

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1973
ANSWERED ON:08.03.2006
EXCHANGE OF ENCLAVES BETWEEN INDIA AND BANGLADESH
Barman Shri Hiten

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of Indian enclaves in Bangladesh territory and vice-versa;
- (b) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Union Government for the exchange of these enclaves;
- (c) the achievements made in this regard so far;
- (d) the date when the first proposal of exchanging these enclaves was mooted;
- (e) the reasons for delay in this regard;
- (f) whether the Union Government has set a deadline in this regard;
- g) if so, the details thereof; and
- h) the time by which the exchange of enclaves is likely to be completed?

Answer

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

(a) There are 111 Indian enclaves in Bangladesh and 51 Bangladeshi enclaves in India.

(b to d) Both the Governments have agreed to the exchange of enclaves in the Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) signed in 1974. However the exchange of enclaves has not yet taken place.

(e to h) At the Foreign Secretary-level talks in December 2000, it was decided to set up two Joint Boundary Working Groups, to address the pending matters relating to the Land Boundary Agreement of 1974. The Groups were constituted in June 2001. Two meetings of the Groups took place on 2-4th July 2001 in Dhaka and 26-27th March 2002 in New Delhi. We requested for a joint survey of the enclaves since the Land Boundary Agreement envisages that the people in the areas to be transferred will be given a choice of citizenship. The Bangladesh position was that all necessary procedures for the exchange of enclaves had been completed in accordance with the Land Boundary Agreement and that there was no constitutional or legal barrier to the exchange. The Bangladesh side considered conducting census in the enclaves extraneous to the provisions of the Land Boundary Agreement; they maintained that survey/census was not a pre-condition to the exchange of enclaves.

However during the Foreign Office Consultations held in April 2003, Bangladesh side agreed for a joint census and survey provided they were carried out within a reasonable time frame. In July 2005, we have conveyed to the Government of Bangladesh that the total number of mandays required to complete the job was 1600 with 13 teams to be deployed for completion of the survey of enclaves on both sides. During the Foreign Office Consultations held in June 2005, it was decided to resume the meetings of the Joint Boundary Working Groups (JBWG) to address the boundary-related issues including exchange of enclaves. During the Home Secretary level talks held in October 2005, the Bangladesh side agreed to the holding of the meetings of the JBWG. Dates for the meetings are being worked out.