

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:

Shri K. N. Pandey:
Shri Ram Kishan Gupta:
Shri P. K. Deo:
Shri K. P. Singh Deo:
Shri S. K. Tapuriah:

Will the Minister of **External Affairs** be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the press reports in the *Hindustan Times* of the 22nd May, 1967 to the effect that 'a senior diplomat of the Indian High Commission' is alleged to be involved in a racket to smuggle hashish into London from Delhi; and

(b) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): (a) The Ministry of External Affairs is aware of the press report appearing in the *Hindustan Times* of 22nd May, 1967 and have made some enquiries in the matter. Our enquiries have so far revealed that no diplomat senior or junior or any other official of the Indian High Commission, London, is involved in a racket to smuggle hashish into London.

(b) Indian High Commission in London has already taken up the matter with the British Government for publishing such incorrect reports in their newspapers.

Indian Nationals detained in Burma

*293. **Shrimati Jyotsna Chanda:** Will the Minister of **External Affairs** be pleased to refer to the reply given to Starred Question No. 218 on the 3rd April, 1967 and state:

(a) the further progress since made in securing the release and repatriation of Indian nationals detained for alleged economic offences by the Burmese Government after the 27th May, 1964; and

(b) the special efforts made in this direction?

The Minister of External Affairs (Shri M. C. Chagla): (a) and (b). The question of Indian nationals detained in Burma for alleged economic offences is being pursued by our Embassy with the Burmese authorities. Priority is being given to the examination of cases of those Indian nationals who have been in jail before 27th May, 1964 since they have been under detention for a longer period. Since the last answer given in the House on 3rd April, 1967, we have been informed of the release of two more Indian nationals belonging to the pre-27th May, 1964 category. Our Embassy is pursuing the remaining cases with the Burmese authorities.

Manufacture of War Equipment

*294. **Shri S. C. Jha:** Will the Minister of **Defence** be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India is still not in a position to manufacture all the necessary war equipment, like tanks, war trucks, jeeps, automatic guns, fighting planes and fighting ships and has to be dependent on outside help; and

(b) if so, when India would be self-sufficient in these things?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Defence (Shri B. R. Bhagat):

(a) and (b). Our aim is to have a self-sufficient production base. Defence Production is a continuously evolving process with an increasingly high degree of sophistication. We have achieved adequate self-sufficiency in small arms.

We have, however, still to depend on foreign sources for non-ferrous metals, special steels and alloys and sophisticated components in the field of electronics, aeronautics and instrumentation, and in these fields efforts are being made to achieve increasing self-sufficiency with the assistance of the developing industrial base in the country.