

scale, currently (2004), India's contribution constitutes 0.421% of the UN regular budget. The scale of assessment is reviewed every three years, on the basis of the latest national income statistics, to ensure that assessments are fair and accurate. These contribution are mandatory on all UN Member States, since they are a part of the Charter obligations.

SHRI MURI DEORA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, India, the largest democracy in the world, is trying for several years for a permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council. Recently, the Secretary-General, Shri Kofi Annan, had constituted a Committee on this. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what the recommendation of this Committee is. I would also like to know whether the Minister is satisfied with the report of this Committee to stake India's claim.

MR. CHAIRMAN: This question relates to the contribution paid annually by India to the United Nations during the last three years.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, we are contributing towards that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We may be contributing. लेकिन आपका क्वेश्चन इसमें कहाँ आता है?

*126. [The questioner (SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO) was absent. For answer vide Page 38.]

*127. [The questioner (SHRI PYARI MOHAN MOHAPATRA) was absent. For answer vide Page 39.]

Help to Afghanistan

*128. SHRI LALIT SURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to help Afghanistan in the task of building their Parliament complex and the repair and renovation of other buildings which were damaged during the internal armed conflict in that country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, indicating the financial and other assistance proposed to be extended and the time-frame fixed for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMED): (a) The Government is undertaking the repair and renovation of Indira Gandhi Institute of Child Health (IGICH), Habiba School and Common Facility and Tool Room Centre (CFTRC) at Industrial Park in Kabul, Afghanistan. The Government has also offered to underake the construction of a new Parliament building in Afghanistan.

(b) The Government has approved a sum of Rs. 981.56 lakh, Rs. 2017.78 lakh and Rs. 401.08 lakh for repair and renovation of IGICH, Habibia School and CFTRC respectively. The work in respect of IGICH and Habibia School commenced in September 2003 and the work on CFTRC commenced in February 2004. While IGICH and Habibia School is expected to be completed by December 2005, work on CFTRC is likely to be completed by April 2005.

SHRIMATI SARLA MAHESHWARI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, where is the Minister?

SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is no Minister.

श्री सभापति: मंत्री जी बैठे हैं। तैयारी कर रहे हैं क्वेश्चन का जवाब देने के लिए।

SHRI LALIT SURI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a matter of great satisfaction for every Indian that we are helping Afghanistan in the task of reconstruction. Needless to say, we have historical, political, and cultural relations with Afghanistan dating back to the reigns of Mauryas and Kanishka. My question to the hon. Minister is this: Are we facing any difficulty in transporting our goods from India to Afghanistan *via* Pakistan?

SHRI E. AHAMED: Mr. Chairman, Sir, sometimes, we find it difficult, but, now we are transporting our goods. I think once the work of construction of new road that we have now undertaken is completed, it will help us to have very easy access to Afghanistan through Iran.

SHRI LALIT SURI: Sir, my second supplementary is: are the Indian contractors, who are doing work in Afghanistan, getting direct work or are they getting work as sub-contractors to various countries, specially America?

SHRI E. AHAMED: Sir, I will be able to answer on a special subject because we know only whatever the work is being taken up. I will not be able to say about the nature of the work whether it is going directly to the contractor or sub-contractor or not. I may just inform the hon. Member about that.

SHRI LALIT SURI: Sir, the question was raised whether the Indian Government is helping the Indian companies to get direct contract with Afghanistan since we have very good relations with them.

SHRI E. AHAMED: Sir, we have been doing whatever possible to help our people in a proper way.

SHRI YASHWANT SINHA: Sir, the reply of the Ministry says that the Government has also offered to undertake the construction of a new Parliament building in Afghanistan. It does not say what has been the response of the Government of Afghanistan to this. So, this is my first question because I know that this offer was made by the Government of India quite some time ago. Therefore, if there has been no response from the Government of Afghanistan. What has the Government done to get that response? Secondly, Sir, we are involved in a lot of activities in Afghanistan which is not merely re-construction and repair of buildings but reconstruction and laying of new roads, etc. It is in that context that the transit through Pakistan of various materials from India to Afghanistan is of critical importance. Now, therefore, the Minister should tell us clearly whether this matter of transit has been taken up with the Government of Pakistan in the recent parleys and what has been the response of the Government of Pakistan to this?

SHRI E. AHAMED: Sir, with regard to the proposed construction of the Parliament House of Afghanistan, the matter is being looked into by some experts and the discussions are also going on and the location of the site has been decided by the Government of Afghanistan and we have been waiting for their reply. Once it is communicated to our Government, we will definitely go ahead as there are already provisions made by the Government which the hon. Member also knows very well.

Regarding the transshipment, some of the roads are being constructed which will be helpful to us to have an easy accessibility to Afghanistan and also to transport our goods. If the new road is constructed, it will help us to have a shortcut route to Afghanistan. A question was put by the hon. Member whether we have had a discussion with Pakistan on this matter. I will not be able to answer at this point of time because I can give him the details only later.

DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the question that the hon. Member has put figured in the discussion with Pakistan. We have been impressing upon the Government of Pakistan that normalisation of economic relations between our two countries must include the extension of the Most Favoured Nation and also giving India normal transit route

through Pakistan to Afghanistan. No conclusion has been reached but this matter is under discussion with the Government of Pakistan.

SHRI SHANKAR ROY CHOWDHURY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, will the hon. Minister be in a position to answer whether the Government of India has any construction project of buildings in Afghanistan in cities other than Kabul?

SHRI E. AHAMED: Sir, many construction works are going on in Afghanistan and the Indian contractors are also there.

So far as bilateral assistance given by India is concerned, I submit that we are providing various kinds of assistance to Afghanistan. If the hon. Chairman permits, I will just read out some of the important assistances that India has already given and those which are under process. The assistance is: 400 buses have been provided for public transport system. Three Airbus aircrafts have been gifted and are transferred from Air India to Ariana Airlines. Indian medical missions are functioning in Kabul, Mazar-e-Sharif, Herat, Kandahar and Shibergan. Food assistance of one million tonnes of wheat, which is being converted into high-protein biscuits for the school feeding programme in Afghanistan and supplied through the World Food programme. As a result of the assistance, about one million Afghan children are receiving a package of 100 grams of biscuits every day. Sir, US \$ 84 million for upgradation/reconstruction of Zaranj-Delaram road have been given. Around US \$ 80 million for Salma Dam Power Project in Herat province has been given. Contribution of US \$ 200,000 per annum to the World Bank managed Afghan Reconstruction Trust Fund. Three hundred vehicles have been gifted to Afghan Ministry of Defence. Rehabilitation of Habibia School and Indira Gandhi hospital. Setting up of a common facility and tool room centre at Industrial park in Kabul.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, if you want, you can lay a copy of that on the table of the House.

DR. CHANDAN MITRA: Sir, the question is relating to the transit of goods to and from India to Afghanistan. When the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mr. Shaukat Aziz was in Delhi recently, he, very categorically, stated that further progress on this would be possible only after the India-Iran pipeline, through Pakistan, is agreed upon. He said that this matter cannot be taken up at this point of time. Therefore, these two things are related. In

view of the hon. Prime Minister's clarification just now, I would like to know whether this matter, specifically, linking transit facilities or improvement in transit facilities between India and Afghanistan is indeed linked to the Indo-Iran pipeline and its acceptance by India or whether we are taking other steps to make this transit possible.

SHRI E. AHAMED: In the light of the reply given by the hon. Prime Minister, I don't want to add anything more. The reply was very specific and self-explanatory.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next Question.

SHRI B.J. PANDA: Sir, Question No. 129...(Interruptions)...

श्री एस० एस० अहलुवालिया: सर, 128 पर सवाल पूछना था।

श्री दीपांकर मुखर्जी: 128 तो हो चुका है।...(व्यवधान)...

श्री एस० एस० अहलुवालिया: गेहूँ यहां भारत ने भेजा...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति: वह प्रश्न अब हो चुका है और दूसरा प्रश्न ले लिया है।

श्री एस० एस० अहलुवालिया: सर, यह बड़ा महत्वपूर्ण सवाल है। वह गेहूँ है कहां?

श्री नीलोत्पल बसु: सर, क्या ऐसे हो सकता है? जब चाहे बोलने लगते हैं।

श्री एस० एस० अहलुवालिया: मिनिस्ट ने पढ़कर सुनाया कि हमने फूड प्रोग्राम में... (व्यवधान)... फूड बनाने की बात कही आप बताएं वह गेहूँ कहां है?... (व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति: दूसरा क्वेयचन ले चुके हैं।...(व्यवधान)...

श्री नीलोत्पल बसु: सर ऐसे थोड़े ही होता है।...(व्यवधान)...

श्री दीपांकर मुखर्जी: सर यह कौन सा प्रोसीजर है।...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति: प्रश्न संख्या 129।

श्री एस० एस० अहलुवालिया: सर बहुत महत्व का सवाल था और जवाब नहीं आया।

...(व्यवधान)... इतनी बड़ी बात है, अफगानिस्तान और हिन्दुस्तान...(व्यवधान)...

श्री सभापति: महत्व का है, जवाब हो गया है। प्रश्न संख्या 129।