

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1940

ANSWERED ON:23.07.2014

AGREEMENTS WITH BANGLADESH

Chavan Shri Harishchandra Deoram;Godse Shri Hemant Tukaram;Gogoi Shri Gaurav;Reddy Shri Ponguleti Srinivasa;Singh Dr. Prabhas Kumar;Tharoor Dr. Shashi

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

- (a) whether the matter of relaxed visa norms for certain categories of Bangladeshi citizens has been discussed at the bilateral level and if so the details thereof;
- (b) whether any opposition has been voiced against relaxing visa norms for Bangladeshi citizens including by certain State Governments and if so, the details thereof along with the steps taken to address the apprehensions;
- (c) whether any interactions at bilateral level have been held between India and Bangladesh regarding reaching any consensus on the Land Boundary Agreement and Teesta River Water Agreement; and
- (d) if so, the details and the outcome thereof?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (GEN. RETD. V.K.SINGH)

(a) to (d) The matter of visa norms has been discussed at various levels with Bangladesh as part of the bilateral agenda between India and Bangladesh. As a result of these discussions, Revised Travel Arrangements were signed with Bangladesh in January 2013 to ease the visa obtaining procedures and promote people-to-people exchanges between the two countries. There were media reports of some State governments opposing visa free entry for Bangladeshi citizens. However, there is no proposal being considered at present for grant of visa free entry to Bangladeshi nationals.

The issues of Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) and Teesta River Water Agreement have been discussed at various bilateral meetings between India and Bangladesh and the Indian side has conveyed that the Constitution Amendment Bill on the LBA is under the scrutiny of the Standing Committee on External Affairs of the Indian Parliament. On the Teesta River Water Sharing Agreement it has been conveyed to the Bangladesh side that the matter is under discussion with the concerned stakeholders for building a consensus.