

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) Yes, Sir. The proposal was received as early as in Feb 1988 as deposit work.

(b) A joint inspection was conducted in May, 1998.

(c) Road Over Bridge was found feasible in 1988 as proposed but the State Govt. did not pursue the proposal any further. Now State Govt. is exploring the possibility of its construction on BOT (Build, Operate & Transfer) scheme basis.

(d) Not know.

(e) Full cost to be borne by the State Govt./Private Entrepreneurs.

[English]

Defence Minister's Statement on China

367. PROF. P.J. KURIEN :

DR. SUBRAMANIAN SWAMY :

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA :

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN :

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS :

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA :

SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY :

PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA :

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH :

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether he is reported to have expressed strong views describing China as "Potential threat number one" and has also stated that India is surrounded by China's military and naval activities;

(b) the factual position thereof and the steps taken to protect the country from such hostile activities; and

(c) the extent to which the observation at (a) above is likely to affect the ongoing process of strengthening ties with China ?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES) : (a) to (c) China is our biggest neighbour. China is a Nuclear Weapon State and continues to maintain the largest standing army in the world. In recent years, China has undertaken, as a national objective, in tandem with economic growth and development, the modernisation of her armed forces, including her nuclear weapons capability. China had laid stress on the doctrine of "active defence", "limited war under high technological conditions" and the creation of "rapid

reaction combat units" with a focus on her periphery. The redefinition of China's "strategic frontiers" coupled with military modernisation programmes, are rapidly transforming the force projection capabilities of China's armed forces in the sea, air and on land. In recent years, China has also engaged in upgrading logistic and infrastructure facilities in the India-China border areas.

2. India's defence policy must take into account our complex regional security environment including, in particular, China's nuclear weapon and missile capability. The clandestine acquisition of nuclear weapon and offensive missile capability targeted solely against India and the long established transfer from external sources of nuclear weapons and missile technology, equipment and expertise to Pakistan, must also be taken into account. Military collaboration between China and Myanmar also has a direct bearing on India's security.

3. Raksha Mantri in his recent interviews and memorial lecture has reiterated the aforementioned concerns. Raksha Mantri has re-affirmed Government's commitment to seek a resolution of all pending issues with China through mutual consultations and has stated that the talks should go beyond the confidence building measures. Government remains committed to the process of building a co-operative and constructive relationship with China.

4. Government keeps under constant review all developments having a bearing on the country's security and takes appropriate measures to safeguard the national interest.

[Translation]

Train Accidents in Jabalpur Division

368. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJE : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Jabalpur division has the largest number of rail accidents;

(b) if so, the estimated loss of life, railway property and financial loss in the 10 railway accidents occurred during 1997-98;

(c) whether the Government propose to adopt any new policy to check the railway accidents;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTERS OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) and (b) No, Sir. There were 11 consequential train accidents on Jabalpur Division of Central Railway during 1997-98. In which 4 persons sustained grievous injury and 47 suffered minor