

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SARDAR SWARAN SINGH) : (a) and (b) Adequate force levels are maintained to meet the threats facing the country. These levels are indicated from time to time in the Annual Reports of the Ministry of Defence.

OFFER OF NICKEL TO INDIA BY CUBA

1278. SHRI ARJUN ARORA : SHRI NIREN GHOSH : SHRI Z. A. AHMAD : SHRI KALYAN ROY :

Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE AND SUPPLY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Cuba offered to sell Nickel to this country ;

(b) if so, the quantity and the value involved in the offer;

(c) the date of receipt of the offer; and

(d) whether the offer has been accepted ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE AND SUPPLY (CHOWDHARY RAM SEWAK) : (a) to (d) An offer is known to have been made by Cuba, in very general terms, for the sale of some Nickel against the import of steel to some of the Indian manufacturers and exporters of steel fabrications. Owing to the tight situation of steel and their prior commitments, those who received these enquiries did not find it possible to respond positively to the Cuban offer. No progress, therefore, has been made in this matter.

JURISDICTION OF ATOMIC ENERGY

1279. SHRIM. P. BHARGAVA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether some work which is being done in the Atomic Energy Commission falls under the jurisdiction of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute and the Indian Council of Medical Research;

(b) whether it is a fact that there is resentment in scientific circles about the iron curtain regarding the activities of the Atomic Energy Commission; and

(c) whether space and mathematical researches are also being conducted by the Atomic Energy Commission?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF ATOMIC ENERGY (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : (a) to (c) Research in the field of utilization of atomic energy for peaceful purposes, which inevitably includes agriculture and medicine, is promoted by the Atomic Energy Commission. However, every care is taken to ensure collaboration with specialist bodies in each case. The activities of the Atomic Energy Commission are well-publicised. There is no basis for the allegation regarding the existence of an iron curtain. So far as advancement of research in higher mathematical sciences and peaceful uses of outer space is concerned, the Department of Atomic Energy is responsible for these under the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961.

INDIA'S IMAGE ABROAD

1280. SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal under the consideration of the Government of India to review the working of the Indian Missions in order to portray the image of India in those countries in a better way; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) and (b) Indian Missions abroad are continuously making efforts to project the right image of India. And their performance is kept under constant review, with a view to ensuring an even fuller appreciation of India and what she stands for.

TEA CORPORATION

1281. DR. (MRS.) MANGLADEVI TALWAR : Will the Minister of FOREIGN TRADE AND SUPPLY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have taken any final decision in setting up a Tea Corporation on the lines of National Textile Corporation; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE AND SUPPLY (CHOWDHARY RAM SEWAK) : (a) No, Madam.

(b) Does not arise.