

in March, 1977 the Government of the United States of America officially informed the Government of India about the forthcoming talks between the USA and the USSR on the Indian Ocean and asked for the views of the Government of India on the subject. The Government of India took this opportunity to reiterate its well-known policy on the Indian Ocean and to welcome the prospect of a dialogue between the USA and the USSR on this subject and to express the hope that the talks would facilitate early establishment of a Zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean in accordance with the UN Resolutions on the subject.

(b) It would appear from the statements of US leaders that their policy is to seek mutual military restraint and balanced reduction in the Indian Ocean, leading to de-militarization.

Statement by Mr. Aziz Ahmed on India's No-war Pact Offer

*136. SHRIMATI SARASWATI PRADHAN:
SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the statement reportedly made by Mr. Aziz Ahmed when he was Pakistan's Foreign Minister in response to India's offer of No War Pact suggesting the setting up of a self executing machinery for a "Peaceful settlement" of the outstanding issues between the two countries; and

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

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Consistent with India's commitment to the peaceful settlement of all disputes, Government believes that

all differences between India and Pakistan should be solved peacefully and bilaterally and without any pre-conditions.

Safeguards for Telephone System during Monsoons

*137. SHRI BISHMA NARAIN SINGH:
SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN:
SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA:
SHRI IBRAHIM KALANIYA:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state what steps Government have taken or propose to take against deterioration in or break-down of telephone system in Delhi during the Monsoons?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BRIJ LAL VERMA): Telephones go out of order during monsoons mainly due to extensive damages caused to underground telephone cables by large scale road digging operations undertaken by various service organisations during the premonsoon dry season. Such damages do not normally cause failure of the telephone service during the dry season, but result in faults on the onset of the rainy season with the ingress of moisture into the damaged cables, some of which carry 1000 and 1200 telephone lines.

Special steps being taken to minimise the adverse effect of this situation are:

(a) Progressive Gas Pressurisation of underground inter-exchange junctions and main telephone cables. About 615 Km of underground cables have been pressurised.

(b) Progressive use of jelly filled cables;

(c) Gradual replacement of overhead wire alignments by underground cables;

- (d) Systematic checking of junction circuits including indoor equipments;
- (e) Progressive systematic check of subscriber fittings and gradual replacement of old fittings;
- (f) Progressive use of ducts for laying cables under some of the major roads.

Invitation to Foreign Consultants by the National Labour Institute

*138. SHRI SYED AHMED HASHMI: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of experts/consultants in various fields are being invited through UNDP/ILO or direct by the National Labour Institute to work in various short term projects undertaken by the Institute; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that most of the know-how provided by these experts/consultants is hardly relevant to our needs?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): (a) A number of experts/consultants were invited through UNDP/ILO. National Labour Institute does not invite experts directly.

(b) No.

Implementation of Interim rates of wages to Journalists and Non-journalists

*139. SHRI S. W. DHABE: Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the managements who have so far (i) implemented; and (ii) not implemented, the Government decisions regarding interim rates of wages in respect of journa-

list and non-journalist employees of their newspapers; and

(b) the details of the managements, out of those mentioned in reply to part (a) (ii) above, who have obtained stay orders from courts of law in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): (a) A statement (Statement I) giving the available information is placed on the Table. [See Appendix CII, Annexure No. 6].

(b) Another statement (Statement II) giving this information is also placed on the Table. [See Appendix CII, Annexure No. 7].

Closure of Industrial Units

*140. SHRI NRIPATI RANJAN CHOUDHURY:
SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA:

SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

Will the Minister of PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of industrial units which remained closed in various States due to retrenchment, lock-outs or for other reasons during the period from the 1st April to 30th June, 1977;

(b) the number of workers affected and the number of man-days lost as a result of these closures;

(c) the main causes of the closures; and

(d) the remedial measures taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND LABOUR (SHRI RAVINDRA VARMA): (a) to (d) The requisite information is still awaited from the State Governments, etc. who have already been requested to furnish the same. Complete information will be laid on the Table of the Sabha as soon as it is received from the concerned quarters.