

**Chinese Offer of Rice to India**

- \*20. Shri Ebrahim Sulaiman Salt:  
 Shri Ramachandra Voerappa:  
 Shri N. K. Sanghi:  
 Shri Hukam Chand  
 Kachwal:  
 Shri Kam Singh Ayarwal:  
 Shri Swell:  
 Shri Onkar Lal Borwa:  
 Shri Meetha Lal:  
 Shri George Fernandes:  
 Shri Madhn Limaye:  
 Shri J. H. Patel:  
 Shri B. S. Sharma:  
 Shri Hem Barua:  
 Shri Surendranath Dwivedi:  
 Shri F. M. Sayeed:  
 Dr. Karni Singh:  
 Shri Kikar Singh:  
 Shri R. K. Birla:  
 Shri Kola Birla:  
 Shri Mahan Swarup:  
 Shri Siddheshwar Prasad:  
 Shri Y. A. Prasad:

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that China has offered rice to India;  
 (b) if so, the terms of the offer;  
 (c) whether Government have accepted the offer; and  
 (d) if so, with what result?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): (a) No, Sir.

- (b) to (d). Do not arise.

**Strength of Army Officers**

- \*21. Shri Hukam Chand  
 Kachwal:  
 Shri Ranjit Singh:  
 Shri B. S. Sharma:  
 Shri Kam Singh Ayarwal:

Will the Minister of Defence be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the present strength of Officers in the Army is below the authorised strength;

(b) whether the release of Emergency Commissioned Officers is likely to further reduce this strength; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to meet this contingency?

The Minister of Defence (Shri Swaran Singh): (a) to (c). I regret that it is not possible to give any indication about the strength of officers in the Army as this would not be in the public interest. I can assure the hon. Member however that the release of Emergency Commissioned Officers and intake of Short Service Commissioned Officers is being so phased as not to affect the efficiency or strength of the Officers in the Army.

**Islands in Indian Ocean**

- \*22. Shri Madhn Limaye:  
 Shri S. M. Joshi:  
 Shri G. M. Banerjee:  
 Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia:  
 Shri George Fernandes:

Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

- (a) the total number of small Islands in the Indian Ocean whose sovereignty is not in doubt;  
 (b) the number of those which are in the doubtful category; and  
 (c) the steps which Government propose to take to see that these Islands are not used as bases by the foreign powers or as springboards for attack on India or as testing grounds for nuclear explosions?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): (a) and (b). Government do not at present have complete information in this respect. Necessary enquires are being made.

(c) Government are vigilant about any proposals by foreign powers to set up bases in the Indian Ocean area. Necessary action is being taken, in consultation with other interested Governments, and the U.N.