

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2140  
ANSWERED ON:07.12.2005  
BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH IRAN  
Baxla Shri Joachim

**Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether a joint declaration between India and the Islamic Republic of Iran issued on January 25, 2003, in New Delhi, envisaged various bilateral measures for furthering of mutual socio-economic interests;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of steps taken by both sides towards implementation of the same;
- (d) whether any assessment of the status of the joint declaration has been made following the change of regime in Iran recently; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) India and Iran articulated their vision of a strategic partnership for a more stable, secure and prosperous region and for enhanced regional and global cooperation between the two countries. Partnership between the two countries was agreed in various fields, including trade and commerce, energy, transit, strategic dialogue, defence, culture, combating terrorism and science and technology.

(c) Bilateral cooperation is promoted through a regular exchange of high-level as well as working level visits, and regular meetings within the framework of institutional mechanisms like the Joint Commission, a Strategic Dialogue and a Special Working Group on the Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline. On the sidelines of the JCM, there have been meetings of the Joint Business Council. Sale-Purchase Agreement for import of 5 million metric tonnes per annum of Liquefied Natural Gas from Iran was signed in June 2005 between GAIL/IOC/BPCL and National Iranian Gas Export Co. Ltd. subject to ratification by the Iranian side. Indo-Iran bilateral trade amounted to US \$ 4.132 billion in 2004-05, registering a growth of more than 43% over the previous year. Defence cooperation was marked by exchange of goodwill visits of ships in 2003 and 2004 between the two countries. There have been regular meetings between the National Security Advisors of both countries. On the cultural front the two countries have set up a Common Cultural Heritage Fund under the aegis of which a joint stamp on Kabir and Hafez was released in 2004. The two countries are also operationalising the North-South and the Trilateral India-Iran-Turkmenistan transit corridors through Iran into Russia and Central Asian countries. Iran has facilitated the transit of personnel, equipment and procurement of some vital supplies for the construction of the Zaranj-Delaram road in Afghanistan that will provide Afghanistan with an alternative route to the sea.

(d) & (e) India-Iran relations are deep and are underlined by civilisational ties that go back by several millennia. We have reiterated our desire and endeavour to developing relations with Iran at the highest level. In consultation with the Iranian side, the 15th JCM has been fixed tentatively for March 11-12, 2006.