

Counterfeit Currency Under 'Topac' Scheme

2966. SHRI P SOUND ARARAJAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of reports that ISI of Pakistan is engaged in printing counterfeit Indian currency in huge quantity to flood Indian market with such currency under a scheme code name 'Topac'.

(b) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to reports that a Pakistan deployment posted with the Pakistan Embassy in Kathmandu was caught red handed by the Nepal police with counterfeit Indian Currency recently; and

(c) what action has been taken by the Government to check ISI activities from endangering Indian economy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) to (c) Government is aware of reports that Pakistan is engaged in the printing of counterfeit Indian currency.

A staff member of the Pakistan Embassy in Nepal was caught red handed in Kathmandu in January 2000 while passing off counterfeit Indian currency to an undercover officer of the Nepal police. Government of Nepal asked the Pakistani Staff member to leave the country within 72 hours on account of his involvement in an activity incompatible with his status.

Government remain vigilant about these activities.

Pakistan's attitude over Kashmir issue

2967. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Pakistan's Military' ruler has asked Islamic countries to exert political and economic pressure on India to resolve the Kashmir issue as reported in the Hindustan Times dated 6th March, 2000;

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto;

(c) whether Government propose to expose Pakistan's such attitude in the international fora; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) to (d) Pakistan habitually and routinely indulges in hostile propagandist statements against India especially on OIC fora and with member States of the organisation to promote anti-India sentiments. Government have effectively and appropriately brought to the

notice of the international community, including member countries of the OIC, facts regarding Pakistan's support to terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir and elsewhere in India. There is a greater appreciation in the international community of Pakistan's sponsorship of cross-border terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir and elsewhere in India.

Recognition of India as a Nuclear Power

2968. SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that the John Hollmer adviser on nuclear proliferation to US President has outlined a two step plan to strip India of its nuclear weapon capability and opposed any recognition of India as a nuclear power under the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT); and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) and (b) Government have seen reports to this effect quoting the US official. Such statements are completely unrealistic and untenable. US is fully aware that India is a State possessing nuclear weapons and committed to maintaining a minimum credible nuclear deterrent. After the May 1998 nuclear tests, the Prime Minister declared "India is a nuclear weapon State. This is a reality that cannot be denied. It is not a conferment that we seek; nor is it a status for others to grant."

Prime Minister's visit to Mauritius

2969. SHRI SATISHCHANDRA SITARAM PRADHAN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Prime Minister had visited Mauritius in recent past;

(b) if so, the details of the visit with its objectives alongwith the names of persons who accompanied the Prime Minister;

(c) whether some agreements on different fields have been signed between the two countries during his visit; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA) : (a) Yes Sir.