

**BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE****TWENTY-THIRD REPORT**

**Sardar Hukam Singh (Bhatinda):** I beg to present the Twenty-third Report of the Business Advisory Committee.

**ESTIMATES COMMITTEE****NINTH REPORT**

**Shri B. G. Mehta (Gohilwad):** I beg to present the Ninth Report of the Estimates Committee on the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research on the subject 'Secondary Education'.

**PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES—  
A SUMMARY OF WORK**

**Secretary:** I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the "Parliamentary Committees—A Summary of Work", pertaining to the Third Session of the Second Lok Sabha. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-659/58.]

**CALLING ATTENTION TO MATTER  
OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE****RECRUDESCENCE OF FIRING BY PAKISTANI  
BORDER FORCES ON THE EAST PAKIS-  
TAN-ASSAM BORDER.**

**Shri Hynnlewtá (Autonomous Districts—Reserved-Sch. Tribes):** Under Rule 197, I beg to call the attention of the Prime Minister to the following matter of urgent public importance and I request that he may make a statement thereon:—

**'RECRUDESCENCE OF FIRING BY PAKIS-  
TANI BORDER FORCES ON THE EAST  
PAKISTAN-ASSAM BORDER.'**

**The Deputy Minister of External Affairs (Shrimati Lakshmi Menon):** On behalf of the Prime Minister, I make the following statement:

"The House will recall that in response to a number of Call Attention Notices and Short Notice Ques-

tions, the Deputy Minister made a statement on my behalf on March 31st, regarding firing by Pakistani troops across the Sylhet-Cachar border. This statement dealt with the course of events up to March 27th when a cease-fire agreement—the second since the incidents began on March 11th—was arrived at. Firing, however, has continued and more Call Attention Notices and Short Notice Questions have been tabled in the last few days. I fully appreciate the concern felt by the House and I take this opportunity to make a further statement on the course of events between March 27th and April 14th.

Though detailed reports about individual incidents have not yet been received, the following general picture emerges from the preliminary reports received so far:

Sporadic firing has been going on almost daily in the Surma region from March 27th to 7th April. The affected area covers such places as Madampur, Latu, Nijjalapur, Mahisasan and Bhanga Bazar.

The firing spread from the Surma region to the Khasi-Jaintia Hills along the Pyain river. Full details are not available, but it is clear that Pakistani armed forces opened fire on an Indian patrol on April 4th, the firing on Indian cultivators was resumed on April 5th and continued throughout the morning and the next day. As usual, protests were lodged by Assam Government. Pakistan authorities have also lodged counter-protests.

The casualties on our side as a result of firing were one killed, three seriously wounded, who may or may not survive, and five others wounded.

There was an exodus of about a hundred families from the Bhanga area caused by the intensity of firing and collecting of vegetables on both sides of the Surma had stopped but people have started returning for vegetable collection since the cease-fire on 9th April.

[Shrimati Lakshmi Menon]

A meeting between the Divisional Commissioners of Assam and East Pakistan took place at Karunganj and a fresh cease-fire agreement to be effective from 5.30 A.M. on April 9th was reached at the meeting. Various details regarding co-operation of the authorities on both sides in the effective maintenance of the cease-fire were also settled and it was hoped that there would be no further incidents.

The latest position is that, despite the cease-fire agreement, Pakistani forces opened fire in Nathampur area on April 9th, and Pakistani villagers began violating Indian territory by starting fishing *en masse* in Indian waters on the Surma river. It has also been reported that whereas the cease-fire agreement provided for demolition of recently constructed bunkers and the filling up of trenches, Pakistani armed personnel are repairing such bunkers on their side and digging new trenches. The Assam authorities have lodged a protest against these breaches of the cease-fire agreement and violation of Indian territory with the East Pakistan authorities and we have also lodged a protest with the Pakistan High Commissioner at Delhi and requested him to move the Government of Pakistan to issue immediate instructions to the local authorities concerned to implement the cease-fire agreement in the spirit of good neighbourliness and to take necessary action to prevent their nationals from using the cease-fire agreement as a cloak to violate Indian territory. Our High Commissioner in Karachi has also taken up this matter with the Government of Pakistan.

It is hoped that there will be no further violations and that the cease-fire agreement will be fully observed. I should like to add that the Government of India and Pakistan have also agreed to hold a joint enquiry into the entire series of these incidents commencing March 11th. The Governments of India and Pakistan are each nominating a representative of the

Central Government to carry out this joint enquiry."

STATEMENT RE. CORRECTION  
OF ANSWER TO SUPPLEMENTARY  
STARRED QUESTION NO. 1503.

The Deputy Minister of Defence (Sardar Majithia): In his supplementary question arising out of Starred Question No. 1503 answered by me on the 7th April, 1958, regarding accident at Classification Range (Bulls Eye-Chandmari) in Babina, Shri Jagdish Awasthi had enquired whether Government were aware of an explosion in the Babina Military Area on the 26th March, 1958, as a result of which several children were killed or injured. Since the main question related to the Classification Range, full information was available with me about that Range and I replied that no deaths had taken place in the Range on that date. I did not then have before me details of the accident during March 1958 in another part of the Babina area. The Babina Military Area includes both the Classification Range as well as the Field Firing Area. I regret to have to inform the House that on 26th March, 1958 a blind bomb exploded at 16.00 hours in the Babina Field Firing Area, one mile north of Village Nagda, as a result of which four persons were unfortunately killed and four seriously injured. It appears that these persons had entered the field firing area, presumably with a view to collecting scrap metal and the explosion occurred when they were handling a blind. The injured persons were removed to the Civil Hospital by the local military authorities on receipt of information of the accident. A court of inquiry was ordered by the Commander of the unit, soon after the explosion, and its findings are awaited. The question whether any compensation is payable will be considered after the matter has been fully investigated. I have already recounted to the House in