

**Indian Ambassador in Syria**

2912. Shri Ram Kishan Gupta:  
Shri Yashpal Singh;  
Shri Ram Gopal Shalwale:

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India had no Ambassador at Damascus during the period when recent developments on Syria's border with Israel took a grave turn; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): (a) and (b). Pursuant to decisions taken well before the crisis in West Asia the previous Ambassador to Syria left on transfer on the 17th May.

Transfers in the Foreign Service involve a chain of transfers and it is not unusual for some time to elapse before the successor assumes charge of his post. With the development of the crisis in West Asia the new Ambassador to Syria was recalled from leave and ordered to proceed to Damascus where he arrived on 5th June.

**Indian Diplomat in Peking**

2913. Shri K. P. Singh Deo: Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an Indian diplomat in Peking was made to sign a Police statement that he would not purchase copies of a Red Guard Newspaper; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government in this regard?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): (a) The facts of the case referred to have already been detailed by the Foreign Minister in his statement of June 13 in the Lok Sabha.

(b) This incident has been by passed by the latest developments relating to the treatment to our diplomats in Peking.

**American ship 'Oceanographer'**

2914. Shri S. C. Jha: Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the planned movement of the American ship 'Oceanographer' around the Laccadive and the Maldive Islands and other Islands in the India Ocean and the Bay of Bengal is more from war strategy point of view than from any geological one; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this behalf?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): (a) The U. S. Oceanographic Research and Survey Ship "OCEANOGRAPHER" called recently at Bombay in the course of a research voyage around the world in the course of which she is also due to pass through the high seas in the vicinity of Indian territory. The ship is a scientific research vessel, and we have no reason to suppose that its purposes are not purely scientific.

(b) No particular steps are called for.

**Pay Scales of Armed Forces**

2915. Shri M. Meghachandra:  
Shri Dhireswar Kalita:  
Shri Maharaj Singh Bharati:  
Shri Hukam Chand Kachwal:  
Shri Ram Singh Ayarwal:  
Shri Narendra Singh Mahida:

Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal under consideration of Government to increase the pay scales of the Officers and other ranks in the army;

(b) if so, the main features of the proposal now under consideration; and

(c) when a decision is expected to be taken thereon?

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

(b) and (c). Do not arise.