

Encroachment of Hindu religious land in Pakistan

3744. SHRI PARIMAL NATHWANI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether as per reports appearing in press, land mafias of Pakistan have encroached the lands owned by Hindu Temple of Shri Krishna and Gurudwaras in Pakistan;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether Government of India has brought this illegal encroachment of land owned by Hindus and Sikhs to the notice of Pakistani authorities; and
- (d) if so, the necessary action taken in this regard by Pakistani authorities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR): (a) and (b) Government has seen reports in the press regarding encroachment of land owned by Temples / Gurudwaras in Pakistan.

(c) and (d) The matter of reported sale of land was taken up with the Government of Pakistan which refuted the veracity of such reports and stated that it is committed to the protection of minorities.

Indian contribution to United Nations budget

3745. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the details of contribution paid by India to United Nations budget during each of the last three years;
- (b) the basis of such contributions being made to United Nations;
- (c) whether Government proposes to reduce the Indian contribution in view of the financial health of the country;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR): (a) Contribution by India to the UN Regular budget and the UN Peacekeeping budget during the last three years are as follows:

		Figures in rupees (crores)		
		2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
i.	UN Regular Budget	32.57	53.74	52.79
ii.	UN Peacekeeping Budget	26.95	30.02	36.55

(b) Member states of the UN are obligated to contribute to the UN budget which is calculated on the basis of Scale of Assessments. This was last decided by the UN General Assembly in 2009. According to this scale, India's rate of assessment to the UN regular budget for 2009-2012 is fixed at 0.534 % of the total budget. Contribution to the UN Peacekeeping budget is also based on this scale of assessments with adjustments made for its capacity to contribute to peacekeeping operations.

(c) to (e) It is mandatory for every UN member state to contribute its share to the budget. As such, there is no proposal to reduce India's contribution below the scale of assessment determined by the UN.

Relaxation of SAARC norms

3746. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether relaxation of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) norms can boost Asia's economy;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the action plan prepared for each country for the current year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR): (a) Relaxation of SAARC norms in the areas of trade, travel, transportation and visas, among others, can boost regional economic growth. However, such relaxation of norms have to be agreed to by all SAARC Member States.

(b) SAARC Member States have taken several important steps in this direction. These include the conclusion and implementation of the South Asian Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA), and the recent decision under SAFTA requiring SAARC Member States to work towards pruning of their existing sensitive lists by twenty percent; the desire expressed by the SAARC Ministers of Transport to increase connectivity in the region, including through agreements in motor vehicles and railways; and periodic review of SAARC visa arrangements, including SAARC visa exemption scheme for businessmen/industrialists, journalists, senior academics and other identified categories, by SAARC Home Ministers at their meetings.

(c) India has shown willingness to shoulder asymmetrical responsibility for promoting trade in the SAARC Region by, *inter alia*, unilaterally pruning its sensitive list for the SAARC Least