

Visit of Union Ministers to Chikmagalur during bye-election

641. SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that with the exception of the Prime Minister and few other Ministers, all the Union Ministers visited and toured Chikmagalur during the recent bye-election there; and

(b) if so, what are the names of the Ministers who visited Chikmagalur and their duration of stay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI DHANIK LAL MANDAL): (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Raising of retirement age of Army technicians and mechanics

642. SHRI BISHAMBHAR NATH PANDE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state whether Government propose to raise the retirement age of Army technicians and mechanics who are compulsorily retired at the age of 35 years to at least 45 years, if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (PROF. SHER SINGH): No, Sir. Sepoys belonging to technical/semi-technical categories, under the current terms of engagement, can serve up to 46 years of age or 18 years of service, whichever is earlier.

Replacement of Hunter and Canberra Aircraft

643. SHRIMATI RATAN KUMARI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE

be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hunter and Canberra aircraft of the I.A.F. are proposed to be replaced; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) These ageing and obsolescent aircraft which are being phased out, will be replaced by Jaguar International aircraft. Attention is also invited to the reply given to Starred Question No. 66 in the Rajya Sabha on 23rd November 1978.

Utilization of foreign exchange credit for power programmes

644. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) what is project-wise utilisation of about Rs. 200 crores foreign exchange credit under IDA credits 242-IN, 377-IN and 572-IN for the country's power programmes;

(b) whether shortage and higher prices of aluminium and other factors have affected the utilisation of the above credits;

(c) whether Government have received any representation from the aluminium conductor industry in this regard; and

(d) if so, what are the main points made out in the representation?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) The utilisation under IDA credits 242-IN, 377-IN and 572-IN is as follows: —

| IDA Credit Nos. | Project | Amount of credit \$ Million | Utilisation \$ Million approx. |
|-----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 242-IN | Power Transmission Project-II | 75 | 73 |
| 377-IN | Power Transmission Project-III | 85 | 85 |
| 572-IN | Rural Electrification Project | 57 | 15.95 (upto 15-11-78) |