validity of each treaty/agreement signed during the said period; and
- (c) the details of benefits received by the Indian Government as a result of these treaties/agreements?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a) to (c) India and the United States signed the Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty on 17 October 2001. The agreement, when it comes into force after completion of the necessary legal processes in both countries, would strengthen law enforcement cooperation between the two countries.

The two Governments signed the General Security of Military Information Agreement in January 2002 to provide for mutual protection of military information exchanged between the two sides. This agreement enabled development of India-U.S. defence relations.

The two sides also signed an Agreement regarding the surrender of persons to international tribunals on 26 December 2002. The two Governments have agreed not to surrender or transfer each other's citizens to an international tribunal, unless otherwise obligated to do so by an international agreement to which both India and the United States are parties, and without the express content of the other Government. This agreement flows from the position of both countries that their national judicial processes will have primacy with regard to their citizens.

In addition, bilateral dialogue with the United States has led to understanding, including through Memorandums of Understanding (MOU), Joint Statements and Statements of Principles on expanding mutually beneficial cooperation in a number of areas, including trade, investment, energy, environment, health, science and technology, defence, counter-terrorism, counter-narcotics, cyber security, civilian space applications, safety related issues in civilian nuclear field, and high technology sectors.

In the last three years, India and the UK have signed two bilateral, government-to-government agreements. An MOU on Cooperation in the Power Sector was signed between India and the UK on 25.06.2002 in London. The MOU established a bilateral Joint Power Sector Working Group for promoting and facilitating reform in the power sector in India, exchange of experts, and sharing of information and best practices.

An MOU regarding mutual assistance and co-operation in Customs matters was signed between the two countries on 16 March 2001 for the purpose of proper application of Customs Laws and for the prevention, investigation, prosecution and combating of Customs offences in relation to the movement of goods and persons between the two countries. The MOU has fostered greater bilateral co-operation and mutual assistance in investigating cases relating to Customs and allied matters.

These initiatives have strengthened India's mutually beneficial cooperation with the United States and the UK in the areas of economic development, law enforcement and national security.