

OPERATIONS TO QUELL THE NAGA REBELS

*320. **SHRI PURNA CHANDRA SHARMA:** Will the **PRIME MINISTER** be pleased to state:

(a) whether the operations carried out by the military personnel to quell the Naga rebels, have improved the law and order situation in the affected areas of the Naga Hills; and if so, to what extent;

(b) the number of rebels so far arrested on charges of murder, arson and loot;

(c) the number of casualties which have occurred so far in the raids made by the gangsters;

(d) the approximate loss suffered by the villagers in the raids in the rural areas; and

(e) the number of civil officers kidnapped by the rebels and how many of them have since been recovered?

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI LAKSHMI MENON): (a) to (e). There has been some improvement in the situation in the Naga Hills. Some of the hostile Nagas have surrendered. Isolated cases of attacks, however, continue.

431 hostile Nagas have been arrested in connection with the troubles in the Naga Hills.

Information regarding the casualties, as well as the loss suffered, is being collected.

Two overseers were kidnapped by armed Nagas but have subsequently been released.

SHRI H. D. RAJAH: Will the Prime Minister kindly tell us whether these Naga rebels are armed with Pakistan weapons?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: So far as we know, they are not. We cannot be dead sure, but hon. Mem-

bers will remember that large dumps were left, at the end of the last war in those areas, of weapons and ammunition and these have been available to them. We do not know if any supplies have come from any foreign countries.

SHRI H. D. RAJAH: Is he aware that in the Pakistan Press, they gloat over the fact that these rebels are creating trouble for the Indian Union Government and that arms are supplied by Pakistan people?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: I have not seen that in the Press, but if the hon. Member will draw my attention to the particular passage, we shall enquire into the matter.

SHRI S. N. MAZUMDAR: Has the Government received any information about the press report which was published some time earlier that the Naga National Council has been dissolved and if so whether the Government has any information as to the significance of this, that is, whether there is any change in the erstwhile leaders of the Naga National Council?

SHRI JAWAHARLAL NEHRU: It is rather difficult to give a correct appraisal of the situation due to this disbandment or dissolution of the Naga National Council. It is a significant thing, I suppose, but I do not think, we should attach too much importance to it, at this stage. Broadly speaking, as we have said frequently before, we are anxious, in these Naga areas, not merely to treat it as a law and order problem, but as a political problem of winning over Naga fellow countrymen and countrywomen. But when there is actual shooting going on, when there are actual petty revolts going on, that has to be met. But as soon as order is restored, we want to take up the political problem there, and deal with it in consultation with all the parties concerned because we are anxious to have the Nagas as, shall I say, friendly and satisfied citizens of India.