

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:466

ANSWERED ON:22.02.2006

INDO PAK FOREIGN SECRETARY LEVEL TALKS

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

- (a) whether India and Pakistan resumed Foreign Secretary level talks in January, 2006;
- (b) if so, whether the issue of cross border terrorism was conveyed to Pakistan during the said talks;
- (c) whether the two sides discussed CBMs like starting of Poonch-Rawalkot trans-border bus service and truck service along Srinagar-Muzzafarabad route;
- (d) if so, the details of issues discussed during the said talks and the outcome thereof;
- (e) whether India has entered into an agreement with Pakistan to avoid setting up of defence posts near LoC as reported in the Rashtriya Sahara dated January 18, 2006; and
- (f) if so, the details in this regard?

**Answer**

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

(a) The Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan met in New Delhi on 17-18 January 2006 to commence the third round of talks under the India-Pakistan Composite Dialogue framework.

(b) During the talks, it was reiterated that the dialogue process was predicated on Pakistan fulfilling its commitment of the 6 January 2004 Joint Statement that it would not permit any territory under its control to be used to support terrorism in any manner. India conveyed that terrorism was the central issue and that Indian public opinion would not tolerate it. Our ability to carry forward the dialogue process in a positive direction was related to the creation of an atmosphere free of violence. Attention was drawn to the fact that despite the assurances received at the highest level from Pakistan, there is no end to cross-border terrorism. The infrastructure of terrorism still continues to exist in Pakistan. Attention was drawn to the recent terrorist incidents, of the bomb blasts in Delhi, the incident at Bangalore. These incidents underlined the need for more action to curb cross-border terrorism and to eliminate the atmosphere of violence, whether in Jammu and Kashmir or anywhere else in India.

(c) The two sides also discussed, inter alia, the commencement of the Poonch - Rawalakot bus service and the truck service on Muzaffarabad-Srinagar route for trade in permitted goods as soon as the infrastructure damaged during the October 2005 earthquake is restored.

(d) During the talks, India and Pakistan discussed issues related to `Peace and Security including CBMs` and `Jammu and Kashmir`. They assessed the developments in bilateral relations and expressed satisfaction at the progress made during the Composite Dialogue process. The two sides reaffirmed their commitment to move forward the peace process in a meaningful way during the third round, recalling the outcome of the discussions between the President of Pakistan and Prime Minister of India reflected in the Joint Statements of 6 January 2004, 24 September 2004, 18 April 2005 and 14 September 2005.

On the issue of Peace and Security including CBMs, the two Foreign Secretaries reviewed and assessed positively the progress made during the meetings of experts on Nuclear and Conventional CBMs. They agreed to mandate the two experts groups to continue consultations on security concepts and nuclear doctrines to develop measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields aimed at avoidance of conflict, including, inter alia, consideration of an agreement on `Reducing Risk of Nuclear Accidents or Unauthorised Use of Nuclear Weapons`, conclusion of an agreement on prevention of incidents at sea, modalities for the conduct of already agreed monthly flag meetings between local commanders at the selected sectors. They had a detailed exchange of views on Jammu & Kashmir and agreed to continue the sustained dialogue in a purposeful and forward-looking manner to find a peaceful and negotiated final settlement. They also discussed the process of promoting greater interaction between divided families.

The two Foreign Secretaries discussed consular access and early repatriation of all civilian prisoners and fishermen, reopening of the Consulates General in Mumbai and Karachi and the schedule of meetings under the Composite Dialogue framework. Both sides also agreed to hold early meetings of the technical level working groups of the Joint Commission.

(e) - (f) Yes. The Foreign Secretaries agreed to mandate the two experts groups on Nuclear and Conventional CBMs to continue consultations for elaborating the agreement reached on no development of new posts and defence works along the LoC. The Indian side handed over a Non-Paper containing proposed elements to Pakistan for consideration which includes, inter alia, not undertaking any fresh construction within 500 metres of the LoC, confining ourselves to only the improvement of existing structures but not creating new posts along the LoC.