(b) During the period preceding and immediately after the recent General Elections, there had been a sudden spurt in the activities of the ULFA in Assam, particularly in the districts of Nagaon, Nalbari and Tinsukia, where militants reportedly tried to extort money from traders. As a result, a section of businessmen is reported to have temporarily closed down their establishments and shifted to safer places to avoid harassment.

(c) The State Government was requested to take all necessary security/precautionary measures in this regard. In order to keep a control over the situation, police patrolling vigilance has been intensified. Checking of vehicles, etc. in all the vantage points has been stepped up.

Unauthorised Howkers

639   SHRI PRADIP BHATTACHARYA : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of authorised hawkers for sale of eatables and articles at various Railways stations in the country, zone-wise;

(b) whether there is quite a number of hawkers at various Railway Stations: and

(c) if so, the Steps the Government propose to take to regularise these hawkers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) There are no authorised hawkers in the Railways. The sale of eatables/articles is done by vendors of the licenced contractors/Departmental units.

(b) Yes Sir.

(c) As per policy catering/vending licences are awarded by the Zonal Railways after following prescribed procedure and guidelines. It is not the policy to licence unauthroised howkers.

Conversion of Agricultural Land

640   SHRI K C KONDAIAH : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware that conversion of agricultural land for non-farm use has increased in recent years

(b) if so, the details thereof

(c) whether the Government are considering to issue guidelines to be followed by State Governments to protect land for being diverted to non-farm use in the immediate future

(d) if so, the details of such guidelines, and

(e) if not, the alternative measures proposed to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (EXCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING) (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA) : (a) to (e). Conversation of agricultural land for non-farm use such as housing, industrial development, transport, defence purposes etc. is taking place due to growing population and diversification of economic activity. Government of India have been repeatedly impressing upon all the States and Union Territories to protect good agricultural land from being diverted for non-agricultural purposes In this regard Government of India has also formulated a National Land Use Policy Outline (NLPO) and recommended to the States for implementation. The NLPO inter-alia envisages the restructuring of urban policy to ensure that highly productive land is not taken away

Self-Sufficiency in Urea

641   DR T SUBBARAMI REDDY : Will the Minister of CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS be pleased to state,

(a) whether the Government claim that country will be self-sufficient in urea production within two to three years, and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SIS RAM OLA) : (a) and (b) As per the latest projections of demand and indigenous production of urea, the country is not likely to attain self-sufficiency in urea production within the next three years

Border Dispute

642   SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Maharashtra-Karnataka border dispute is pending for a very long time

(b) whether the Government of Maharashtra has urged the Union Government to hold an opinion poll in the border areas,

(c) if so, the response of the Government thereto and

(d) the time by which a final solution is likely to be taken to solve the dispute?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) Yes Sir

(b) to (d) In early 1989, the Government of Maharashtra had suggested holding of an opinion poll