

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-3403
TO BE ANSWERED ON 05/08/2022**

TRADE AGREEMENT

3403. SHRI THIRUMAAVALAVAN THOL

Will the Minister of **EXTERNAL AFFAIRS** be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government proposes to enter Bi-lateral trade agreement with the Government of Afghanistan, especially in tapping the Lithium, which is abundantly available in Afghanistan;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government is aware of the effect on extending China-Pakistan Economic Corridor to Afghanistan on security and economy of India; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof along with the plan to check its negative effect on our security and economy?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI V. MURALEEDHARAN)

(a) to (d) There is no proposal for such a bilateral trade agreement with Afghanistan.

The Government has seen reports regarding the proposed extension of the so-called China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Any such actions by any party directly infringe on India's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Such activities are inherently illegal, illegitimate and unacceptable, and will be treated accordingly by India.

India's position on CPEC has been clear and consistent. It passes through parts of the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh which are under illegal and forcible occupation of Pakistan and hence impinges on the issue of sovereignty and territorial integrity of India.

Government has also conveyed to the Chinese side its concerns about their activities in areas illegally occupied by Pakistan in the Union Territories of Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh and has asked them to cease these activities.

India is of firm belief that connectivity initiatives must be based on universally recognized international norms. It must follow the principles of openness, transparency and financial responsibility and must be pursued

in a manner that respects the sovereignty, equality and territorial integrity of other nations.

The Government continues to closely monitor the developments in Afghanistan, including the evolving security situation and takes all necessary measures to safeguard our national interest.
