

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:430  
ANSWERED ON:23.11.2011  
PAKISTAN TO STRENGTHEN RELATIONS WITH INDIA  
Choudhary Shri Bhudeo

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

- (a) whether Pakistan has expressed its desire to strengthen its relations with India;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Indian Government thereto;
- (c) whether India and Pakistan have finalised the draft visa agreement and a trade pact; and
- (d) if so, details thereof?

**Answer**

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

(a) & (b) Leadership in Pakistan from time to time has said that Pakistan wants to have good relations with India. India wishes to have constructive relations with Pakistan to enable both countries to effectively address our common developmental priorities.

(c) & (d) In the 2nd meeting of the India-Pakistan Joint Working Group, held at New Delhi on October 13-14, 2011, to examine the modalities for streamlining the visa procedures and to finalize the draft of the new Bilateral Visa Agreement, the two sides finalized the draft text of the Agreement, which will be submitted to the respective Governments for obtaining necessary approvals in order to sign the Agreement at an early date. No trade pact with Pakistan is being finalised at this stage. However, the Commerce Ministers of India and Pakistan met in September 2011 in New Delhi and gave a mandate to the respective Commerce Secretaries to lay down specific timelines for full normalisation of trade relationship, dismantling of remaining non-tariff barriers and full implementation of legal obligations under the SAARC Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area. During the 17th SAARC Summit held at Maldives from November 9-11, 2011, the two Prime Ministers directed both sides to work on enhancing preferential trading arrangements under the SAFTA process. Commerce Secretaries of both countries met in New Delhi on November 14-16, 2011 to carry forward the process of normalisation of trade relations between the two countries.