

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5435  
ANSWERED ON:28.04.2010  
BILATERAL RELATIONS  
Ramasubbu Shri S.

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

- (a) whether any discussions were held recently between India and Sri Lanka, on various bilateral issues;
- (b) if so, the outcome thereof; and
- (c) the steps taken by the Government to improve the ties between the two countries?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SMT. PRENEET KAUR)

(a) to (c): In March 2010 Foreign Secretary visited Sri Lanka. During her visit Foreign Secretary had meetings with the President of Sri Lanka, Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, Foreign Secretary and other senior officials of Sri Lanka. She also met representatives of leading political parties.

While emphasizing the need to ensure the safety and security of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), Foreign Secretary expressed the hope that the resettlement process could be expedited so that the IDPs could resume normal lives. The Foreign Secretary reiterated the need to arrive at a peacefully negotiated political settlement acceptable to all communities in Sri Lanka. President of Sri Lanka appreciated India's substantial assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka and for the resettlement of Internally Displaced Persons. Both sides noted the decrease in incidents of apprehending Indian fishermen after the October 2008 Understanding.

India announced contribution of Rs. 1.5 crores to the India-Sri Lanka Foundation, assistance to restore Thiruketeeshwaram Temple in Mannar, and sanctioned 55 buses to various educational, social and cultural organisations and locally elected bodies in northern, eastern and central Sri Lanka with a view to supporting the transportation sector and strengthening connectivity in these areas.

During her visit Foreign Secretary inaugurated the Sri Lanka-India Centre for English Language Training in Peradeniya, Kandy. The centre has been set up with the assistance of the Government of India has a state-of-the-art digital language laboratory.