

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SWARAN SINGH) : (a) Since 1st January 1968, there have been 5 I.A.F. flying accidents involving loss of life, besides the one which occurred on the 7th February 1968 in which an I.A.F. transport aircraft with 98 personnel on board is missing.

(b) to (d). Courts of Inquiry have been held in the case of all these accidents and the proceedings of the Courts are under scrutiny. Remedial measures, where necessary, will be taken to prevent recurrence of similar accidents after the proceedings of the Courts of Inquiry have been finalised.

LIMIT OF TERRITORIAL WATERS

*459. **SHRI RAMACHANDRA ULAKA :** Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 436 on the 4th December, 1967 regarding the limit of territorial waters and state :

(a) whether the matter has since been examined by Government; and

(b) if so, the result thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SURENDRA PAL SINGH) :

(a) The matter is still under consideration.

(b) Does not arise.

खारे समुद्री जल को पीने योग्य बनाना

*460. **श्री महाराज सिंह भारती :** क्या प्रधान मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या आणविक शक्ति के प्रयोग द्वारा खारे समुद्री जल को पीने योग्य बनाने के बारे में सरकार ने इस वर्ष अमरीकी विशेषज्ञों के साथ कोई परामर्श किया है ; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका व्योरा क्या है ?

प्रधान मंत्री, अणु शक्ति मंत्री, योजना मंत्री तथा वैदेशिक-कार्य मंत्री (श्रीमती इंदिरा गांधी) : (क) और (ख), सस्ती परमाणु बिजली पैदा करने और उसका इस्तेमाल करने के बहुत से पहलुओं पर बातचीत करने के बारे में अमरीकी वैज्ञानिकों के एक दल ने नवम्बर 1967 में भारत का दौरा

किया। इस बातचीत में समुद्री पानी को पीने के योग्य बनाने के बारे में भी विचार विमर्श किया गया। यह विचार-विमर्श समन्वेषी या तथा भारतीय परमाणु ऊर्जा विभाग द्वारा नियुक्त एक वर्किंग ग्रुप इसका विस्तार से अध्ययन कर रहा है।

EXPENDITURE ON INDIAN MISSIONS/CONSULATES

*461. **SHRI S. KUNDU :** Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government had taken any steps to reduce the expenditure on Indian Missions/Consulates during the last year; and

(b) if so, the nature of the steps taken and the result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The broad outlines of measures taken to restrict expenditure in respect of the running costs of our Missions/Consulates abroad during 1966-67 following the devaluation of the Indian Rupee are as follows :—

- (i) Post of Officers and staff in the Missions abroad were sanctioned only after the most careful examination of proposals on the basis of work study analysis and further consideration by the Economy Board of the Ministry of External Affairs. Many posts were held in abeyance and several proposals for creation of new posts were turned down.
- (ii) In view of the acute foreign exchange position, the budget proposals were examined with the greatest possible emphasis on economy without at the same time sacrificing the functional effectiveness of our Missions abroad.
- (iii) No new Missions were opened during 1966-1967, and con-