

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:336  
ANSWERED ON:23.07.2003  
FOREIGN MINISTER'S TOURS ABROAD  
CHANDRAKANT BHURAO KHAIRE

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

- (a) the names of countries visited by him in the last six months;
- (b) the details of the discussions held and the outcome thereof;
- (c) whether any agreement has been signed during these visits; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI VINOD KHANNA)

(a) Greece, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Russian Federation, Malaysia, Tanzania, Botswana, UK, Peru, Brazil, Cambodia, Mauritius, South Africa and Bangladesh.

(b) to (d): GREECE: January 15-18, 2003.

EAM participated in the India-EU Troika Ministerial Meeting under the Greek Presidency of the EU. Greek Foreign Minister, Italian Foreign Minister, EU High Representative Mr. Solana and EC External Affairs Commissioner Mr. Patten participated from the EU side. The meeting reviewed India-EU bilateral Relations and also exchanged Views on regional and international issues. The EU side was fully sensitised to our concerns, especially cross-border terrorism. Both sides agreed that economic and technical cooperation should be intensified.

TAJIKISTAN: Jan. 28-30, 2003

EAM called on Tajik President, PM, Foreign Minister and Defence Minister and held discussions on bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest. An Agreement to set up a joint working group on terrorism and an MOU on Food Processing Plant were signed.

KYRGYZSTAN: Jan. 30-31, 2003

EAM called on Kyrgyz President PM, Foreign Minister and Defence Minister and held discussions on bilateral and regional issues of mutual interest. An agreement on Consular Convention was signed.

KAZAKHSTAN: Jan 31-Feb 1, 2003

EAM met Kazakh Minister of Energy & Mineral Resources and Parliament members and discussed regional and bilateral issues of mutual interest. No agreement was signed during this visit.

RUSSIAN FEDERATION: Feb 19-20, 2003 & May 14-18, 2003.

During his visit to the Russian Federation, EAM met President Putin, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov, Defence Minister Sergei Ivanov and Industry and S&T Minister Ilya Klebanov. He also delivered a speech on India's Foreign Policy at the Russian Diplomatic Academy. EAM also visited the Indian Trade Exhibition held in Moscow from 14-21 February 2003. During his meetings, bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest were discussed. It was decided that the 9th session of the Indo-Russian Inter-Governmental Commission for Trade, Economic, Scientific, Technological and Cultural Cooperation would be held in Moscow in May 2003. It was also decided that Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov would visit India in June, 2003. EAM also visited St. Petersburg. During his visit in May 2003, EAM had meetings with Prime Minister Mikhail Kasyanov, Finance Minister Alexie Kudrin and Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov. The 9th Session of the IRIGC was co-chaired by EAM and the Russian Minister of Industry and Science & Technology Ilya Klebanov. The Commission reviewed trade, economic, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation between the two countries and decided to concentrate on reinvigorating trade and economic relations. Information Technology, diamonds and semi-precious stones, power, metallurgy, science and technology, etc. were identified as important areas for cooperation in order to boost the trade relations between the two countries.

MALAYSIA: Feb, 23-25, 2003

EAM visited Kuala Lumpur for NAM Summit. No Agreement was signed during this visit.

TANZANIA: April 24-May 1, 2002 - (These are dates covering Botswana visit as well).

EAM Co-chaired Joint Commission Meeting. Review of ongoing cooperation in areas such as political, economic, defence, science & technology, culture, etc. contributing to strengthening of bilateral cooperation and understanding on multi-lateral issues. Two MOUs for cooperation in the field of education and on Economic Cooperation with the East African Community were signed.

BOTSWANA:

Discussions on matters pertaining to Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group. No agreement was signed during this visit.

The U.K.: May 19-21, 03

EAM attended the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG) meeting in London from 19-20 May. The meeting reviewed developments in Commonwealth countries on the CMAG agenda. It was decided to continue Pakistan's suspension from the councils of the Commonwealth. EAM held separate bilateral discussions with the UK Foreign Secretary Mr. Jack Straw. Both Ministers reviewed progress in bilateral relations in the framework of the implementation of the New Delhi Declaration signed by the two Prime Ministers in January 2002. Regional and international issues of mutual interest were also discussed. The UK side showed understanding of our concerns regarding cross border terrorism. No agreement was signed.

MAURITIUS; June 30-July 5, 2003 - (these dates also cover South Africa visit).

Discussions held to strengthen cooperation in areas such as political, defence, science technology and trade. Two MOUs on Foreign Office consultation and in the field of social. Defence including welfare of street children, juvenile justice system and other areas in the general field of social defence were signed.

South Africa: Joint Commission Meeting. Review of ongoing cooperation in areas such as political, economic, defence, science & technology, culture etc. contributed to strengthening of bilateral cooperation and understanding on multi-lateral issues. No agreement was signed.

PERU: June 3-4, 2003

EAM called on President Toledo and had detailed discussion on entire gamut of bilateral relations with his counterpart, First Vice President, Minister of Trade and Tourism and Minister of Education. During this visit Peru announced support for India's claim for a Permanent seat in the expanded UN Security Council. Two agreements were signed. In Peru, one on abolition of visa requirement for holders of diplomatic and official passport and other on the multilateral side, signed between EAM and Foreign Minister Wagner on behalf of the Andean Community (CAN) to set up a mechanism for Political consultations and cooperation between India and Andean Community.

BRAZIL: June 4-9, 2003

In Brazil, apart from a call on President Lula EAM held detailed discussion on entire gamut of bilateral relations with his counterpart, Ministers for Planning, Finance and Health. In addition to bilateral component, a trilateral meeting was also held amongst the Foreign Ministers of India, Brazil and South Africa and the outcome of this meeting is the launching of India-Brazil-South Africa (IBSA) Dialogue Forum. It was also decided that Ministers of economy, Planning, Science & Technology, Transportation and Civil Aviation would hold early Trilateral meetings in order to develop programmes and projects for cooperation. A Joint Trilateral Commission with the Foreign Ministers of the three countries as Co-Chairpersons has been set up. The next meeting of IBSA Dialogue forum will be held in India within the next twelve months. In Brazil with regard to the trilateral meeting, the Brasilia Declaration was issued.

CAMBODIA: June 16-19, 2003

EAM visited Phnom Penh (Cambodia) for the 10th ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Meeting; Post Ministerial Conferences (PMC) with ASEAN, consisting of the 10+10 and 10+1 Meetings; and, the 3rd Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (MGC) Ministerial Meeting. The ARF Meeting held discussions on matters of regional and international security, including the situation in the Korean Peninsula, terrorism, transnational crimes and maritime security. In the PMC 10+10 Meeting, there was an exchange of views on developmental issues, as well as international and regional political, economic, financial and trade issues; transnational issues were also discussed. The PMKC 10+1 Meeting reviewed ASEAN-India cooperation in various fields. MGC; the Ministers explored a number of new and innovative ideas for cooperation, to be collated in a 'Phnom Penh Roadmap'.

BANGLADESH: July 14-16, 2003:

EAM visited Dhaka for the sixth meeting of the India-Bangladesh Joint Economic Commission, which he co-chairs. Discussions were conducted in a free and frank atmosphere. The deliberations focussed on strengthening and diversifying economic relations between the two countries. Subjects discussed and agreed upon included (i) negotiations on a bilateral Free Trade Agreement to begin in October 2003; (ii) enhanced cooperation in the railway sector that has emerged as a key area of bilateral economic cooperation, including discussions on commencement of containerised rail services; (iii) utilisation and further extension of Rs.200 crore credit line to Bangladesh and offer of new credit line, which will include a number of proposals in the railway sector (iv) new areas of cooperation including science and technology, information technology and agriculture; (v) Joint Working Groups for cooperation in customs and in removal of non-tariff barriers in trade respectively to meet shortly and (vi) strengthening of multi-modal transport links and

operationalisation of the Dhaka-Agartala bus service in August, 2003.