

(c) and (d) Government have requested State Government/Union Territories Administrations to strengthen and streamline the distributional arrangements, which are primarily their concern, in order to ensure that controlled cloth is not diverted to unauthorised channels. Government have also requested the State Governments/Union Territories Administrations to open a large number of rural outlets for the sale of controlled cloth so that the weaker sections of the society can be covered adequately under the Scheme.

[English]

Excise Relief to Industries

1673. SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there is any proposal to grant excise relief to those industries which make a categorical commitment to pass on the entire benefit arising out of such concession to the consumer in the form of a cut in prices ;

(b) if so, the details thereof : and

(c) whether Government have identified the consumer durable items for this purpose ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY) : (a) to (c) Same proposals have been received suggesting excise duty reliefs for selected industries for stimulating demand for their products. It is not considered expedient in public interest to give details of these proposals at this stage. Decision would be taken at the appropriate time having regard to all the relevant considerations.

Attack on Indian Embassy in Beirut by Sikhs

1674. SHRI H.B.PATIL : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of Government has been invited to the newsitem appeared in 'Free Press Journal' dated 8 October, 1986 that 50 Sikhs attacked the Indian Embassy in Beirut ; and

(b) is so, the details thereof and the steps taken to ensure the safety of mission and persons working therein ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K.NATWAR SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to our information a group of about 100 Indians, mostly Sikhs, had gone to the Indian Embassy at around 9.45 a.m. on October 6, 1986 ostensibly to discuss consular grievances with the Charge d'Affaires a.i. while there they also handed over a written memorandum signed by about 260 persons which had "AIASSF" superimposed on it in hand. Their consular problems were discussed with them and this discussion was to be resumed.

However, around 2.15 p.m. some of these persons forced their way to the balcony, removed the national flag and hoisted a so called "Khalistan flag". They also raised pro-Khalistani slogans. A portrait of Prime Minister, which was in the reception hall, was forcibly removed and smashed by the agitators. The agitators left the Embassy at about 2.45 p.m. The Mission immediately contacted the local authorities who provided prompt security for the Mission and the staff. While the primary responsibility for security of the Embassy and its personnel rests with the host Government, Government is keeping a close watch on the situation and all possible steps have been taken to ensure the safety of the Mission and its personnel.

Restoration of Munabao-Khokrapar Rail Route

1675. SHRI H.N.NANJE GOWDA :

SHRI G.S.BASAVARAJU : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Indian Railway delegation which was to visit Pakistan in September, 1986 to hold discussion in connection with reopening of rail route between Khokrapar-Munabao had cancelled the same ;

(b) if so, the main reasons for delay in restoration of the Indo-Pak rail link ; and

(c) whether Indian delegation had a talk with its Pakistan counterpart recently in this