

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HOME AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2252

ANSWERED ON:03.12.2002

MILITANT ACTIVITIES IN GANDHINAGAR

AVTAR SINGH BHADANA;CHELLAMELLA SUGUNA KUMARI;DADICHILUKA VEERA GOURI SANKARA RAO;PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL;RAJO SINGH;RAMDAS ATHAWALE;SURESH KODIKUNNIL

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the terrorists stormed the Swaminarayan Temple at Gandhinagar on 24.9.2002 and killed/injured many devotees/security personnel;
- (b) if so, the details of the findings of the inquiry in this regard and the assistance rendered by Union Government to counter attack;
- (c) whether the Government had prior information regarding the possibility of an attack on religious places;
- (d) if so, the action taken thereon;
- (e) the details of the group responsible therefor and the arrests made in this connection;
- (f) whether type of weapons used by the militants in the incident were used earlier;
- (g) if so, the details of weapons used/seized in the attack;
- (h) time taken by NSG commandos to reach Ahmedabad and start their operation;
- (i) the measures taken by the Government to ensure speedy movements of NSG commandos to the site of such incidents; and
- (j) the details of instructions issued to State to protect religious places and to defeat the evil designs of the terrorists in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CH.VIDYASAGAR RAO)

(a) to (j): A statement is annexed.

ANNEXURE

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO LOK SABHA UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 2252 FOR ANSWER ON DECEMBER, 2002 REGARDING 'MILITANT ACTIVITIES IN GANDHINAGAR'.

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b): The probe is in progress. The Central Government had provided a team of NSG for the operation against the terrorists.

(c) & (d): The State Government has informed that there was no specific information regarding threat to religious places.

(e): Investigation so far made indicates involvement of Pak based militants such as Jaish-e-Mohammed, and Lashkar-e-Taiba.No arrests have been made as yet by the State Government authorities.

(f): The State Government has intimated that no specific conclusion has yet been reached regarding the use of similar weapons earlier.

(g): The State Government has informed that the weapons used were AK-56 Rifles and about 20 Hand Grenades. 94 live cartridges of AK-56 Rifles were recovered together with 12 magazines and one unexploded Hand Grenade which was later exploded by the NSG Team.

(h): The NSG Team left Delhi at 2030 hours on September 24, 2002 and reached the temple at 2230 hours and the operation was launched at 01.00 hour on September 25, 2002.

(i): Adequate arrangements are made to ensure speedy movement of NSG Commandoes wherever they are required for such operations.

(j): `Public Order` and `Police` are State subjects and therefore maintenance of law and order is the primary responsibility of the concerned State Governments. It is for the State Governments to devise various methods and take concrete steps to improve law and order situation in the respective States. The Central Government, however, keeps a close watch on various developments in the internal security scenario of the country and sensitizes the concerned States in this regard. It also shares intelligence with the States from time to time. Central Para Military Forces are also deployed whenever required by the States. Funds are also provided by the Central Government to modernize and strengthen the State Police Forces.