

†[THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. C. CHAGLA): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

Reports of cases of harassment of Hindus living in East-Pakistan and of extortion of illegal gratification, particularly from migrants proceeding to India, by Pakistan police have been reaching the Government of India from time to time. There has, however, been no indication of increase in the number of such cases in the last few months.

The Government of India have repeatedly represented to the Government of East-Pakistan about the plight of the minorities there, and have reminded them of their obligations under the Nehru-Liaquat Pact which requires them to guarantee to their minorities security, full freedom and equality of rights. Unfortunately, the Government of Pakistan despite their professions to the contrary, have done very little to improve the conditions of the minorities there.]

ANDHRA PRADESH MINISTER'S TALKS WITH U.S. AMBASSADOR

*309. SYED NAUSHER ALI:
SHRI NIREN GHOSH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the press reports about talks between the Agriculture Minister of Andhra Pradesh and U.S. Ambassador Mr. Chester Bowles regarding P. L. 480 credit to Andhra agriculturists;

(b) if so, whether the U.S. Ambassador had prior discussion with the Union Government in the matter; and

(c) what is Government's reaction to such talks with foreign dignitaries?

†[] English translation.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. C. CHAGLA): (a) to (c) Government have seen some press reports of a meeting between the U.S. Ambassador and the Agriculture Minister of Andhra Pradesh. The State Government have been requested to let us have the relevant information. They have promised to do so and the information is awaited. Until we know the matters discussed, we are not in a position to comment further. In general, there is nothing improper in foreign envoys meeting State Government dignitaries though any agreements with foreign Governments can only be negotiated through the Government of India.

AGENCY TO STUDY PUBLIC OPINION

*310. SHRI ARJUN ARORA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up any agency to study 'public opinion' in the country; and

(b) if so, the broad features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K. K. SHAH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) (1) The Directorate of Field publicity collects reactions during its field activities which include, seminars/symposia, public meetings, group discussions, film shows, etc.

(2) The Press Information Bureau maintains Public Opinion Analysis Unit.

(3) There is also a Press and Public Reactions Analysis Units in the Bureau.

'AID INDIA DAY' IN LEBANON

*311. SHRI A. P. CHATTERJEE:
SHRI NIREN GHOSH:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister received Rs. 4 lakhs on behalf of "some friends of India in Lebanon";

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the amount was collected by observing 'Aid India Day' under which collections were made in streets, and even school boys paid money from their pocket money; and

(c) the manner in which the amount is likely to be disbursed?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) and (b) Some friends of India in the Lebanon, under the patronage of President Charles Helou, had organised an Indian Day Campaign in July 1966 as a gesture of friendship and solidarity with India. Contributions in cash and kind were received from people from different walks of life. The total collection was £168,000 (Rs. 4 lakhs). The Secretary-General of the Executive Committee of the India Day Campaign, gave a formal communication to the Prime Minister intimating that this amount was being credited for use by India.

(c) The matter is under consideration.

*312. [Transferred to the 8th June, 1967.]

CHINESE CLAIM ON CHINESE-SIKKIM TERRITORY

*313. SARDAR RAM SINGH: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government of China have recently sent a protest note alleging intrusion of Indian defence personnel recently in the Chinese territory on the Sikkim borders;

(b) whether the Sikkim territory is claimed by the Chinese as their own; and

(c) if so, whether the Government of India have taken any steps to refute the Chinese claim?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. C. CHAGLA)

(a) Yes, Sir. They have alleged that Indian troops recently constructed seven stone piles on the Chinese side of Kailu La on the Tibet-Sikkim border.

(b) The Chinese have not in their note given the exact location of this area; Kailu La, however appears to be the Chinese name for Kongra La. It is a fact that there are some stone piles well within the Sikkim side of the border at Kongra La. They have been there for a long time. The allegation, therefore, that the stone piles are within the Chinese territory amounts to a claim on a part of Sikkim territory.

(c) A reply to the Chinese protest note rejecting this false allegation will be sent shortly.

SIKH PILGRIMS TO PANJA SAHIB

*314. SHRI N. R. MUNISWAMY:
SHRI T. PANDE:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state.

(a) whether it is a fact that Sikh pilgrims were harassed by Pakistani officials when they visited Panja Sahib on the occasion of Baisakhi in April, 1967; and

(b) if so, what action was taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI M. C. CHAGLA):

(a) and (b) The pilgrims who visited Panja Sahib in West Pakistan on the occasion of Vaisakhi in April this year faced some difficulties which were primarily a result of lack of unified leadership among various pilgrim fixed for them. According to the leaders of some religious organisations who took part in the Vaisakhi pilgrimage, the attitude of some of the officials in Pakistan was not very helpful. The Government are examining the difficulties faced by the pilgrims with the object of streamlining the procedures involved.