

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF SUPPLY AND REHABILITATION (SHRI G. VENKAT-SWAMY):** (a) No, Sir.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-8474/74].

(c) Plans for resettlement of 21,300 families during the Fifth Plan period have been formulated. Of these, 15,800 families are planned to be resettled on agricultural lands and 3,700 families on non-agricultural occupations, subject to availability of suitable lands and adequate funds.

**Reaction of various countries over Associate Statehood to Sikkim**

586. SHRI SAMAR GUHA.

SHRI R. S. PANDEY.

SHRI NOORUL HUDA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) reaction of various countries of the world about incorporation of Sikkim as an Associate State of India,

(b) the reaction of Bangladesh, Nepal, Ceylon, Pakistan and other neighbouring countries of India in particular;

(c) the steps taken by India to explain her position vis-a-vis Sikkim,

(d) whether Indo-Sikkimese relations will now be dealt with by the Ministry of External Affairs or by the Ministry of Home Affairs, and

(e) the constitutional rationale behind such a measure?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS):** (a) and (b). Except for China, Pakistan and Nepal no country has reacted adversely to Sikkim being associated with the Union of India. The reaction of China and Pakistan has been hostile. In Nepal, after an initial adverse reaction, there is a somewhat

better understanding of the real situation.

(c) Our position has been fully explained in official discussions by our Heads of Mission, press briefings etc.

(d) Indo-Sikkim relations continue to be looked after as hereto before by the Ministry of External Affairs.

(e) The Constitutional Amendment formalises the situation existing heretofore. It gives effect to the wishes expressed by the people of Sikkim through their elected representatives.

**Measures to reduce Staff strength in Indian Missions Abroad**

587. SHRI SHASHI BHUSHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the extent to which the staff at the Indian Missions abroad has been increased or reduced during the period from 1st January to 31st October, 1974;

(b) whether the present workload justified the present number of staff in each of the Indian Missions abroad; and

(c) what further steps have been taken or are proposed to be taken to reduce the staff strength there to the minimum required and thus reduce the expenditure?

**THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS):** (a) A statement giving increases and decreases in staff strength (under the control of Ministry of External Affairs) in the Indian Missions abroad during the period from 1st January to 31st October, 1974 is laid on the Table of the House. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-8475/74].

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The matter is kept constantly under review and Foreign Service Inspectors visit the Missions periodically to assess their optimum staff