

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6645
ANSWERED ON:16.05.2012
MEETING BETWEEN INDO PAK DIGNITARIES
Joshi Shri Mahesh

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of times the Ministers of External Affairs, Prime Ministers and Foreign Secretaries of India and Pakistan have held meetings during the last three years and the current year;
- (b) the details of the issues discussed during these meetings; and
- (c) the outcome of these talks held along with the measures adopted to settle mutual disputes?

Answer

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

(a) to (c) During the period 2009- May 2012, the Prime Ministers and Ministers of External Affairs of India and Pakistan have met five times each; the Foreign Secretaries have met nine times. These include meetings on the margins of multilateral events besides bilateral meetings.

In pursuance of the mandate given by the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan in April 2010, the Foreign Ministers and Foreign Secretaries of two countries discussed the modalities for restoring trust and confidence in the relationship and thus paving the way for a comprehensive sustained and meaningful dialogue on all issues of mutual interest and concern. In all the meetings, the status of bilateral relations was reviewed and the importance of carrying forward the dialogue process with a view to resolving peacefully all outstanding issues was affirmed. India reiterated in all the discussions the need for Pakistan to fulfill its repeated assurances, including those given at the highest level, not to allow the use of territory under its control for terrorism directed against India and to bring to book the perpetrators of the Mumbai terrorist attack. It was agreed that increase in trade and economic engagement between the two countries would be mutually beneficial. It was also agreed that people-to-people contacts and humanitarian issues should be accorded priority and treated with sensitivity. The first round of the resumed dialogue was completed during March-July 2011.

The discussions have contributed to better understanding of each other's positions. The second round of the resumed dialogue has commenced with the meeting of the Commerce Secretaries in November 2011 and Secretary level talks on Tulbul Navigation Project in March 2012. The Dialogue process has strengthened people-to-people contacts, as a result of the enhancement of transport linkages and people-centric Confidence Building Measures including Cross-LOC trade and travel. Pakistan has moved towards normalization of trade relations by making the transition from a 'Positive list' to a 'Negative list' of imports from India. The Negative List is expected to be phased out by the Government of Pakistan before the end of 2012. In connection with the trial underway in Pakistan of the seven accused in the Mumbai terror attacks case, a Judicial Commission from Pakistan visited India from March 14-21, 2012.