

**Title:** Need to approve the proposal submitted by Government of Bihar seeking amendments in the Buddha Gaya Temple Act, 1949.

SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR (NAGPUR): Sir, Buddha Gaya Temple, the site of Buddha's enlightenment, is one of the most important monument of ancient India. Buddhist pilgrims and devotees from all over the world visit this holy Mahabodhi Mahavihar. The management of Mahabodhi Mahavihar is monitored by an Act passed ;by the Bihar Government, namely, Buddha Gaya Temple Act, 1949. The Act *inter alia* provides for nomination of persons on the management other than the Buddhists.

The Buddhists all over the country have been agitating for a long time seeking appropriate modifications in the Buddha Gaya Temple Act, 1949 so as to provide for the management of this temple by persons belonging to the Buddhists community. The Government of Bihar in consultation with Buddhagaya Mahabodhi Mahavihar All India Action Committee headed by Bhadant Arya Nagarjun Surei Sasai submitted the amended draft of the Act to the Central Government for approval. The draft Act envisages that the Managing Committee consisting of Chairman, Secretary and eight nominated members be all from amongst Buddhists on the same principle followed for management of other religious bodies. The approval of the Central Government has not yet been communicated.

I would urge upon the Government to expedite their approval to the revised draft lest the agitation may take a serious turn.