

(b) whether Government are aware of deforestation in West Bengal specially northern part of State and if so, whether Government propose to appropriately advise the Government of West Bengal in this regard; and

(c) whether Government also propose to involve voluntary organisations and societies in social forestry programme ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) The State Government has reported that no appreciable deforestation has taken place in the northern part of West Bengal. Analysis of data from satellite imagery indicates that forest cover over a substantial area of 1844 square kilometer was lost in West Bengal during the period 1975 to 1982. All State Governments including West Bengal have been requested to take up a comprehensive set of measures to arrest deforestation.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Aid to Nicaragua

8415. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the difficulties being faced by the Government of Nicaragua due to economic blockade;

(b) whether Government are sending a team to assess the situation there;

(c) whether Government are sending them economic, military and medical aids; and

(d) if so, the details thereof ?

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

(b) Yes, Sir. At the invitation of the Government of Nicaragua, an India techno-economic delegation visited Nicaragua from 3rd to 7th April, 1986.

(c) and (d). In 1985 a gift of Rupees one lakh worth of medical supplies was made in response to a request from Government of Nicaragua. Possibilities of bilateral economic cooperation in the fields of agriculture, industry, trade and technical expertise are being examined. No military aid has been requested or given.

[*Translation*]

BSF in Assam

8416. SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA :
SHRI TEJA SINGH DARDI :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that services of Border Security Force were utilised in the first week of April, 1986 in order to maintain law and order situation in South Assam area;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard; and

(c) whether Government propose to extend further cooperation to Assam Government with a view to deal with the elements engaged in disintegrating the country ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL SECURITY (SHRI ARUN NEHRU) : (a) to (c). Following a request from the Deputy Commissioner, Cachar, a BSF unit was deployed in Silchar on law and order duty in aid of Civil Authority from 5th to 7th April, 1986. Assistance as necessary and feasible is always extended.

[*English*]

Urbanisation of Rural Population

8417. SHRI N. DENNIS :
SHRI AMARSINGH RATHAWA :

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state :

(a) the steps Government propose to take to check the speedy urbanisation of rural population;