

INDO-BANGLADESH JOINT STATEMENT REGARDING POWS

853. SHRI V. K. SAKHLECHA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the attitude of Pakistan Government in regard to the joint statement signed by the Government of India and Bangladesh on the issue of the repatriation of Prisoners of war and Bangladesh nationals wishing to return to Bangladesh from Pakistan is disappointing; and

(b) if so, what are the details of the joint statement?]

विदेश मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सुरेन्द्र पाल सिंह) : (क) जी हाँ ।

(ख) 17 अप्रैल, 1973 को प्रकाशित भारत-बंगला देश संयुक्त विज्ञप्ति सदन की मेज पर पहले ही रखी जा चुकी है ।

[THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The text of the Joint Indo-Bangladesh Declaration of 17th April, 1973 has already been laid on the Table of the House.]

PRESIDENT'S AWARDS IN HINDI LANGUAGE ONLY

854. SHRI S. S. MARISWAMY : Will the MINISTER OF DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on the recent Republic Day, President's awards were presented to military personnel; and

(b) if so, the reasons for their being written only in Hindi language?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM) : (a) No, Sir. No awards were presented by the President on the Republic Day 1973.

(b) Does not arise.

INCREASE IN PRICE OF COAL IN ORISSA

855. SHRI C. P. MAJHI : Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

[English translation.

(a) whether the price of coal has gone up in the State of Orissa, since the taking over the coal mines by Government;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) what was the quantity of coal supplied to the State during the quarter ending on 31-12-1972 and that of the quarter ending on 31-3-1973 ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUBODH HANSDA) : (a) and (b) There is at present no statutory control on the prices of coal. There have, however, been some reports about the increase in the retail price of coal in different regions immediately after the Government take-over of the non-coking coal mines. The increase was not on account of any decision taken either by the Government or the Coal Mines Authority, but to some traders taking undue advantage of the situation arising out of take-over.

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

STAMPS ISSUED BY PAKISTAN POSTAL DEPARTMENT

856. SHRIMATI SAVITA BEHEN : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the stamps issued recently by the Pakistan Postal Department designed to attract world's attention to Pakistani POWs in India, immediately following the Joint-Bangladesh offer of a solution of the problem of Pak-POWs; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction to the issue of the said stamps ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) Government have seen reports of Pakistan having issued a stamp on the POWs.

(b) The issue of this stamp is a part of Pakistan Government's propaganda campaign directed against India on the POW question. Government have taken