

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) :

(a) Yes, Sir, the West Bengal Government have issued instructions that there should be no delay or discrimination in the issuing of India-Pakistan passports to *bona fide* applicants irrespective of the community to which they belong.

(b) Yes, Sir. The State Governments are issuing such passports as an agency functioning on behalf of the Central Government.

RECOGNITION OF EAST GERMANY

720. SHRI K. C. PANDA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state

(a) whether the West German Foreign Minister recently visited India and had talks with him in regard to the recognition of East Germany; and

(b) whether the West German Foreign Minister indicated that his Government would not keep quiet if any country tried to upset the *status quo* by abruptly recognising East Germany; and

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government of India in this regard ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

COST OF NUCLEAR COMPLEX

721. SHRI KRISHAN KANT : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have made any estimate of the costs of nuclear complex that may be built in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) how do they compare with the cost estimates prepared by other experts ?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) :

(a) and (b) Presumably the hon. Member is referring to Nuclear-powered Agro-Industrial Complexes, the feasibility of which was studied by a Working Group constituted by the Atomic Energy Commission. The preliminary report submitted by the Working Group is available in the Parliament Library.

(c) We are not aware of any studies on the subject having been conducted by any one else.

CLOTH PRICES

722. SHRI A. G. KULKARNI :

SHRI R. P. KHAITAN :

Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any proposals from the Textile Industry to upgrade the cloth prices and the reasons for upgrading;

(b) whether any decision has been taken by Government in this connection; and

(c) whether due to the high cost of raw materials like cotton, stores and wages the Indian Textile Industry is finding it difficult to compete in the world markets and if so, what steps Government propose to take to remove these difficulties ?

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT) : (a) Yes, Sir. The industry has urged for an increase in the prices of controlled cloth on account of increase in prices of cotton, wages, stores, power, fuel, coal and dyes and chemicals and also due to increase in rates of interest and overhead charges.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) It is true that due to high cost of raw materials particularly of cotton the industry is finding it difficult to compete in the world markets. The following steps have been taken to bring down the prices of cotton :—

(i) credit margin on cotton has raised from 25% to 40% in the case of mills and from 50% to 60% in the case of traders.

(ii) Arrangements for import of 1.25 lakhs Indian bales of PL 480 cotton, which formed part of the original demand for PL 480 cotton were expedited.

(iii) Import of 1.5 lakh bales of staple fibre, which is a good substitute of cotton has been undertaken by the STC.

(iv) An additional import of one lakh bales of global cotton has been arranged.

(v) Limits up to which cotton stocks can be held by mills have been reduced by 1 month.