

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:197
ANSWERED ON:01.12.2004
INDO-BHUTAN GROUP ON BORDER MANAGEMENT
Mahto Shri Tek Lal;Rao Shri Sambasiva Rayapati

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) Whether India and Bhutan have agreed to undertake specific measures to strengthen security along the border, including the deployment of SSB forces from the Indian side;
- (b) if so, whether this agreement was reached during the External Affairs Minister's visit to that country;
- (c) if so, whether both countries have expressed satisfaction on the formation of a bilateral group on border management and security;
- (d) if so, whether the Bhutan Government has assured that there will be no militant camp in Bhutan that conducts anti-India activities; and
- (e) if so, the details in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a), (b), (c), (d) & (e) - A Statement is placed on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN THE ANSWER TO THE LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.197 TO BE ANSWERED ON 01.12.2004 ON 'INDO-BHUTAN GROUP ON BORDER MANAGEMENT'

Royal Bhutan Army undertook successful military operations in December 2003 and January 2004 to flush out Indian Insurgent Groups located in Southern and Eastern Bhutan. As a result of the operations, 30 camps belonging to ULFA, NDFB and KLO were destroyed. The Government of India stood firmly behind the Royal Government of Bhutan, providing all the requested logistical support, till the completion of operation.

2. Government of India is committed to providing all security assistance to Bhutan required to prevent and minimise any adverse fallout of the flush out operations. SSB is being deployed along the India-Bhutan border. It is also providing convoy protection to Bhutanese vehicles transiting through Assam. To strengthen cooperation on security issues, a Joint India-Bhutan Border Security Group has been set up under the Home Ministries of the two countries, and two fruitful meetings have been held in March and September 2004. There is close interaction between security agencies of India and Bhutan. There is also effective coordination between bordering districts of India and Bhutan.

3. During the visit of External Affairs Minister to Bhutan in October 2004 and other high level meetings between the two countries, both sides have expressed satisfaction at the working of the joint mechanism and ongoing cooperation between the two countries.

4. Royal Government of Bhutan has assured us that insurgent groups would not be allowed to use Bhutanese territory for activities against India.