

(v) The Advisory Committee on Press Council have had the benefit of views of several important witnesses as to how the interests of readers should be safeguarded in the Press Council.

As regards part (c) of the question, the Press Council have written to the News-readers Club, Bombay that any complaint which falls within the provisions of the Press Council Act and is lodged with the Council, will be duly taken notice of and necessary action taken.

EMPLOYMENT TO EMERGENCY

COMMISSIONED OFFICERS

247. SHRI M. V. BHADRAM : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to refer to the reply to Starred Question No. 470 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 7th March, 1968 and state :

(a) what further efforts have been made by Government to provide alternative employment to the Emergency Commissioned Officers demobilised from the Defence Services in 1967;

(b) how many of them have so far been absorbed in other services?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI M. R. KRISHNA) : (a) and (b) A statement giving the information is attached.

STATEMENT

(a) The following further steps have been taken to augment the efforts being made for the re-employment of the released Emergency Commissioned Officers in suitable civil posts

(i) The reservations of 25% and 30% vacancies in Class I and II posts which were hitherto applicable only to permanent posts have been expended to temporary posts which are likely to be made permanent and/or to continue on a longterm basis and the permanent vacancies filled by direct recruitment initially on a temporary basis. As a result of this decision it is expected that a larger number of vacancies in the Central and State Governments etc. will become available for absorption of the released E.C.Os. in due course.

(ii) Out of the posts of Asstt. Commandants in Assam Rifles which were hitherto filled entirely by deputation of regular Army Officers it has been decided to reserve 40% for released ECOs/ SSCOs. A procedure for a phased replacement of serving Army officers by

the ex-EC/SSC Officers to the required extent is being worked out in consultation with the Ministry of Home Affairs.

(iii) Border Roads Development Board has been requested to absorb as many released ECOs as possible in the Border Roads Organisation where there is a good scope for their absorption.

(iv) The State Governments have again been requested to absorb ECOs belonging to the respective States in suitable state services/posts. The lists and particulars of released ECOs belonging to each State/Union Territory who were released during 1967 and are still unemployed were sent to the respective State Governments/U. T. Administrations. They have assured their fullest co-operation in absorbing as many of them as possible in their States.

(v) In April, 1968 to augment the rehabilitation of released ECOs four Army Officers of the rank of Lt.Col. have been appointed 'Officers on Special Duty' at four important Centres namely, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras and Delhi to keep constant and active liaison with the State Governments, Public and Private Sector Undertakings in their respective zones viz. Western, Eastern, Southern and Northern Zones of the country. It will take some time before the efforts of these officers bear fruit.

(b) The number of Emergency Commissioned Officers released in 1967, for whom alternative employment has been secured has risen from 721 to 800.

KACHCHATIVU ISLAND

248. SHRI M. V. BHADRAM : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether any steps have been taken by Government to settle the dispute between India and Ceylon over the ownership of Kachchativu Island in the Palk Straits; and

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

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI) : (a) and (b) The Government of India have been in touch with the Government of Ceylon through diplomatic channels. Preliminary discussions have been held both in Delhi and Colombo with a view to holding a meeting of senior officials of the two sides to settle this matter.