

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:383

ANSWERED ON:22.02.2006

DIFFICULTY IN PRACTISING HINDU FAITH IN RUSSIA

Paraste Shri Dalpat Singh

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

- (a) whether Hindus in Russia face difficulties in practicing their faith freely and are unable even to establish a permanent place of worship in Moscow;
- (b) whether the Moscow Mayor cancelled permission to build a temple in the heart of Moscow;
- (c) whether Britain backs Russian Hindus` right to religion;
- (d) if so, whether the said matter has been taken up with Russia; and
- (e) if so, the reaction of the Russian Government in this regard?

**Answer**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (ANAND SHARMA)

(a) and (b) There are no restrictions for Hindus to practice their religion in Russia. As regards the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) temple, this was functional from 1989 till June 2004, when it was moved, with the consent of the Temple authorities, to a new location in the city. Subsequently, the Moscow Prosecutor General's office issued a ruling that the relocation order for the ISKCON temple was not legal. It is understood that ISKCON representatives are working with the Moscow City Government to find a solution.

(c), (d)& (e) The British Foreign Minister, responding to a question raised in British Parliament, inter-alia stated that Britain raises the issue of religious freedom during regular EU and bilateral contacts with Russian authorities. He confirmed that Britain will continue to monitor religious freedom issues in Russia and raise them as appropriate in the course of its ongoing dialogue.

Government has taken up the matter with the Russian Foreign Office and they have referred the matter to the Moscow City Government.