

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2107  
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Gawali Patil Smt. Bhavana Pundlikrao

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

- (a) whether the Minister of State in his Ministry visited Liberia and Ghana recently; and  
(b) if so, the details of the issues discussed during his visit?

**Answer**

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

(a) & (b) Yes. Dr. Shashi Tharoor, Minister of State for External Affairs visited Liberia from 16 – 19 September, 2009 and made a transit halt at Accra (Ghana) on 19th September 2009.

**LIBERIA:**

A twelve member high-level official and business delegation accompanied the Minister of State. The business delegation composed of companies in the sectors of agriculture, mining, IT education, telecommunication, transportation and small industries.

Apart from calling on the Liberian President, Her Excellency Mrs. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the delegation held extensive talks with Acting Foreign Affairs Minister, H.E. Mr. William V.S. Bull, and the Ministers of Justice, Agriculture, Education, Telecommunication, Commerce and Industry and the Chairman of the National Investment Commission.

In the discussions with the Liberian leadership, India conveyed its commitment to become an active partner in Liberia's development and underlined that India's approach would be to respond to the needs of Liberia and participate in efforts and projects which are deemed to be priorities by the Liberian side.

Details of assistance offered to Liberia are as follows:- # US\$2 million grant-in-aid for projects in the education and health sectors.  
# Donation of 25 buses to augment the public transportation facilities in the capital Monrovia.  
# Setting up of an IT Centre of Excellence in Liberia.  
# Setting up of two 'Hole-in-the-Wall' computer education centres in Liberia.  
# To assist Liberia in capacity building and training, particularly Liberian diplomats and policemen.  
# Training of Liberian women in solar energy development at the Barefoot College, Tilonia in Rajasthan.

India appreciated the accession of Liberia to the Pan-African e-Network Project of the Government of India, through which it is deriving the benefits of tele-education and tele-medicine facilities.

Indian business delegation held intensive discussions and identified opportunities in mining, small enterprises development, IT education, agriculture and commercial farming.

The Liberian side offered substantial tracts of land for development of commercial cropping for increasing Liberia's food security as well as for export purposes.

Dr. Tharoor also met with members of the Indian Female Formed Police Unit which is rendering security services as part of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). He also interacted with the Indian community in Liberia.

Both countries recognized the need for comprehensive reform of the United Nations and the expansion of the UN Security Council to make it more representative of existing world realities. Liberia recognized the pioneering and substantive contribution of India towards UN activities particularly peacekeeping. Liberia also appreciated the role of the Indian contingent of UNMIL, particularly the first ever Indian Female Formed Police Unit (FFPU). Liberia agreed to extend its support for India's candidature of the non-permanent seat from the Asian Group for the period 2011-2012 for which elections are to be held in October 2010. India appreciated the Liberian gesture.

A Protocol on Foreign Office Consultations was signed during the visit.

**GHANA:**

During his brief halt at Accra, Dr. Tharoor called on H.E. Prof. John Evans Atta Mills, President of Ghana. He conveyed the good wishes of Prime Minister Dr. Manmoham Singh to President Atta Mills on the centenary birthday celebrations of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah,

the first President of Ghana. He also discussed with President Atta Mills matters of mutual interest, both bilateral and international.

President Mills warmly appreciated India's development, calling it a model country. He was deeply appreciative of the assistance provided by India for the economic development of Ghana and sought greater investment by Indian companies in agriculture, railways and the energy sectors. President Mills also unequivocally condemned terrorism in all its forms.