

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:153

ANSWERED ON:07.03.2001

VISIT TO VIETNAM

B.K. PARTHASARATHI;RENUKA CHOWDHURY

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the bilateral and multilateral issues discussed by our Prime Minister with his Vietnamese counterpart and other leaders during his recent visit over there;
- (b) the details of the agreements signed on the occasion, sector-wise;
- (c) the areas identified for future cooperation between the two countries;
- (d) the steps taken or strategy chalked out for further increasing the bilateral trade; and
- (e) how the visit is likely to strengthen the bilateral relations?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH)

(a) PM discussed a range of bilateral and multilateral issues of political and economic significance. Among bilateral issues PM discussed

- (i) Trade and investment
- (ii) Peaceful uses of nuclear energy
- (iii) Defence and
- (iv) Culture & Education, while under Multilateral issues were included:
 - (i) UNSC Membership,
 - (ii) Indo-ASEAN summit
 - (iii) Mekong-Ganga Cooperation and
 - (iv) WTO.

(b)

- (i) Agreement on Cooperation in Tourism
- (ii) MOU on Cooperation in Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy,
- (iii) Protocol on extension of CEP for three years, i.e., for 2001, 2002 and 2003.

(c) & (d) The methodology of expanding trade from the present low figure of US\$ 150 million to \$ 500 million in three years was discussed. Also to how to offset Vietnam's adverse trade balance with India and increase investment cooperation in keeping with rapidly unfolding economic reforms. Both sides expressed satisfaction at ONGC's plans for going on-stream in a major natural gas JV in Vietnam by end of 2002; we offered to assist Vietnam to set up software development and training centres and to improve its HRD skills.

(e) PM's visit reaffirmed confidence in Vietnam as a factor for peace and stability in the region and while recognizing need for more efforts, widened areas of economic/technical cooperation between us. Vietnam's leaders reiterated their full support on matters of vital concern to us, including the candidature for permanent membership in the UN Security Council.