

the simple reason that modern rockets and missiles can reach naval bases anywhere. So, the question of moving it away from this border or that border doesn't arise.

I would appeal to the Defence Minister and to the Government to consider an alternative location, if at all necessary, because the coastal people are demanding that their birth-right to have access to the sea should not be taken away. Thank you.

Alleged excesses by Indian Army in Manipur

SHRI W. ANGOU SINGH (Manipur): Madam Deputy Chairman, I thank you for allowing me to raise an urgent and serious problem in the State of Manipur. On the one hand, Manipur is burning on account of insurgency movement and, on the other hand, people are revolting against the excesses committed by the Indian Army. On the 3rd April, Shri George Fernandes, the Defence Minister, is going to visit Imphal. This has been published in a local newspaper. In the meanwhile, the underground RPF has called for a boycott in Manipur.

The main problem I want to raise is about the need to prevent recurrence of the Sonamacha incident in the State of Manipur by the Indian Army. In Manipur one Yunlambar Sonamacha, aged 15 years, a student who is going to appear for the High School leaving examination from Angtha village of the Thoubal district had disappeared recently from 12th February.

It has been stated that Sonamacha has been picked up by 17th Rajputana Rifles man from his house in Angtha village on 12th February. After that Sonamacha has disappeared. The Army denied having anything to do with the disappearance of Sonamacha and was not in their custody. But a staff court of inquiry was instituted after protests by the students and women's organisations. The NSUI, a student wing of the Congress Party had called for a *bandh* for kidnapping of Sonamacha by the Army.

During the course of the probe, Sonamacha's sister-in-law, Jati Devi, identified Major R.K. Mahindra, the Commander of the 17th Rajputana Rifles posted at Yaripek, Thoubal district, as the man who took away Sonamacha on the night of the 12th February from his residence.

Two *habeas corpus* petitions have been filed in the Guwahati High Court by two parties. After hearing the two *habeas corpus* petitions filed in the court, a Division Bench consisting of Justice V.S. Singh and Justice P.K. Sarkar directed that an inquiry be instituted, to be headed by a sitting Judge and the court asked the District and Session Judge of Manipur East, Maibam Binay Kumar Singh to head the probe and that the report be submitted on or before 20th March, the next date for hearing of the case.

During two days of hearing the Judges termed the incident as a case of human rights violation by the Army. This disappearance of Sonamacha case has soured the relations between the Army and the State Government of Manipur. Such antagonisation between the army and the State Government had been there in the State since the time of the previous Chief Ministers. The army thinks that the State Government is sympathetic to the militants and the State Government complains that the situation is created by army excesses and flouting of the guidelines of the Supreme Court.

Now the State Government has ordered a judicial inquiry into the 15-year old school boy's disappearance. I take this opportunity to attract the attention of the Defence Minister and the Home Minister to this burning issue concerning Manipur which creates unrest among the public. I urge upon them to take measures to prevent the recurrence of incidents like that of Sonamacha in the State of Manipur and to see that the people's confidence in the Indian army is not eroded.

Thank you.