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Title : The Minister of External Affairs made a statement regarding the "Visit of President of Pakistan to India on April 8, 2012".

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): Madam, I rise to inform the House on the visit of H.E. Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on 8th April, 2012.

His Excellency Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan came to India on a private visit on April 8, 2012. The primary purpose of his visit was to pray at the shrine of Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti at Ajmer. However, President Zardari was kind enough to accept Prime Minister's invitation to lunch in New Delhi on his way to visit Ajmer.

President Zardari and Prime Minister met before lunch for about forty minutes and had friendly and constructive discussions covering India-Pakistan relations, and regional and global issues of common interest. In their discussions, the two leaders noted that there had been steady progress in the bilateral dialogue process which was resumed last year. The dialogue process will continue as planned in the months to come.

Prime Minister expressed appreciation of the fact that Pakistan has moved forward on trade-related issues. Both leaders felt that we should tap into the considerable potential of bilateral economic and trade ties for progress and prosperity of our two peoples. The issue has been discussed by the Commerce Ministers of the two countries, and there is a way forward which has already been identified.

12.08 hrs (Shri P.C. Chacko *in the Chair*)

Prime Minister and President Zardari discussed the subject of terrorism. Prime Minister told President Zardari that there is need for taking firm action to curb terrorism to enable us to make forward movement in the bilateral relationship. He conveyed that it was imperative to bring the perpetrators of the Mumbai attack to justice, and prevent activities aimed against India from Pakistani soil. In this context, he also mentioned the activities of Hafiz Saeed carried out in public. It would be evident that our concerns on terrorism had to be addressed if the people of India are to support and sustain progress in bilateral relations. President Zardari referred to judicial processes against Saeed and said the matter need to be discussed further between the two Governments. It was noted that the Home Secretaries are due to meet shortly and they would be discussing this issue further.

President Zardari mentioned the need for all issues in the bilateral relationship including Sir Creek, Siachen, and the issue of Kashmir to be addressed. Both leaders felt that we need to move forward step by step and find pragmatic and mutually acceptable solutions to all those issues. [\[k2\]](#)

The two leaders also discussed developments in the region. They agreed to use the potential of regional cooperation for the economic development of people of both countries. It was clear from the conversation that both countries consider the dialogue process and the improvement of bilateral relations as being in the mutual interest of the people of India and Pakistan.

The two leaders also felt that priority needed to be given to issues of people-to-people contacts. In this context, they decided that a liberalised visa agreement which has been worked out should be signed during the next meeting of the Home/Interior Secretaries.

President Zardari invited Prime Minister to visit Pakistan. PM accepted the invitation with pleasure and said that he would be happy to visit at an appropriate time. The diplomatic channels will be used to work out mutually acceptable dates and substantive preparations for that visit.

(Placed in Library, See No. LT 6566/15/12)

SHRI JASWANT SINGH (DARJEELING): Sir, I have the highest regard for the hon. the Minister of External Affairs. The statement pertains to the visit by a Head of State and the discussions of the Head of States and that of Governments. Parliamentary propriety and courtesy requires that the statement ought really to have been made by hon. the Prime Minister so that we have the benefit of having the Prime Minister share with the House and thus the country as to exactly what transpired. This is not a comment on the Minister of External Affairs statement which he has read out with great ability. I am raising a point about the Prime Minister's continued and persistent actions from Parliament whenever it concerns his duty and function to keep the Parliament apprised for what he is doing as Prime Minister particularly in this instance, his discussion with the Head of State of a visiting country.

12.10 hrs.