

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3556
ANSWERED ON:24.08.2011
RESEARCH AND INFORMATION SYSTEM
Singh Shri Radhey Mohan

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the role of Research and Information System (RIS) for Developing countries working as a think-tank under his Ministry;
- (b) the manner in which its working has strengthened India's socio-economic relations with various countries; and
- (c) the details of inputs it has so far provided to solve particular issues at international level during the last three years?

Answer

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

(a) RIS is an autonomous research institution established and funded by Ministry of External Affairs. It specializes in policy research on international economic issues and developmental issues of interest to developing countries. The focus of the work programme of RIS is to promote South-South Cooperation and assist developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. RIS is also engaged in the Track II process of several regional initiatives. The other major activities of RIS include policy advisory services, fostering policy dialogue by organizing conferences, symposia and workshops, capacity building and training programmes etc. RIS is also mandated to function as an advisory body to the Government of India on matters pertaining to multilateral economic and social issues, including regional and sub-regional cooperation arrangements, as may be referred to it from time to time.

It also provides inputs for India's economic engagements with its neighbours, in particular Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives and Myanmar as well as with multilateral groupings such as ASEAN, East Asia Summit (EAS), BIMSTEC, IOR-ARC, IBSA, BRICS and global fora such as G-20, G-8 etc.

(b) Through its studies, RIS has provided recommendations for greater engagement with other developing countries. RIS has also played an active role in providing inputs for Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreements (CEPAs), SAFTA etc which facilitate India's closer economic relations with its partner countries. RIS is also active in the Track II process with other countries to promote people-to-people contacts.

(c) RIS has, inter alia, provided inputs enhancing understanding of issues of global, regional economic, commercial and of integration nature. ASEAN-India, East Asia Summit (Chiang-Mai Initiative and EAS, Inputs on Economic Cooperation among East Asia Summit Members etc), BIMSTEC (Economic Cooperation), SAARC (Economic Cooperation), CEPEA, G-20, IOR-ARC, India-EU (India-EU Broad-based Trade and Investment Agreement (BTIA) Negotiations in Trade in Services with special reference to Audio-Visual Services), Mekong-Ganga Cooperation (India's Air Connectivity Potentials with Mekong Sub-region), etc are some of the areas where RIS is engaged in studies/research and continues to provide inputs.