

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1408
ANSWERED ON:29.07.2015
President's Visit to Sweden and Belarus
S.R. Shri Vijay Kumar

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Head of the State has recently visited Sweden and Belarus with a view to firming up ties with these countries;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the details of discussions held and the agreements signed with each of these countries; and
- (d) the benefits likely to accrue to India as a result thereof?

Answer

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

(a) & (b) Yes. The President of India paid State visits to Sweden from May 31 to June 2, 2015 and Belarus from June 2 to 4, 2015. These were the first ever visits at Head of State level from India to these countries.

(c) The President held extensive and substantive discussions, including with the King, Prime Minister and Speaker of Sweden as well as the President and other leaders of Belarus covering bilateral and international issues. Promoting bilateral economic relations, scientific and technological links as well as educational and cultural ties were a major focus of the discussions. With Sweden, six Inter-Governmental agreements for cooperation in the fields of urban development, medium and small enterprises, exemption from visa requirements for holders of diplomatic passport, polar and ocean research, medicine and health research were signed. With Belarus, the agreements signed included a protocol on amending the Avoidance of Double Taxation Agreement and MoUs for Cooperation in textiles, capital markets, standardization and broadcasting. A Roadmap for comprehensive enhancement of the partnership between India and Belarus was also issued.

(d) The visit has contributed to further strengthen our cordial and mutually beneficial relations with Sweden and Belarus. New avenues of cooperation in various fields were also identified which would serve to enhance our bilateral partnership both with Sweden and Belarus.
