

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

RAJYA SABHA
STARRED QUESTION NO.207
TO BE ANSWERED ON 12.05.2016

SECRETARY LEVEL TALKS WITH PAKISTAN

*207. SHRI NEERAJ SHEKHAR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government held Foreign Secretary level talks with Pakistan during the last week of April, 2016;
- (b) if so, the details thereof along with the details of issues discussed and the outcome of the said talks; and
- (c) whether Government also discussed the issue of Pathankot attack and visit of Pakistani Joint Investigating Team (JIT) thereafter, if so, the details thereof, if not, the reasons therefor?

ANSWER
THE MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ)

- (a) to (c) A Statement is laid on the table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (c) OF THE RAJYA SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 207 REGARDING “SECRETARY LEVEL TALKS WITH PAKISTAN” FOR ANSWER ON 12.05.2016

The Foreign Secretary of India met his Pakistani counterpart on the sidelines of the "Heart of Asia" Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) of over 30 countries and International organizations on Afghanistan held in New Delhi on April 26, 2016. The Pakistan Foreign Secretary was leading Pakistan's delegation to the SOM.

Recalling that during the visit of Pakistan's Joint Investigation Team (JIT) to India from March 27-April 1, 2016 in the context of the Pathankot terrorist attack, the JIT was given evidence, visited the crime scene and interviewed witnesses, the Foreign Secretary emphasised the need for early and visible progress on the Pathankot terrorist attack investigation as well as the Mumbai case trial in Pakistan. He also brought up the matter of listing of Jaish-e-Mohammad leader Masood Azhar in the UN 1267 Sanctions Committee. Foreign Secretary clearly conveyed that Pakistan cannot be in denial on the impact of terrorism on the bilateral relationship. Terrorist groups based in Pakistan targeting India must not be allowed to operate with impunity.

India also pressed for immediate consular access to Kulbhushan Jadhav, the former Naval officer whose presence in Pakistan remains unexplained in the absence of consular access to him.

The discussions between Foreign Secretaries also covered humanitarian issues including those pertaining to fishermen and prisoners, and people-to-people contacts, including religious tourism. The two Foreign Secretaries exchanged ideas on taking the relationship forward and agreed to remain in touch.
