

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:405

ANSWERED ON:22.02.2006

INDIAN HIGH COMMISSIONS WORKING OUT OF RENTED FLATS

Adsul Shri Anandrao Vithoba;Tripathy Shri Braja Kishore

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the CAG has asked the Ministry to curtail the expenses on hiring of rented buildings for Indian High Commissions as reported in the Times of India dated December 21, 2005;
- (b) if so, whether Indian High Commissions are working out of rented flats in some countries;
- (c) if so, the details and the reasons therefor;
- (d) the reasons for not renovating/repairing Indian properties abroad; and
- (e) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ANAND SHARMA)

- (a) Yes, Sir. This is also in line with the Ministry of External Affairs` policy of progressively reducing the outflow on rentals by construction/acquisition of suitable properties.
- (b) & (c) Yes, Sir. India has resident diplomatic Missions/Posts at 164 stations abroad. So far, the Ministry of External Affairs has been able to construct/acquire Chancery (office) buildings at 77 stations and the process is continuing. The remaining Missions/Posts are functioning out of rented Chancery buildings. There are various factors which determine the Government`s decision to construct/acquire properties abroad and the important ones are: India`s overall interest; economic viability; availability of suitable properties; local procedures and regulations; principle of reciprocity; security requirements etc. Finally, the availability of funds in the Ministry`s budget and Government of India`s own procedures also have a bearing on this process.
- d) Repair and maintenance of the Government-owned diplomatic properties abroad is a continuous process. Most of the routine repairs and maintenance are carried out by the respective Missions/Posts abroad under their delegated powers. Only major renovation proposals exceeding the delegated powers need to be referred to the Ministry for approvals. All such cases are considered keeping in view economic viability, functional requirement, conformity with the local norms/laws and availability of budgetary resources.
- e) In order to closely pursue renovation/repair proposals, and for acquisition/construction of diplomatic properties abroad, a special Projects Division has been established since February 2005.