

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
FINANCE
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4365
ANSWERED ON:20.08.2010
MULTIPLE ENTRY VISA AGREEMENT WITH SAUDI ARABIA
Lagadapati Shri Rajagopal

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether India and Saudi Arabia have recently agreed to grant long-term, multiple entry visas to business persons and also entered into agreements on S&T, oil, gas and minerals in the recently held Indo-Saudi Joint Commission;
- (b) if so, the details of the agreements entered into between India and Saudi Arabia; and
- (c) the manner in which India has so far been benefited thereby?

Answer

Minister of State in the Ministry of Finance (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA)

(a): Yes, Sir, in the 8th Indo-Saudi Joint Commission both sides agreed to grant six months multiple entry visa to business persons on production of a letter from the concerned chambers of Commerce and Export Promotion Councils of the country of the applicants. But the Agreement has been signed in the area of Science & Technology only during the visit of Prime Minister to Riyadh in Feb-March, 2010. Though there is a mention of cooperation in the field of Oil, Gas and Minerals in the agreed minutes of the 8th Indo-Saudi Joint Commission, no agreements on Oil, Gas and Minerals were signed during the Prime Minister's visit.

(b): The details of Agreement entered into, between India and Saudi Arabia in the areas of Science & Technology are as under:

Agreement on S&T cooperation between Department of S&T, Govt. of India and King Abdul- Aziz City for S&T(KACST). Areas of cooperation identified by KACST are as follows:

- i) Space Science
- ii) Information Technology
- iii) Biotechnology
- iv) Advanced Manufacturing
- v) Automotive Engineering

MOU between Indian Space Research Organization(ISRO) and King Abdul-Aziz City for S & T(KACST): Under this agreement Antrix, the commercial Wing of ISRO, has agreed to develop and launch satellites for Saudi Arabia through KACST.

MOU between Centre for Development of Advanced Computing(C-DAC) and King Abdul-Aziz City for S&T(KACST):The MOU envisages cooperation in the areas of information technology and services and stipulates setting-up of an IT Centre of Excellence by C-DAC for KACST.

(c) It has provided a new impetus to propel the Indo-Saudi bilateral relationship to a strategic level in which science and technology cooperation constitutes a crucial component. The agreements on S&T will provide further potential for extensive trade between the two countries and facilitate the growth of investments, joint ventures, joint initiatives, technology developments and market in the IT Sector.