

or temporary incapacity or death on account of a recurrence of heart attack before the accident of the officer who was driving the jeep, (iii) the journey was unauthorised and besides the officer and the driver of the jeep, all the others were individuals not entitled to travel in the military vehicle, and (iv) the loss to the State is about Rs. 9,000 00.

(c) Does not arise.

Explosion in Shooting Range in Jhansi Distt.

11. Shri Hukam Chand Kachhavalaya: Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1282 on the 14th November, 1966 and state:

(a) whether the enquiry into the death of three boys as a result of an explosion in the shooting range of Armed Brigade in Jhansi District has been completed;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the next of kin of the boys have submitted any application for compensation?

The Minister of Defence (Shri Swaran Singh): (a) The Court of Enquiry has been completed.

(b) Babina Field Firing Range is a fully restricted area and unauthorised persons are not permitted in the ranges at any time of the day or night. The villagers of Bhandra Buzurg were fully aware of this. However, four boys from village Bhandra Buzurg went inside the Babina Field Firing Range at about 15.00 hrs. on 24th September, 1966 to round up some grazing cattle that had strayed into the Range Area. These boys were wounded by a shell burst mid-way between village Keshodhan and village Jhanda. Two Boys (Amar Singh and Asa Ram) died on the spot and another boy (Akhe Raj) died after reaching his village. The villagers could not go into the range area on the night of 24th/25th September, 1966, since firing by an Aircraft

was going on. The villagers reported the matter to the civil police on the morning of 25th September, 1966 and with the help of the police, both the dead bodies were recovered on the evening of 25th September, 1966, from inside the Range area.

(c) No application for compensation has been received from the next of kin of the boys. We have, however, initiated action on our own to pay *ex-gratia* compensation.

Fire in C.O.D. Cheoki

12. Shri Hukam Chand Kachhavalaya: Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1275 on the 14th November, 1966 and state:

(a) whether the report regarding the causes of fire in the Central Ordnance Depot, Cheoki, (near Allahabad) has since been received by Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the further time likely to be taken?

The Minister of Defence (Shri Swaran Singh): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) It has not been possible for the lower formation to submit the report to Government so far through Army Headquarters due to several administrative reasons. However, instructions have been issued to ensure that the report is submitted to Government within a month.

Indian Embassy in Peking

13. Dr. Karni Singh: Will the Minister of External Affairs, be pleased to state:

(a) whether, in view of the recent political upheavals in China, any steps have been taken to ensure the safety of the lives and property of the officials of the Indian Embassy in Peking; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?