

Pakistan on all issues, including on "Peace and security" issues, based on mutual respect and regard for each others concerns. Government have also conveyed to the Chinese side our concern arising from the proliferated environment in our region and the importance of paying adequate attention to each other's concerns on vital issues affecting each other's security and territorial integrity.

[Translation]

### Indian Origin Citizens

1238. SHRI AJIT JOGI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the families of Indian Origin residing in Afghanistan and other foreign countries have been assaulted by soldiers or civilians during last three years; and

(b) if so, the country-wise, details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) :

(a) and (b) No credible reports about assault on families of Indian origin residing in Afghanistan, by soldiers or civilians, have been received during the last three years. Sporadic incidents of violence against families of Indian origin have been reported in the following countries: Canada (one); Czech Republic (two); Iran (two); and Turkmenistan (one). Some incidents of harassment of persons of Indian origin have also been reported in Indonesia, Russia and Zambia.

[English]

### Regional Passport Office, Bangalore

1239. SHRI K.C. KONDAIAH : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of passport issued during January 1997 to the end of February 1998 by the Bangalore Passport Office;

(b) the number of passports renewed during the above period;

(c) the minimum time taken to issue new passports and to renew the existing passports; and

(d) whether Single Window Agency is functioning at the above passport office?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) :

(a) the number of passports issued by the Passport Office at Bangalore is 1,09,478 during the fourteen months period from January 1997 to the end of February, 1998.

(b) the number of passports renewed by the same office during the above period is 23,669.

(c) Every effort is made to ensure that a fresh passport is issued within a period of five weeks from the date of application and renewal is undertaken within a period of one week, provided all documents are in order.

(d) Passport application together with supporting documents is required to be submitted at any single counter only. Fee is paid at a separate counter.

### Export of Nuclear Material

1240. SHRI S.S. OWAISI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the India have entered into export of nuclear material;

(b) if so, the total export of nuclear material made during the last two years, country-wise;

(c) whether western producers of nuclear material have tried to keep India away from this field by reducing their prices ; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to boost export nuclear material?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) :

(a) and (b) Apart from meeting the domestic requirement of various materials and components needed for the indigenous nuclear programme, efforts are made, when such opportunities arise, to offer expertise as well as some nuclear related material available in the country to other countries for peaceful uses. Some time back, Government of India entered into a contract with a South Korean power company for export of 100 metric tonnes of nuclear grade heavy water (valued at U.S.dollar 22.75 million) which is being shipped at present. Heavy water standards of various concentrations and valued at US dollar 35,800 have also been exported to South Korea during the last two years. Some quantity of nuclear grade zircaloy material worth about US dollar 5.84 lakh was also exported to South Korea during the last two years.

Thorium oxide ceramic buttons (500 pieces) valued at US dollar 15,000 were exported through an Indian representative company to General Electric, USA in July 1997.

(c) India has to naturally compete with some other countries for export of nuclear material like heavy water etc. However, there is no conclusive evidence that the competing countries are trying to keep India away from becoming an exporter of nuclear materials. It is possible that as a matter of business strategy in the existing market conditions, the exporting entities in some of these countries quote low enough prices to secure orders. However, in the absence of evidence to this effect, such competitive bidding need