

Programme in New Delhi recently; and Sir.

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps taken by the Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) and (b). Government are aware that a group of Afghan nationals had held a demonstration outside the office of the UNHCR in New Delhi on November 13, 1992. These Afghan nationals had sought refugee status the UNHCR.

Government are of the view that all possible assistance is rendered to mitigate the hardships faced by these displaced Afghan nationals. This has been conveyed to UNHCR and to the Afghan Government.

Discussion with British P.M.

2777. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:
SHRI MANORANJAN
BHAKTA:
SHRI SHRAVAN KUMAR
PATEL:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the British Prime Minister discussed the issue of Kashmir and India's stand on Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty during his recent visit to India;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto;

(c) whether the issue of outside support to subversive elements in Jammu & Kashmir also discussed during his visit; and

(d) if so, the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) Yes,

(b) On the Kashmir issue, the British PM expressed the view that this matter was essentially for India and Pakistan to resolve in terms of the Simla Agreement. PM conveyed our continued readiness to resolve all outstanding issues with Pakistan bilaterally and peacefully, but pointed out that for any meaningful negotiations to take place Pakistan must sincerely cooperate in creating a climate of trust and confidence.

On the NPT, the British PM indicated that while they understood the logic of India's stand, they would urge India as well as other countries to sign the Treaty. Our rejection of the NPT because of its discriminatory nature was reiterated by PM.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) PM conveyed our deep concern regarding continued Pak support to terrorism and subversion directed against India. The British PM, inter alia, called for the cessation of external support for militants in J & K.

Prime Minister's Interview to BBC

2778. SHRI CHANDRESH PATIL:
SHRIMATI BIBHU KUMARI
DEVI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister gave a phone-in-interview to the BBC recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any foreign country reacted on the subjects that figured in the interview;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the impact of this interview on the

World-wide audience?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI
SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Phone-in-interview took place on 07 February, 1993. The subjects covered by various questioners included developments in Ayodhya on 06 December, 1992 population problems, reduction in Defence expenditure, Govt. plans for rebuilding the demolished Mosque in Ayodhya, the status of Muslim women, primary education in India, Indian Govt's policies towards the Tamil problem in Sri Lanka, Govt. programme to uplift the status of women, the Kashmir problem, future of SAARC, right to equality in India, remedial measures after 'anti-Sikh' riots in 1985, measures to facilitate NRI investment in India, India's response to Pakistani proposal for holding a conference on nuclear issue, economic liberalisation reservation policy, etc.

(c) There was no official reaction from foreign countries.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The interview served the useful purpose of putting Government's policies in the correct perspective to a large audience spread all over the world. It was successful in informing the world, of our commitment to economic liberalisation as well as re-assertion of our position on a variety of regional and international issues.

Release of Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi

2779. SHRI RAM PRASAD SINGH:
SHRI BIRSINGH MAHATO:
SHRI CHITTA BASU:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have ever taken up the matter of the release of Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of the National League for Democracy in Myanmar and for the restoration of democracy in that country; and

(b) if so, the initiatives taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. We have repeatedly called upon the Government of Myanmar, both on our own and in consonance with other like-minded countries, to release immediately and unconditionally the Nobel Laureate, Mrs. Aung San Suu Kyi. The latest instance of our efforts in this direction was the support extended by us to a UN Resolution on Situation in Myanmar in December, 1992, calling on that country to restore democracy and release Mrs. Suu Kyi.

However, consistent with our well-established policy of non interference in the internal affairs of another country, we have refrained from actions that might be construed as such by the Myanmar Government.

Tehri Dam Project

2780. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR
GANGWAR: Will the Minister of POWER
be pleased to state:

(a) the time/date from which the work at Tehri Dam Project was started in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) the amount spent on this project till date;

(c) the original scheduled period of completion of the project and whether the work is progressing as per scheduled; and