

action has already been initiated to promote legislation to bring hospitals and some other institutions within the purview of the term 'Industry' under the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. However, it may not be possible to introduce a Bill in the House in the current session of Parliament.

Improvement in India's relations with neighbouring countries

627. SHRI CHINTAMANI PANI-GRAHI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been any improvement in our country's relations with the neighbouring countries viz. China, Nepal and Ceylon in the recent past ; and

(b) if so, the precise nature thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) *China*

There has been some improvement in our relations with China. Chinese officials in China and their representatives abroad are behaving towards our representatives in a normal and friendly manner. The Chinese news-media are making less critical references to India. Our Prime Minister's messages of congratulations on the Chinese National Day and on Chinese entry into the United Nations were published in Chinese newspapers and the Chinese Prime Minister thanking for the support extended by us for China taking her rightful place in the United Nations.

Nepal

India's relations with Nepal have considerably improved and an important turning point was the signing of the Treaty on Trade and Transit on August 13, 1971, followed by the Foreign Minister's visit to Kathmandu from September 3 to 5, 1971. After discussion in depth, the two sides reiterated their continued adherence to the policy of non-alignment as an important factor in the maintenance of universal peace and international security and the lessening of tensions in the world. The two sides also agreed on the need for creation of conditions for the return of refugees to their homes. The visit by His Majesty the King

of Nepal from 10th to 12th June, 1971 and his stopovers in Delhi on route to third countries have also provided opportunities for a friendly exchange of views at the highest level and resulted in better understanding.

Ceylon

Our relations with Ceylon have continued to improve in the recent past. Our Foreign Minister's visit to Ceylon in September, 1971, resulted in greater and closer economic co-operation between the two countries. A Trade-cum-Economic Delegation from Ceylon would be visiting India soon. Government of India have also extended economic assistance to Ceylon. Cooperation in other fields is also continuing.

Peace Treaty with Foreign countries

628. SHRI CHINTAMANI PANI-GRAHI : SHRI AMAR NATH CHAWLA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether there has been any request from any foreign countries to sign a treaty with India on the pattern of the Indo-Soviet Peace Treaty ;

(b) if so, the name of such country ; and

(c) the reaction of Government of India thereto ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) : (a) No, Sir,

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

Strengthening of Indo-USSR relations

629. SHRI CHINTAMANI PANI-GRAHI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether any further concrete measures have been taken to strengthen cultural, economic and political relations with the U. S. S. R. since the signing of the Indo-Soviet Peace Treaty ; and

(b) if so, what are those measures ?