

(c) As per Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension Scheme, 1980 free air travel passes are not provided to the Central Freedom Fighter Pensioners. Only Ex-Andaman freedom fighters and their widows along with a companion are allowed free air travel to visit Andaman and Nicobar Islands from Kolkata and back once a year. At present there are about 50,000 freedom fighters/eligible dependents based in various parts of the country. It is therefore, not feasible to work out the expenditure on account of free air travel passes to the freedom fighters.

Hindus taken shelter in India after fleeing from Pakistan

2845. SHRI TARUN VIJAY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state

- (a) how many Hindus have so far fled Pakistan and taken shelter in India;
- (b) the State-wise and district-wise numbers in India;
- (c) what is Government's policy on giving them work permits and then citizenship in India;
- (d) whether Government is aware of the number of temples demolished and Hindu girls abducted and converted to islam in Pakistan; and
- (e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c) Some Pakistani nationals who had come to India have refused to return to Pakistan on the grounds of religious persecution in Pakistan and have applied for Indian citizenship. Since the initial application for citizenship is submitted to the Collector/DM concerned and a number of agencies are involved in the processing of applications for grant of citizenship, no caste/religion based centralized data and State/district wise data of Pakistani nationals who have applied for Indian citizenship is maintained.

As per extant instructions, Pakistani nationals staying on Long Term Visa under the eligible categories with the intention of settling permanently and obtaining Indian Citizenship are permitted to engage in employment in private sector *i.e.* excluding Government/Semi Government, local bodies, cooperatives jobs etc. The Citizenship Act 1955 and the Citizenship Rules 2009 provides for grant of Indian citizenship to such persons.

(d) and (e) Government has seen reports of incidents of desecration and vandalisation of Hindu Temples and Gurudwaras in Pakistan. Incidents of persecution, abduction and intimidation of the minority communities have also been reported. Statistical data of such cases is not available. Based on reports of persecution of minority groups in Pakistan, Government had taken up the matter with the Government of Pakistan. The Government of Pakistan has stated that it was fully cognizant of the situation and looked after the welfare of all its citizens, particularly the minority community.

Smuggling along Myanmar border

2846. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) the status of smuggling activities and other illegal activities along the Myanmar border;
- (b) the inputs given by various security agencies in this regard; and
- (c) the steps Government contemplates to end this menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) and (b) In respect of Indo-Myanmar border, a Free Move regime exists between the two countries which allow locals from both the Nations to move across the International Border upto 16 Kms on either side. It is porous and vulnerable to infiltration/exfiltration. Liaison and coordination with Police, Narcotics Control Bureau and other Intelligence Agencies is carried out regularly.

(c) The following steps have been taken to curb the menace of smuggling and other illegal activities along the Myanmar border:

- (i) 15 Battalions, designated as Border Guarding battalions are deployed along the Indo-Myanmar border.
- (ii) Border fencing of Indo-Myanmar border initially for 10 km between BP 79 to 81 in Manipur has been sanctioned.
- (iii) Out posts are deployed on routes of ingress/egress and are effectively checking smuggling.
- (iv) 16 Coys have been relocated from depth areas closer to the Indo-Myanmar border to enhance vigil/check smuggling.