

1985-86 as compared to 39% in the corresponding period of the previous year. The ITDC has taken the following steps to improve the rate of occupancy and standard of service in its hotels :—

- (i) by entering into marketing and reservation tie-ups with agencies abroad;
- (ii) by participating in Travel Marts, Trade Fairs, etc., to promote ITDC properties;
- (iii) floating Special Packages Programmes for promoting domestic tourism;
- (iv) to improve the training quality of employees by running various courses to achieve this object;
- (v) Maintenance Engineering Wing has been placed directly under the Hotels Division for ensuring better services in the hotels; and
- (vi) a High Powered Inspection Committee has been constituted by the ITDC to review the performance and services of its hotels for taking remedial measures from time to time.

DR. V. VENKATESH : The question is about ITDC consultancy services abroad. Sir, may I know from the Government whether these ITDC hotels abroad are going to exhibit the Indian culture in addition to the other assignments which they are discharging, in order to promote Indian culture abroad ?

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : We shall consider it.

DR. V. VENKATESH : May I know from the Government whether there is any promotion of Indian trade and may I also know whether food preparations of Indian taste will be propagated in those hotels ?

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : Sir, it is a very useful suggestion.

Strength of Home Guards and Increase in their Facilities

*239. **SHRI VIJAY N. PATIL :** Will

the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Union Government have given any directives to State Governments to increase the strength of Home Guards;

(b) whether Union Government have received any representation to increase the amenities and other facilities to Home Guards;

(c) if so, the steps taken in this regard; and

(d) whether Union Government have advised the State Governments to increase the Rural Home Guard Units ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY AND COMPANY AFFAIRS AND IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) A list of amenities and facilities which the Central Government has advised the State Governments to provide the Home Guards from time to time is given in the statement below. Recently in 1984, the Central Government has advised the State Governments to enhance the rates of duty allowance and training allowance from Rs. 8 to Rs. 15 and from Rs. 7 to Rs. 14 respectively per head per day.

(d) No, Sir.

Statement

The list of amenities and other facilities which the Central Government has advised the State Government to provide to the Home Guards :—

- (i) Duty allowance and Training allowance;
- (ii) Free uniform and washing allowance;
- (iii) Free board/lodging during training;
- (iv) Cash and other awards for gallantry and distinguished and meritorious service;

- (v) Death-cum-injury benefits to the Home Guards sustaining injury/meeting with death during training/duty on the same basis as to the police personnel engaged in the same operation;
- (vi) Ex-gratia grant for funeral expenses to the family of the deceased Home Guard; and
- (vii) Preference to Home Guards in recruitment to certain Group 'C' and 'D' posts in Central and State Governments, subject to certain conditions.

SHRI VIJAY N. PATIL : Sir, whenever there are riots in different places, the State Governments ask for the help of the Union Government and CRPF and BSF forces are deployed sometimes in these parts and the local police force is not sufficient. In view of this, has the Central Government advised the increase in the daily allowance to Home Guards and whether the Central Government is thinking over this matter to advise the State Governments to increase the strength of Home Guards and that too in the rural areas also because wherever there are local people, when the law and order situation takes a serious turn, the local Home Guards can be operated ?

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN : Sir, the Central Government has already advised the State Governments to enhance the rates of duty allowance and training allowance. I have stated this in the main reply.

As far as increasing the strength of Home Guards in the States is concerned, that is for the State Governments to decide and the Central Government gives whatever help is provided under the rules.

SHRI VIJAY N. PATIL : When I say that military is requested for from the Central Government, other forces from outside are also requisitioned whenever there are riots. You can advise them to increase the strength of Home Guards to face any situation which arises in such circumstances.

SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN :

If the hon. Member's view is that we should advise the State Governments to increase the strength of the Home Guards, well, I have noted his suggestion.

MR. SPEAKER : Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Data Obtained by Indian Expedition to Antarctica

*231. **PROF. K.K. TIWARY :** Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) what are the scientific data obtained by the recent Indian Expedition to Antarctica; and

(b) whether any permanent centre was established in Antarctica by India to undertake continuous experiments in the various fields of science ?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI RAJIV GANDHI) : (a) During the Fourth expedition, scientific data were obtained in the fields of geophysics, geology, meteorology, radio wave propagation and biology. In the field of geology and geophysics, electro-magnetic studies and seismic reflections were undertaken on the ice shelf and on the rocky terrains. Data on the nature of sediments in the shelf area of the Antarctic Ocean were also collected. In meteorology, measurements of meteorological parameters were undertaken on regular intervals and radio-sonde ascents were launched. The information collected by the newly installed picture transmission receiver and potential gradients equipment greatly helped in the local weather forecast.

Studies on the radio-wave propagation were made particularly during the favourable weather conditions, and when exceptionally highly magnetic storms occurred. In the field of biology, investigations were