

have started constructing a big barrage on the bank of Buri Teesta with in the border of East-Pakistan and India, very near to Dewangany with in Haldibari P.S., district Coochbehar, West Bengal;

(b) whether it is a fact that if the barrage is finalised, it will completely submerge the Dewangany area; and

(c) the steps Government propose to take to save the Indian people in that border area from this catastrophe?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): (a) to (c). According to information available with the Government of India, Pakistan has included a scheme, in their Third Five Year Plan, for constructing a diversion barrage on the Buri Teesta, a small tributary of Teesta. It is located some 15 miles south of Indo-Pak border and cannot be termed a "big barrage".

The Government of India have no information in regard to this project being taken on hand. The possibility of its submerging any areas in India, on completion is under examination. Meanwhile, detailed information on the project has been called for from our Mission in East Pakistan and from the West Bengal Government.

Military Preparations by Pakistan

*291. Shri Samar Guha: Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that along the border of Jharalingeswar in Cooch Behar, Pakistan has built up a bund in the Chatnai area;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Pakistan is preparing bunkers and digging trenches along the Mekhliganj area in the Cooch Behar district of West Bengal;

(c) whether it is a fact that all the border posts in the border area opposite to Mekhliganj have been reinforced by the Pak army;

(d) whether it is a fact that Pak army is preparing bunkers and digging trenches along the Belonia border of Tripura also; and

(e) whether it is also a fact that Pak. army, reinforced recently, have fired upon the Indian people, several times, living in the border areas of Belonia?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): (a) It is a fact that the East Pakistan authorities recently started constructing a bund from Kaliganj Chatnai to Ratansingh Chatnai opposite Jharsingheswar, P.S. Haldibari, District Cooch Behar. Strong protests were lodged with the East Pakistan authorities by our Border Security Force and the Government of West Bengal. As a result of these protests the Pakistan authorities have stopped construction of the bund.

(b) According to reliable reports all the old trenches and bunkers along the border opposite Mekhliganj in Cooch Behar have recently been cleaned and repaired by the EPR personnel.

(c) There is no information about the reinforcement of Pakistan border outposts in the border area opposite to Mekhliganj by Pakistan Army. However, we have received reports to the effect that EPR personnel in some of the Pakistan border outposts have been reinforced.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) During the last three months, there was firing only once, on 20th April, 1967, by the East Pakistan Rifles towards Belonia town. There was no casualty.

Official of Indian High Commission in U.K. involved in smuggling

*292. Shri Yashpal Singh:
Shri Jyotirmoy Basu:
Shri Bhagaban Das:
Shri C. K. Chakrapani:
Shri D. C. Sharma: