

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2344  
ANSWERED ON:28.03.2012  
NEPAL'S PROXIMITY WITH CHINA  
Agarwal Shri Jai Prakash

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

- (a) whether certain prominent personalities in Nepal are in favour of maintaining close relations with China than with India;
- (b) if so, the initiatives being considered by the Government for building closer relations with Nepal; and
- (c) the reaction of the Government to such statements in view of positive initiatives in this direction taken so far?

**Answer**

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

(a) to (c) As close neighbours, India and Nepal share a unique relationship of friendship and cooperation characterized by open borders and deep-rooted people-to-people contacts. Government of India attaches the highest priority to relations with Nepal and is committed to further enhance and expand this relationship. India's relations with Nepal have stood the test of time and cannot be viewed through the prism of Nepal's relations with any other country including China. At the same time, as an open and free society, Nepal has people of various persuasions, some of whom may not prefer close relations between the two countries. The Government of India has been co-operating with Nepal in its socio-economic development in the infrastructure, human resource development, health, power, civil aviation, tourism, agriculture and water resources sectors. The Small Development Projects scheme delivers development assistance at the grass-roots level in sectors identified with the local population. As part of India's effort to assist with capacity building and development of human resources in Nepal, over 1800 scholarships are offered annually for Nepalese students to pursue various courses in India and Nepal. To increase connectivity, India is cooperating in development and upgradation of border infrastructure including integrated check-posts, road and rail linkages along the India-Nepal border. Government's effort for further expanding the close relations with Nepal is also manifested in the regular high level interactions between the countries. Prime Minister of Nepal, Dr Baburam Bhattarai paid an official visit to India in October, 2011. The Minister of External Affairs visited Nepal in April, 2011. He had earlier visited Nepal in January, 2010. The Minister of Finance visited Nepal in November, 2011.