

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:93

ANSWERED ON:09.03.2005

CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN

Rao Shri Kavuru Samba Siva;Yaskhi Shri Madhu Goud

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

- (a) whether Foreign Secretary level talks were held between India and Pakistan recently;
- (b) if so, the various issues discussed therein including the CBMs adopted by the two countries;
- (c) whether India has conveyed serious concerns to the US regarding its alleged arms sale to Pakistan in the wake of Indo-Pak dialogue having reached a sensitive stage;
- (d) if so, the reaction of the US Government thereto; and
- (e) the details of concrete steps envisaged to strengthen bilateral ties between the two countries?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (e) A statement is placed on the Table of the House.

Statement as mentioned in reply to the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 93 (Priority XIII) for answer on 09.03.05 regarding 'Confidence Building Measures between India and Pakistan'.

(a), (b) and (e): The Foreign Secretary Level talks between India and Pakistan were held from December 27-28 2004. The following main decisions were taken during the meeting:

On the issue of Peace and Security including CBMs, the two Foreign Secretaries, inter-alia reviewed the progress made during the meetings of Experts on Nuclear and Conventional CBMs. Building upon the existing contacts between DGMOs, they agreed to promote regular contacts at local level at designated places and explore further CBMs along the international boundary and the LoC. They discussed and narrowed further their differences on the draft agreement on pre-notification of flight testing of ballistic missiles, and agreed to work towards its early finalization.

It was agreed that the meetings on the other six subjects under the Composite Dialogue, i.e. Siachen, Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Navigation Project, Sir Creek, Terrorism & Drug Trafficking, Economic & Commercial Cooperation and Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in Various Fields would be held on mutually agreed dates between April and June 2005.

It was decided that technical meetings including the Joint Study Group on Trade and Economic Cooperation headed by the Commerce Secretaries, Indian Coast Guards and Pakistan Maritime Security Agency, Pakistan Rangers and Border Security Force of India, Expert level dialogue on Nuclear and Conventional CBMs, technical level meeting on bus service between/through Amritsar and Lahore, meeting between the Narcotics Control Authorities would be held between January and June 2005.

On issues related to apprehended fishermen, civilian prisoners and missing defence personnel, it was inter-alia agreed that:

- (i) Immediate notification would be provided to the respective High Commissions through the Foreign Ministries of arrested Pakistani/Indian nationals;
- (ii) Consular access would be provided within three months of apprehension;
- (iii) Repatriation would be done immediately after completion of sentence and nationality verification;
- (iv) A mechanism would be introduced for early repatriation, without sentencing of inadvertent crossers;
- (v) A similar mechanism would be established for early release, without sentencing of those under 16 apprehended by either side.

India announced Visa on arrival at Wagah Border for Pakistani nationals above 65 years, children below 16 years, and pre-vetted groups and grant of Student Visas to Pakistan nationals on a case-by-case basis.

The India-Pakistan process was taken significantly forward during the External Affairs Minister, Shri K. Natwar Singh's visit from 15-17 February, 2005. Following concrete steps were taken to further strengthen bilateral relations:

(i) Agreements were reached to start bus services between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad, and between Lahore and Amritsar, including to religious places such as Nankana Sahib. Pakistan also agreed to work towards early restoration of the Munnabao-Khokrapar rail link.

(ii) It was also decided that agreements would be concluded in the coming months on Pre-notification of Missile Tests, and between Coast Guards and Pakistan's Maritime Security Agency, as well as between the narcotics control authorities of the two countries. Discussions would begin on Agreements on Preventing Incidents at Sea, and Reducing the Risk of Nuclear Accident or Unauthorised use of Nuclear Weapons.

(c) and (d): India's strong concern regarding the repercussions of arms sales to Pakistan by the US, including on the ongoing India-Pakistan dialogue, has been conveyed at high levels to the US Government. It was also conveyed that such transfers of arms to Pakistan at a time when Indo-US relations saw transformation towards a strategic partnership, will impact on the goodwill for the US in India.

U.S. officials have stated that while the United States values its relationship with India, as far as India-Pakistan relations were concerned, while the US has an arms supply relationship with Pakistan, it was supportive of the India-Pakistan dialogue.