

(a) the steps taken by the Government to establish strong bilateral relations with China during the last one year;

(b) whether the Government have held high level discussions with that country in this regard;

(c) if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and

(d) the details of steps being taken to resolve the border issue between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) to (d). During the last one year, Government have continued their efforts to work towards the goal of establishing a long-term, stable and good neighbourly relations with China. Steps taken by Government include, *inter alia*, the following :

- a) India and China have maintained the momentum of high-level visits. During the last one year, the Vice President, Home Minister, Health Minister and other Indian Ministers visited China, while visitors from China included Ministers for Defence, Supervision and Labour. During these visits, the two sides exchanged views on bilateral and other issues of mutual interest. Agreements on the avoidance of double taxation, resumption of banking relations and health cooperation were concluded.
- b) Government have worked with the Chinese Government to actively promote expansion of bilateral trade and economic cooperation. The two sides have, for instance, sought to remove institutional bottlenecks by signing agreements on the avoidance of double taxation and the resumption of banking links. Efforts have also been made in the India-China Joint Economic Group to promote economic cooperation in new areas.
- c) The two countries have taken steps to promote functional exchanges in a wide spectrum of areas, ranging from space science to sericulture. Cultural exchanges have also been promoted under a bilateral cultural exchange programme.
- d) The two countries have continued their discussions in the Joint Working Group (JWG) to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question. They are also implementing the Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquillity along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas, which was signed in September 1993. Further measures under this Agreement are being worked out in the JWG and the India-China Expert Group. The JWG met in July 1994 while the Expert Group held its third session in March 1995.

Enquiries Conducted by Directorate of Estates.

2398. SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI : Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Directorate of Estates conduct enquiries in the absence of the allottees of the accommodation without disclosing their identity and the reasons for such an enquiry;

(b) if so, the steps taken to desist from such activities henceforth; and

(c) the number of such enquiries conducted during June and July 1995 giving the details thereof and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI P.K. THUNGON) : (a) and (b) Enquiries into subletting are normally conducted during office hours by two gazetted officers of the Directorate of Estates. The occupant of the house can ask for identity of the officials in the event of any doubt.

(c) The number of inspections conducted during June and July, 1995, are 98 out of which 53 cases of subletting have been identified.

Multilateral Security Regime

2399. SHRI SANT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether India may not be included in any multilateral security regime as it has not signed the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), according to a senior U.S. Official in Washington, as reported in the "Business Standard", New Delhi, dated July 14, 1995; and

(b) : if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Government has noted the statement of the US Under Secretary of State for International Security to that effect.

(b) Government's position that India will not sign the NPT is well known and remains unchanged.

Discussions with China to Reduce Defence Forces

2400. SHRI RAM NAIK : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether discussions with China are in progress to reduce the armed forces on India-China border;

(b) if so, the particulars thereof; and

(c) the progress made in the matter so far?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.