

(c) No trained ex-Army officers are working in the BSF on *contract* basis. Retired Army officers are, however, serving in the BSF on re-employment terms.

**Diversification of production of Soda Ash in Western Region**

1481. SHRI SAMINATHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken to diversify the production of Soda Ash in Western region; and

(b) the steps taken to reduce the import of 10,000 tonnes of Soda Ash per annum through the State Trading Corporation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) There is concentration of the soda ash industry in the Western region. Three out of the four existing units, accounting for a capacity of 430,000 tonnes/year out of a total of 470,000 tonnes/year, are located in that region. Appreciating the need for dispersal of the industry, letters of intent have been issued for the establishment of two units, one in Maharashtra and another in Tamil Nadu for a capacity of 66,000 tonnes/year each. A letter of intent has also been issued for effecting substantial expansion to the existing unit in U.P. by 110,000 tonnes/year. A proposal for the establishment of a soda ash unit of 66,000 tonnes/year capacity at Haldia in West Bengal is also under consideration.

(b) The following steps have been taken to minimize imports and to achieve self-sufficiency as soon as possible:—

- (i) Existing units have been asked to increase production to the extent possible.
- (ii) Applications for the establishment of additional capacity have been invited recently by means of a Press Note, for ensuring more production as a long-term solution.

**Statue of Mahatma Gandhi at New Delhi**

1482. SHRI C. CHITTIBABU: Will the Minister of WORKS AND HOUSING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Committee constituted by

Government last year for selecting the site and design for putting up the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at New Delhi has submitted its report;

(b) if so, the findings of the Committee; and

(c) the decision of Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WORKS AND HOUSING (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL): (a) Yes, Sir. The Committee of Assessors was constituted only to select the final design of the statue of Mahatma Gandhi to be installed near India Gate.

(b) The Committee did not find any of the eight maquettes submitted by the sculptors, suitable for the purpose of erecting a national memorial in honour of Gandhiji.

(c) Government agree with the above finding of the Committee.

**Safety and security of Personnel and Records of Deputy High Commissioner's Office in Dacca and in other places in Pakistan**

1483. SHRI TRIDIB CHAUDHURI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the developments leading to the closure of Indian Deputy High Commissioner's Office in Dacca and that of the Pak Deputy High Commissioner's Office in Calcutta since April, 1971; and

(b) the steps taken by Government to ensure the safety and personal security of Indian diplomatic personnel and Deputy High Commission records in Dacca in particular and of Indian Diplomatic personnel and their family members in different centres of Pakistan like Karachi and Islamabad?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH): (a) On the 18th April, the erstwhile Pakistan Deputy High Commissioner in Calcutta, Mr. Hossain Ali, and 54 members of his staff renounced their allegiance to the Government of Pakistan in order to serve the cause of Bangla Desh.