

12.46 hrs.

**MANIPUR (HILL AREAS) DISTRICT
COUNCILS BILL***

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI
K. C. PANT) : I beg to move for leave to
introduce a Bill to provide for the establi-
shment of District Councils in the Hill
Areas in the Union territory of Manipur.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce
a Bill to provide for the establishment of
District Councils in the Hill Areas in
the Union territory of Manipur.

The motion was adopted.

SHRI K. C. PANT : I introduce† the Bill.
12.47 hrs.

MATTER UNDER RULE 377

REPORTED STATEMENT BY INDIAN
HIGH COMMISSIONER IN ISLAMABAD

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA (Alipore)
I have sought your kind permission under
rule 377 to raise this very grave matter
which has been agitating the minds of many
hon. Members since they had the news
in yesterday's paper. At the first oppor-
tunity, we are seeking to get the clarification
from Government.

I am referring to the news report which
has appeared in all the papers yesterday to
the effect that the Indian High Commissioner
in Islamabad, Shri J. K. Atal has made
a public statment there saying "that the
quick formation of a civilian regime in
Pakistan could cut the chances of war by
half."

If I may just quote a futher paragraph
from this report. It says :

"In connection with India's demands
that East Bengal refugess return home,
the High Commissioner said "I am sure

my Prime Minister would have more
patience to wait longer because the
formation of a national government soon
would be a sign that something was
happening in the right direction".

I do not know whether this has been
rightly reported or not. But if it is a correct
report, then it was an extremely extraordinary
statement for a representative of this country
to make abroad. Everybody knows, and you
know, Sir, that an attempt is being made by
people in Pakistan including to Mr. Bhutto
to try and bluff people that they are going
to bringin a civilian government by some sort
of sham elections I think the Prime Minister
and other authorised spokesmen of the
Government in this country have made it
quite clear that this will make no difference
to the situation because it is a sham thing,
until Sheikh Mujibur Rehman is released and
the elected representative, that is, those who
were elected before March 25, are allowed to
decide what form of government they want,
there could be no question of a political
settlement.

I would like to know from the hon.
Minister firstly whether this statement
attributed to Mr. Atal is correct or
not and whether he has been correctly
reported or not. If not, why have Govern-
ment not bothered to contradict it ?

It is a very serious matter which I think
would be the best weapon at the moment
that could be given to Yahya Khan in his
hands.

If this is what he is reported to have
said, then I would like to know what busi-
ness the High Commissioner has to go about
making public statment which are in direct
variance with the public statements made
here by Government and the clear line that
Government have taken on this matter. Or,
are we to take it, because he had
brought Id greetings from Yahya Khan to
our PrimeMinister and he is reported to have
carried back some message from here to
Yahya Khan, that this is the actual confi-
dential view of the Government, which I
would not like to believe, which is not
being reveled to the country.

*Published in Gazette of India Extraordinary. Part II, section 2, dated 29-11-71

†Introduced with the recommendation of the President.