

The Bhagvantom Committee was a Technical Committee set up to advise Government on (i) technical aspects of Television development; and (ii) new methods and techniques for providing Television Service according to the highest international standards. This Report was intended for official use only and it was not proposed to be made available to the public, on sale or otherwise. Accordingly, the question of printing this Report did not arise.

FORGING RELATIONS WITH NEW AFRICAN COUNTRIES

775. SHRI Z. A. AHMAD : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the question of forging closer ties with the newly independent African countries has been considered by Government; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken in this direction?

THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) :

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) To promote better and closer relations with African countries, the Government of India have increased the number of resident diplomatic missions and extended diplomatic representation in other by concurrent accreditation. From the point of view of African presence in India the existing African diplomatic representation in Delhi has been strengthened by the addition of an Embassy opened very recently by the Democratic Republic of Congo. There are also indications that Kenya will follow suit.

The Government of India has also instituted a scheme of economic and technical collaboration with those countries and intensive efforts have been made towards the general expansion of trade. We have also paid considerable attention to the provision of educational facilities in India for students and other trainees from these countries.

RE-ALLOTMENT OF LAND TO DELHI ADMINISTRATION

776. SHRI SITARAM JAIPURIA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of Government have been drawn to a news-item

published in the Hindustan Times of 7th September, 1967 regarding issue of a Press note 're-allotment of land to the Delhi Administration along the right bank of the Jumuna for construction of embankment' which should have been issued two years ago; and

(b) if so, whether any enquiry has been made in the inordinate delay in issuing the Press note, if so, who has been found responsible for this lapse?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K. K. SHAH) : (a) and (b) The Press note dated 6th September, 1967, issued by the Press Information Bureau was on the basis of a formal *ex-post-facto* sanction issued by the Ministry of Works and Housing on the previous day. Although there was no delay in the issue of the Press note, it is regretted that the Press note did not specify that President's *ex-post-facto* approval was conveyed by letter dated 5-9-1967 for the Ministry of Works, Housing and Supply.

U.N. INTELLIGENCE AGENCY IN NAGALAND

777. SHRI ARJUN ARORA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether any UN intelligence agency is allowed to operate in Nagaland; and

(b) if so, what is its assessment of the armed strength of the underground movement in Nagaland?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : (a) India is a member of the United Nations and the Government of India are not aware that the United Nations operate any such agency.

(b) Does not arise.

†A.I.R. BROADCAST

778. SHRI V. M. CHORDIA : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that broadcasts are made from the All India Radio praising (i) religious places and (ii) religious heads belonging to lands outside India; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi but it could not be supplied to the Ministry because of unavoidable circumstances.

(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, Australia, 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 8th 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;