

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1374  
ANSWERED ON:10.12.2003  
PM VISIT TO UN  
IQBAL AHMED SARADGI

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

- (a) whether during his visit to UN, bilateral and regional issues figured in the talks between our Prime Minister and leaders of Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Portugal;
- (b) if so, whether Afghanistan President has expressed concern over the increased cross-border activity from Pakistan;
- (c) if so, whether our Prime Minister took up this issue with all the leaders he met including the US President; and
- (d) if so, the outcome thereof ?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a) Yes. Prime Minister met with the leaders of Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Portugal on the margins of the 58th Session of UN General Assembly in New York in September 2003. Bilateral and regional issues figured in the talks between the Prime Minister and the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka and the President of the Transitional Islamic State of Afghanistan. During his meeting with the Portuguese Prime Minister, the discussions covered review of bilateral relations including exchange of high level visits and trade & economic cooperation. Current regional and international issues including international terrorism were also discussed.

(b) No. However, in his speech at the 58th UN General Assembly in September 2003, President Karzai said that Governments must stop using extremism as an instrument of policy. He added that as long as terrorism survives in this part of the world, neither Afghanistan nor its neighbours nor indeed the rest of the world can be safe. Referring to the forces of violence, he said that terrorism, embodied in various manifestations, from cross-border militant infiltrations to hateful teachings at places disguised as madrassas, continues to make inroads into the space of peace and prosperity which he wants to secure for his nation. In an interview with the Pakistani daily, 'The News' in New York in September 2003, President Karzai is reported to have stated, inter alia, that the Taliban question is not being fully addressed by the government of Pakistan.

(c) & (d) Although there was no specific mention about cross border terrorism in the talks with the Portuguese Prime Minister, Mr. Durao Barroso, there was, however, mutual understanding that cooperation in the fight against international terrorism should continue. The Portuguese Prime Minister expressed his country's full support in the war against terrorism.

During his meetings with the leaders of Zimbabwe, South Africa, Nigeria and Mauritius on the margins of UN General Assembly in New York in September 2003, situation in South Asia was discussed, including the question of cross border terrorism. While cross border activity from Pakistan into Afghanistan was not specifically discussed, the issue of terrorism and the need to combat it internationally discussed.

The Prime Minister did not discuss issues on Afghanistan with his counterpart from Sri Lanka.

Prime Minister and US President George Bush discussed progress in the efforts to combat terrorism in the global and regional South Asian contexts.