

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.1341
TO BE ANSWERED ON 23.11.2016**

SAARC SUMMIT

1341. SHRI RAYAPATI SAMBASIVA RAO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether SAARC Summit scheduled to be held in Pakistan was cancelled recently and if so, reasons therefor;**
- (b) whether the Government had any consultation with SAARC nations regarding the future of SAARC; and**
- (c) if so, details thereof?**

ANSWER

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

(a) The 19th SAARC Summit scheduled on 9-10 November 2016 in Islamabad was postponed following communications from India, Afghanistan, Bhutan and Bangladesh to the current SAARC Chair Nepal conveying their inability to participate.

India conveyed that increasing cross-border terrorist attacks in the region and growing interference in the internal affairs of Member States by one country had created an environment that was not conducive to the successful holding of the Summit and that in the prevailing circumstances Government of India was unable to participate in the proposed Summit in Islamabad.

Afghanistan conveyed the unavailability of its President due to increased level of violence and fighting as a result of imposed terrorism on Afghanistan. Bangladesh cited growing interference in the internal matters of Bangladesh by one country. Bhutan conveyed its concern on the recent escalation of terrorism in the region.

(b) & (c) Since the postponement, there have been no consultations within SAARC framework regarding the future of SAARC. However, Government of India had also conveyed that it remained steadfast in its commitment to regional cooperation, connectivity and contacts but believed that those can only go forward in an atmosphere free of terror.
