

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1692
ANSWERED ON:10.08.2011
LOOK EAST POLICY
Meinya Dr. Thokchom

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government of India still pursues the Look East Policy;
- (b) if so, the details of the present activities being undertaken under the said Policy;
- (c) whether the linking of our road network particularly NH-39 with that of Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, etc. is part of our Look East Policy; and
- (d) if so, the progress made, so far, in this direction?

Answer

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

(a) Yes.

(b) There has been steady progress in India's ties with countries of East Asia as well as in the India-ASEAN relationship through the years. India became a Sectoral Dialogue Partner of ASEAN in 1992. The relationship was upgraded within ten years in 2002 to the level of an Annual Summit Level Dialogue Partnership. Trade between India and ASEAN countries has now reached US\$ 55.21 billion as compared to US\$ 7.84 billion in 2001-2002. India is today ASEAN's sixth largest trading partner and eighth largest investor. The Framework Agreement for Comprehensive Economic Cooperation signed in 2003 is at the heart of India's economic engagement with ASEAN countries. An Agreement on Trade-in-Goods has been concluded after negotiations over six years. India and ASEAN are also intensifying cooperation in diverse sectors, including science & technology, tourism, transport & infrastructure, information & communication technology, space technologies, agriculture, energy etc. India is pursuing extensive engagements with countries of North East Asia with whom also our trade and investment ties are increasing rapidly. There are regular high level exchanges between countries in East Asia and India, including Ministerial/Summit level events.

(c) & (d) The Government of India has built the 160 km (approx) India-Myanmar Friendship Road between Tamu-Kalewa-Kalemyo (TKK road) in Myanmar which connects Myanmar to Moreh in Manipur. This will eventually become part of the India-ASEAN Highway. India and Myanmar are also in discussions to undertake various other road projects including the road from Zawkhathar (Mizoram)/Rhi into Myanmar. These roads, besides providing a valuable cross border link between India and Myanmar, enhance cross border trade, tourism and economic development of the areas on both sides of the border.