

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1095  
ANSWERED ON:02.08.2006  
PROGRESS IN PEACE PROCESS WITH PAKISTAN  
Satpathy Shri Tathagata

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

- (a) The progress made so far in the peace-process between India and Pakistan;
- (b) Whether the Union Government has decided to go ahead with the dialogue with Pakistan despite the serial bomb blasts in Mumbai recently;
- (c) If so, the reasons therefor;
- (d) Whether the said matter has been brought to the knowledge of Pakistan; and
- (e) If so, the response of Pakistan thereto ?

**Answer**

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

(a) Continuous efforts have been made to intensify the ongoing process of confidence building, dialogue, and cooperation with Pakistan. Two rounds of India–Pakistan Composite Dialogue have been successfully completed, and the third round is presently in progress. Significant progress has been made on various issues. The ceasefire along the Line of Control, International Border and Actual Ground Position Line has been holding since November 2003. Several Confidence Building Measures have been implemented. New transport and communication links have been established. India issued 90,663 visas to Pakistani nationals last year. There has been considerable progress on the humanitarian issue of release of civilian prisoners and fishermen in each other's custody. Since the commencement of the Composite Dialogue, India has released 277 Pakistani civilian prisoners and 281 Pakistani fishermen, while Pakistan has released 181 Indian civilian prisoners and 1264 Indian fishermen.

(b) – (d) Pakistan has been informed that the Foreign Secretary level talks to review the third round of the Composite Dialogue were postponed and a fresh set of dates would be discussed through diplomatic channels. India remains committed to the dialogue process with Pakistan. However, this can be sustained only if Pakistan acts against terrorist groups operating from territory under its control, in accordance with its commitments enshrined in the Joint Press Statement of January 6, 2004.

(e) Pakistan has accepted the postponement of the Foreign Secretary level talks. Pakistan Foreign Office Spokesperson stated that Islamabad's willingness to agree to rescheduling of the talks was not because the blasts have been allegedly linked to Pakistan but because of the "domestic" problem in India. President Musharraf, in an address on 20 July 2006, termed the postponement of the talks as the success of terrorists who want to stop the Composite Dialogue process.