

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
RAJYA SABHA
QUESTION NO 19.11.2009
ANSWERED ON
RELATIONS WITH NEPAL .

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Smt. Maya Singh

Will the Minister of COAL AND MINES be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether Government has failed to maintain its years old relation with Nepal after establishment of Maoist political ideology there;
- (b) the steps being taken by Government for the safety of Indians living there keeping in view the Nepali Maoists attack on Indian priests of Pashupati Temple in Kathmandu;
- (c) whether Government is aware of anti-Indian activities being run in Nepal after emergence of Maoist politics; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SMT. PRENEET KAUR)

(a) Our relationship with Nepal is close, traditional, time-tested and covers a broad canvas. India maintained friendly relations with the Government led by the Unified Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) leader Mr. Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda'. He paid an official visit to India as Prime Minister of Nepal from 14-17 September 2008, and met our President, Vice President, Prime Minister, and External Affairs Minister and the Leader of Opposition. During the visit the two countries reiterated the special features of the bilateral relationship and committed themselves to work towards further improving relations. Both sides also agreed to reactivate the existing bilateral mechanisms.

(b) The safety and security of Indian citizens abroad is an abiding and central concern of the Government of India. The criminal act of violence against the newly appointed Indian priests was immediately taken up at the highest levels in the Government of Nepal and our deep anguish and serious concerns conveyed. A team from the Embassy of India, Kathmandu, visited the Pashupatinath Temple to reassure the Indian priests. The Cultural Affairs Minister of Nepal along with our Ambassador in Kathmandu visited the temple and met the priests. The Minister apologised on behalf of the Government of Nepal and condemned the criminal acts. Following this criminal assault, local authorities have deployed a new security contingent around the temple. The Nepalese authorities also apprehended persons involved in this incident. The Nepalese authorities at the highest levels have assured additional steps to ensure the safety and security of Indian priests in Nepal. Since then there has been no untoward incident.

(c) & (d) As an open and free society, Nepal has people of various persuasions, some of whom may not prefer close relations between the two countries. During the visit of Mr. Madhav Kumar Nepal, Prime Minister of Nepal to India from 18-22 August, 2009, the Nepalese side assured that it would not allow its territory to be used for any activity against India.