

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:938

ANSWERED ON:25.11.2009

ASEAN SUMMIT

Botcha Lakshmi Smt. Jhansi;Chowdhury Shri Adhir Ranjan;Gowda Shri D.B. Chandre;Muttemwar Shri Vilas Baburao;Panda Shri Prabodh;Ram Shri Purnmasi;Singh Shri Sushil Kumar

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Summit was held in Thailand recently;
- (b) if so, the details of the discussions held during the summit;
- (c) whether the Prime Minister of India met the Prime Minister of China on the sidelines of the Summit;and
- (d) if so, the details of the issues discussed between the two leaders and the outcome thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF THE STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (DR. SHASHI THAROOR)

(a) Yes.

(b) At the India-ASEAN Summit held on 24th October, 2009 in Cha-am Hua Hin, Thailand, PM exchanged views with ASEAN leaders to further strengthen India's ties with the ASEAN. The conclusion of the India-ASEAN Trade-in-Goods Agreement was a concrete step forward in this process. The leaders favoured an early conclusion of negotiations on the Trade -in-Services and Investment Agreement. Apart from noting the progress on initiatives taken by India before the Hua Hin Summit, Prime Minister made several offers to further strengthen the India-ASEAN links. These included a Round Table for policy inputs, negotiations for open skies policy, further simplification of the visa regime for business and tourism, exchange programme for the youth, commencement of exchange between parliamentarians between India and the ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly and preparations for commemoration in 2012 of the 10th anniversary of India's Summit -level dialogue with ASEAN and 20 years as a sectoral dialogue partner. Other areas of cooperation proposed include agriculture, space and enhanced partnership of the ASEAN Integration Programme. He also offered US \$ 50 million to participate in ASEAN's work plans in areas such as education, energy, agriculture and forestry, SMEs and ICT. The ASEAN leaders expressed a strong desire to substantially strengthen their links in all areas.

(c) Yes.

(d) The two leaders had a frank and constructive exchange of views on all issues of interest, including on the Boundary Question and matters relating to trans-border rivers. Both leaders agreed to continue and strengthen efforts to build political trust and understanding. They agreed that existing mechanisms of bilateral cooperation should be used to resolve all issues amicably in the spirit of the Strategic and Cooperative Partnership. They reaffirmed the need to maintain peace and tranquility on the border pending a resolution of the boundary question.