

Countries where downsizing of the Missions has been recommended are:

Egypt, Ethiopia, France, Ghana, Kenya, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Thailand, Algeria, Columbia, Cuba, Ivory Coast, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Morocco, Panama, Senegal, Sudan, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan.

(d) The recommendations of the Expenditure Reforms Commission are under the consideration of Ministry of External Affairs, as part of its own ongoing exercise to rationalise and restructure the Ministry according to functional necessities.

India's initiatives to fight terrorism

1256. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the inhuman terrorism triggered US rage and its consequent attack on Afghanistan killing many children, women and other civilians is threatening to escalate a global war;

(b) if so, whether India should immediately initiate some global actions to fight out terrorism of any hue and devastating war;

(c) if so, whether some actions have already been initiated to render peace a chance; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH):

(a) The military campaign in Afghanistan is in response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001 in the USA.

(b) to (d) The tragic events of September, 11 have brought heightened awareness in the international community of the urgent need to combat terrorism. As a victim of terrorism for over two decades, India has consistently stressed that combating terrorism should have the highest priority on the global agenda. We have emphasised that terrorism is a global menace which cannot be compartmentalised; that the fight against it has to go beyond the immediate; and has to be comprehensive, global and sustained. India has also pointed out that there can be no justification for acts of terrorism; political, religious, ethnic, ideological or any other. International measures to counter terrorism should encompass not only the perpetrators of terrorist acts, but also those who incite, support, finance or extend safe havens to terrorists.

During the UN General Assembly (UNGA) session on November 10, 2001, the Prime Minister, Shri Atal Behari Vajpayee forcefully conveyed India's point of view including our concerns on cross border terrorism.

India has welcomed international efforts including efforts under the United Nations to counter terrorism. In this framework, India has welcomed the UN Security Council Resolution 1373 of September 28, 2001. India is also piloting a Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism (CCIT) to strengthen the legal framework for countering terrorism. At the United Nations discussions on CCIT are continuing.

India supports the efforts being made by the international community, including through the UN, for the early return of peace and normalcy in Afghanistan.

Depiction of Goddess Lakshmi in objectionable terms

1257. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Goddess Lakshmi has been defined in objectionable terms in a museum in Australia; and

(b) if so, action taken to get the matter rectified?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH):

(a) It has come to the notice of the Government of India that in the Gold Museum in New South Wales, Australia, captions describing Goddess Lakshmi are, *prima-facie*, objectionable.

(b) The matter was taken up by the High Commissioner of India in Australia with the Speaker of the Australian House of Representatives as also directly with the Museum authorities.

Joint campaign to fight against international terrorism

† 1258. SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI:

DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to launch a joint campaign at international level to combat with terrorism by bringing democratic countries at one forum;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.