

(b) whether Shri Babu Singh Chauhan, village and post office Chhira-wali, Distt. Aligarh, who is the brother of the above prisoner of war, has made several representations to Government and submitted evidence to show that Saheb Bahadur Singh Chauhan is still in Pakistani custody which has been corroborated by those who were in jail with him and have since returned to India; and

(c) what efforts have been made by Government to secure the release of Indian prisoners of war in Pakistani jails and what particular steps have been made to secure the release of Saheb Bahadur Singh Chauhan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Shri Saheb Bahadur Singh is reportedly one of the 54 missing Defence personnel who are believed to be in Pakistani jails.

(b) Government have received representations from Shri Babu Singh Chauhan regarding his missing brother.

(c) Government have repeatedly taken up with the Government of Pakistan the question of release and repatriation of all the missing Defence personnel who are believed to be in Pakistani jails. The Government of Pakistan, however, maintains that there are no Indian Defence personnel in its custody. We are continuing to press Pakistan on this issue.

Meeting between Pakistan's foreign Minister with U.N. Secretary General

4684. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistani Foreign Minister had met the U.N. Secretary-General around June 23, 1992 and accused India of interfering in Sind Province affairs while referring to Kashmir issue;

(b) if so, what are the details of the talks; and

(c) what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) Government have seen press reports to this effect.

(c) Government reject these baseless allegations as entirely without foundation.

Opening of a Passport Office at Rajkot

4685. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:
SHRI ANANTRAY DEVSHANKER DAVE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is a demand for opening a new passport office at Rajkot in Gujarat to cover entire Saurashtra Region;

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken in this regard;

(c) the total number of passport/ visa applications received from the Saurashtra region, year-wise, month-wise break up for the last three years; and

(d) whether there is a heavy work load on Ahmedabad regional passport office?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA):

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government is reviewing the network of Passport Offices with a view to improving the provision of passport services. The review will consider the need for additional passport offices, their location and priority as also the availability of necessary additional financial and manpower resources.

(c) The passport offices do not maintain region-wise record of number of applications received. It is, therefore, not possible to furnish the information asked for.

(d) Yes, Sir. During the year 1990 and 1991, Passport Office, Ahmedabad received total number of 162,559 and 209,005 applications respectively for issue of fresh passports and other passport services.

Reported Statement of Dalai Lama on Tibet and China

4686. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the statement of Dalai Lama as reported in the Hindustan Times of 2nd August, 1992 about Government's policy towards China and Tibet;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto;

(c) what steps Government have so far taken for the rehabilitation of Tibetans and preservation of their culture taking into account the spiritual aspects; and

(d) the extent of financial help and details of the assistance given to them per annum?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. K BHATIA): (a) Yes, Sir. Government has seen the statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama as reported in the Hindustan Times of August 2, 1992.

(b) Government recognises Tibet to be an autonomous region of China. It respects the Dalai Lama as a religious and spiritual leader. Government have consistently held the view that issues concerning Tibet should be settled through peaceful dialogue between the Chinese Government and the Tibetan people.

(c) Since 1959, Government have spent substantial amounts and made effective arrangements for the rehabilitation of the Tibetan refugees. These rehabilitation measures have included establishment of Tibetan settlements in various parts of India and of Schools for Tibetan children, grant of permission to establish Tibetan monasteries and (other) institutions of religious learning and provision of avenues for self-employment for the Tibetans. This assistance has been free of any pressure for assimilation, and has thus permitted the Tibetan refugees to preserve their traditional culture.

(d) About Rs. 46 lakhs per annum is spent on this establishment of the Dalai Lama, an average of about Rs. 3.5 crores per year for Tibetan schools in various parts of India, an average of Rs. 1.25 lakhs per annum for the Tibet House in New Delhi and other Tibetan cultural activities and an average of Rs. 50 lakhs per annum for rehabilitation measures.

Commercial sections of foreign Missions

4687. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA;

SHRI ANANTRAY DEV SHANKER DAVE;

SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that commercial sections of all our foreign mission *s&e* highly understaffed and poorly equipped;