

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri Swaran Singh): (a) to (c). A statement is placed on the Table of the House. [*Placed in Library. See No. LT-3195/64.*]

Firing by Pak Troops

972. Shri P. C. Borooah: Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Pakistani troops fired on an Indian patrol near Deore village in Jammu on the 12th August, 1964, killing two Indian policemen; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

The Minister of Defence (Shri Y. B. Chavan): (a) No such incident took place on the 12th August, 1964. However, on the 5th August, Pakistani troops opened unprovoked medium machine gun fire on a police patrol near Deore, as a result of which two constables were killed.

(b) A cease-fire violation complaint has been lodged with the U.N. Military Observers. The decision of the Chief Military Observer is awaited.

West Bengal Cost of Living Index

973. Shrimati Renu Chakravarty: Will the Minister of Labour and Employment be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the West Bengal cost of living index compiled recently has shown a decline;

(b) whether his attention has been drawn to the West Bengal Labour Minister's statement that this has been done on the basis of Central Government statistics; and

(c) whether any enquiry has been made into the matter and if so, the result thereof?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Labour and Employment (Shri R. K. Malviya): (a) The Labour Bureau is compiling and publishing

Consumer Price Index Numbers on base 1960=100 for Calcutta, Howrah and Asansol in West Bengal. If the Honourable Member's reference is to the Calcutta Index, the correct position is that in May the Index was 118 and in June 116, indicating a drop of 2 points. In other words, compared with May 1960 (the base period), the rise in the index in May 1964 was 18 points, while compared with June 1960 (the base period) the rise in June 1964 was 16 points only. This fall of 2 points was mainly due to fall in the food group index consequent upon a fall of 21 points in the fruits and vegetables sub-group index in June, 1964. The items included in the fruits and vegetables sub-group index are highly susceptible to seasonal fluctuations in prices.

(b) We have not yet seen the statement of Labour Minister, West Bengal, but have written to the West Bengal Government about it.

(c) Does not arise.

Saving in Defence Expenditure

974. Shri S. M. Banerjee: Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the defence expenditure is proposed to be reduced during the current year; and

(b) whether this is likely to affect further expansion and establishment of ordnance factories?

The Deputy Minister in the Ministry of Defence (Dr. D. S. Raju): (a) A general review of the project and programmes included in the current year's Budget has been proposed by the Prime Minister with a view to re-assess priorities. Preliminary reviews in that direction have been undertaken in the Defence Ministry.

(b) Further expansion and establishment of Ordnance Factories are not likely to be affected by the proposed assessment of priorities.