

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:286  
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2012  
BAN ON WEARING TURBAN  
Badal Harsimrat Kaur

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken note of the issue of not allowing wearing of turban in schools by the French Government;
- (b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto;
- (c) whether the Government has taken up the issue with the French Government;
- (d) if so, the reaction of the French Government thereto; and
- (e) the corrective action taken in the matter?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA)

(a) to (e) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (A) TO (E) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.286 REGARDING 'BAN ON WEARING TURBAN' FOR ANSWER ON 25.04.2012

(a) to (e) Yes Madam. Government is aware that the French law on respect for secularism contains a provision prohibiting "symbols and clothes which involve ostentatious display of religion", and that as a result turbans are not allowed to be worn in public schools.

This issue has been raised with the French Government regularly, including at the highest level by the Prime Minister in his meeting with the French President on 30th September 2008. I have also discussed this issue in my meeting with the French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe on 20th October 2011 in New Delhi. The French side has clarified that their domestic law bans display of any religion-connected symbols in public schools only and is non-discriminatory and applies to people of all religions living in France. Our Embassy in Paris is in regular discussions with the French Foreign Ministry and Interior Ministry. It has been clarified to the French side that our intention is to seek a practical solution to address a sensitivity of a minority community of our country. We continue to pursue this matter at various levels with the French Government.