

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

**LOK SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO.722
TO BE ANSWERED ON 20.12.2017**

VISIT TO ROME

722. SHRI VINCENT H. PALA

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether any attempt was made to invite Pope Francis to visit India;**
- (b) if so, the details thereof;**
- (c) the number of visits made by Hon'ble Prime Minister/Minister of External Affairs to Rome, Italy during the last three years; and**
- (d) The names of dignitaries invited from Italy/Rome to visit India during the last three years?**

ANSWER

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
(SHRI M.J. AKBAR)**

(a) & (b) Visits of Heads of State to India are decided according to the mutual convenience of the visiting dignitary and Indian dignitaries. Currently, there is no discussion between India and the Holy See about any visit by H.H. Pope Francis to India.

(c) One. Minister of External Affairs visited Rome, Italy, during 2-5 September 2016 for attending the ceremony for Canonization of Mother Teresa at the Vatican City. She also had bilateral discussions with Italian authorities.

(d) Prime Minister of Italy, H.E. Mr. Paolo Gentiloni, paid a State Visit to India in October 2017. Ministerial visits from Italy to India include a visit by Minister for Health, H.E. Ms. Beatrice Lorenzin, in November 2017 and a visit by Minister of Agricultural Food and Forestry Policies, H.E. Mr. Maurizio Martina, in December 2017.
