

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:6843

ANSWERED ON:08.05.2013

COMMENT BY US OFFICIAL

Bhagora Shri Tarachand;Thakur Shri Anurag Singh

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

(a) whether a US official has accused India of financing problems for Pakistan in Afghanistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

**Answer**

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

(a) & (b) Prior to his confirmation as U.S. Secretary of Defence in February 2013, U.S. media reported an extract of a speech by former Senator Charles Hagel at a U.S. University in 2011, wherein he was quoted as stating: "there is some history where Afghanistan and Pakistan have similar interests. But mainly, they have not had similar interests. India is the other piece of thisâ€¦India for sometime has always used Afghanistan as a second front and India has over the years financed problems for Pakistan on that side of the border."

(c) The reported comments by Mr. Hagel were in his private capacity since he was neither a member of the U.S. Government nor of the U.S. Congress at that time. Prior to his confirmation, our Embassy reflected India's concerns at these remarks to the U.S. Department of State. After his confirmation, Secretary Hagel's office subsequently issued a statement on 28 February 2013 underlining the fact that Secretary Hagel is "strongly committed to the United States' strategic partnership with India and to fostering an even closer defence relationship with India that builds upon the work" of his predecessors and serving officials. The Spokesperson of the U.S. Department of Defence also said on 28 February 2013 that "The U.S. Defence Department strongly supports the positive role India continues to play in Afghanistan. We continue to support India's private sector investment with Afghanistan, its leadership on private sector investment there, and its leadership promoting regional economic integration and linkages."