

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1481
ANSWERED ON:15.07.2009
DENIAL OF VISAS TO SIKH PILGRIMS
Rawat Shri Ashok Kumar

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Sikh pilgrims across the country, who want to visit Nankana Sahib in Pakistan are being denied visas by Pakistan;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor along with the number of case where visas were denied to Sikh pilgrims by Pakistan;
- (c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and
- (d) the steps/measures being taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SMT. PRENEET KAUR)

(a to d) Grant of visa to Indian nationals, including pilgrims, to visit Pakistan is the prerogative of the Government of Pakistan. A proposal to increase both the number of shrines and pilgrims under the Bilateral Protocol on Visits to Religious Shrines has been pursued with the Government of Pakistan for over four years. However, Pakistan is yet to formally respond to the wproposals.