

nature of the cuts that would have to be imposed, if necessary, in regard to foreign exchange expenditure. I am afraid, the answer would not be available for some time to come.

Administration of Union Territories

***532. Shri H. C. Mathur:** Will the Minister of Home Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government have undertaken the re-organisation of the administration and services of the Union Territories;

(b) if so, what are the present arrangements and what steps, if any, have been taken in the direction of reorganisation; and

(c) what are the recommendations in the interim reports, if any, received?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs (Shri Datar): (a) to (c). The Government of India are giving their attention to the two-fold question:

(i) on what lines the administrative set of Union territories needs rationalisation; and

(ii) how best posts in various Departments in the Union territories can be manned.

A senior officer has been appointed to go into the existing arrangements and suggest measures for improvement. The officer is engaged in a study of the question.

Shri H. C. Mathur: May I know whether the integration of the services is also being effected at the same time?

Shri Datar: Integration of services is being effected and Government will be consulted in due time.

Shri Brahm Prakash: May I know whether after abolition of the States some economy could be effected in the Union Territories?

Shri Datar: That is a larger question which I cannot answer now.

Counting of Votes in West Bengal

***533. Shri Sadhan Gupta:** Will the Minister of Law be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Election Commission had directed counting of votes to be held as soon as possible after polling in a constituency;

(b) whether counting in West Bengal took place in the same order of priority as the dates of polling;

(c) if not, on what other basis counting was held; and

(d) the reason for following an order of counting different from the order of polling?

The Minister of Law (Shri A. K. Sen): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d). The information asked for is not yet available with the Election Commission which is collecting it. I understand, however, that there was no general direction of the Commission to the effect that counting in any constituency or in all constituencies should take place in the same order as the dates of polling.

Shri Sadhan Gupta: May I know whether it is not a fact that in West Bengal counting had often taken place between 16 days to three weeks or more after the date of polling and, if so, what is reason for it?

Shri A. K. Sen: Unless specific instances are given, it is very difficult to answer that question. But the fact is that the Election Commission had given a general direction to all Returning Officers that counting should be started as soon as possible after the polling was over, and our information is that that direction had been adhered to and followed as best as possible and as best as circumstances could permit.

Shri Sadhan Gupta: Is it not a fact that in all the constituencies in the suburbs of Calcutta which went to the polls on 1st March, counting took place, with one exception, about 16 days to three weeks or more after the date of polling and, if so, what is the reason for it?