

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K. K. SHAH) : (a) and (b) In keeping with the secular ideal of the State, only such themes are projected through A.I.R. broadcasts as lend themselves to universal appeal, without any sectarian bias. Besides news, names of religious places and religious heads occasionally figure in such programmes as talks and devotional music. However, references are made to occasions such as Christmas celebrations in Bethlehem or the Vatican, the Haj Pilgrimage at Mecca, the Buddhist celebrations in Anuradhapura in Ceylon and the Sikh Pilgrimage at Nankana Sahib in Pakistan. Similarly the mention of His Holiness the Pope or the Delegation of Buddhist Monks from Laos during their recent visits to India would have been made in A.I.R. broadcasts.

CHINA'S REJECTION OF INDIA'S PROPOSAL FOR MEETING ON THE BORDER ISSUE

779. SHRI N. R. MUNISWAMY : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that China has rejected India's offer made after the Nathu La incident of a meeting between the Indian and Chinese Commanders across the Tibet-Sikkim border saying that "it is not necessary";

(b) if so, what steps will be taken to arrest their aggression on the borders; and

(c) whether any reasons were assigned by China for not complying with India's offer?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : (a) The Chinese Government have not replied to our notes of the 11th and 12th September proposing a meeting between the local Sector Commanders.

(b) The Government of India have made it clear that they are resolved to repel any aggression against the frontiers guarding of which is their responsibility.

(c) Does not arise.

INVITATIONS TO PRIME MINISTER TO VISIT FOREIGN COUNTRIES

780. SHRI JAGAT NARAIN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the countries from which invitations to visit have been received by the Prime Minister,

(b) the action taken thereon and whether any programme for her visit has been finalised, and

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

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : (a) Invitations to Prime Minister have been received from the following countries —

Afghanistan, Algeria, Austria, Burma, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, Federal Republic of Germany, Hungary, Iraq, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Sudan, Singapore, Syria and Tunisia.

(b) and (c) The visits to Australia and New Zealand are expected to take place in January 1968, and to Malaysia and Singapore some time later in 1968. No detailed programmes have been drawn up so far. In respect of the other countries, while the invitations have been accepted in principle, the dates of the visits have not so far been decided.

781 [Transferred to the 5th December, 1967.]

EXPENDITURE INCURRED ON ENTERTAINMENT OF JOURNALISTS

782. SHRI NIREN GHOSH :

SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE :

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) how much money was spent by the Principal Information Officer of the Press Information Bureau in 1965, 1966 and 1967 for entertaining journalists, Indian and foreign;

(b) whether Government will place on the Table of the House a list of journalists who were invited by the Principal Information Officer together with the number of occasions on which such journalists were invited for entertainment;