

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO- 3545

ANSWERED ON- 21/03/2025

CHINESE ESTABLISHMENT OF COUNTIES IN HOTAN PREFECTURE

3545 DR. PRASHANT YADAORAO PADOLE

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :-

- (a) whether the Government is aware of China's establishment of two new counties in the Hotan prefecture, incorporating Indian territory in Ladakh, if so, the strategic and diplomatic measures undertaken by the Government to address this issue;**
- (b) the details of protests lodged by India against the creation of these counties along with the responses received from the Chinese Government, if any; and**
- (c) whether the Government has formulated any long-term strategies to counter China's increasing administrative and infrastructural developments in the Aksai Chin region, and if so, the details thereof?**

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

(SHRI KIRTI VARDHAN SINGH)

(a) to (c) Government of India is aware of the announcement by the Chinese side pertaining to the establishment of so-called two new counties in Hotan prefecture of China. Parts of the jurisdiction of these so-called counties fall in India's Union Territory of Ladakh. The Government of India has never accepted the illegal Chinese occupation of Indian Territory in this area. Creation of new counties will neither have a bearing on India's long-standing and consistent position regarding India's sovereignty over the area, nor lend legitimacy to China's illegal and forcible occupation of the same. Government of India has registered its solemn protest over these developments through diplomatic channels.

Government is aware that China is developing infrastructure in the border regions. Government gives careful and special attention to improvement of infrastructure for the development of border areas, in order to facilitate the economic development of these areas, as also to meet India's strategic and security requirements.

The budget allocation for border infrastructure have increased in the last decade (2014-2024). The Border Roads Organization (BRO) alone has incurred three times the expenditure level compared to the decade before. The length of the road networks, bridges and number of tunnels have all seen a substantial increase over the earlier period. This has helped provide connectivity to the local population and better logistical support for our armed forces.

Government continues to keep a constant watch on all developments having a bearing on India's security and takes all the necessary measures to safeguard its sovereignty and territorial integrity.
