

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:435
ANSWERED ON:25.02.2015
FOREIGN POLICY ON SRI LANKA
Mahendran Shri C.;Raajhaa Shri Anwhar

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government is aware of the recent changes in the political scenario in Sri Lanka and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) whether the Government has contemplated to review the current foreign policy on Sri Lanka keeping in view the formation of new Government in that country and if so , the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government has also agreed to extend assistance to Sri Lanka in several sectors including setting up of a finance intelligence unit and if so, the details and benefits likely to be received by India as a result thereto; and
- (d) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to further improve bilateral ties with Sri Lanka?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(GEN. (DR) V. K. SINGH (RETD))

(a) Yes, the Presidential elections were held in Sri Lanka on January 8, 2015 in which the common opposition candidate Mr Maithripala Sirisena got elected as President.

(b) to (d) The President of Sri Lanka Mr Maithripala Sirisena undertook a State Visit to India from 15-18 February 2015 on our invitation. The discussions focussed on bilateral relations and international issues.

The issue of setting up a Finance Intelligence Unit in Sri Lanka came up during bilateral discussions. However, a formal proposal is awaited from Government of Sri Lanka.

Following Agreements/MoUs were signed during the visit:

Agreement on Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

Programme for Cultural Cooperation for the years 2015-18

MoU on Nalanda University Project

Work Plan 2015-16 under the MoU on cooperation in the field of Agriculture.

Announcements were also made for:

Commerce Secretary Level Talks

Reduction of entry fees for Sri Lankan nationals visiting National Museum