

Bilateral Cooperation with Portugal

*655. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any joint efforts have been made to increase bilateral cooperation with Portugal and diversify the relations in various areas of mutual interest;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the achievements made in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R.L. BHATIA): (a) to (c). Diplomatic relations between India and Portugal were re-established in 1974. Since then, a number of high level visits have imparted momentum to bilateral relations. In recent years, these have included the visit of the former President Shri Venkataraman to Portugal in April, 1990, the state visit to India by the Portuguese President, Dr. Mario Soares, in January-February 1992, and the transit visit to Portugal by PM in June 1992. The Portuguese Foreign Minister visited India in March 1992 as a member of the EC Troika. Other Ministerial visits have included those of Portugal's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Durao Barroso, to India in February 1991, and Shri Eduardo Faleiro, MOS(EA) to Portugal in July 1991.

Initiatives have been taken to strengthen and diversify bilateral cooperation in various fields. Bilateral Agreements have been concluded in the fields of Culture and Tourism. An Indo-portuguese Joint Commission has been established. In February 1991, an agreement was signed providing for the return of Goan gold ornaments to India which was effected in July 1991. A Portuguese Cultural Centre was opened in Delhi in 1991. IN 1992, Government accorded permission to Portugal to open a Consulate General in Goa.

On the economic side, agreements have been signed between the Portuguese Institute of Foreign Trade and FICCI and between the Bombay Chamber of Commerce and the Portuguese Industrial Association. The inaugural meeting of the Indo Portuguese Joint Business Council is scheduled to take place in Lisbon in May 1993. Efforts are being made to increase bilateral trade and to indentify suitable areas for joint ventures, particularly in the fields of fishing, textiles and agro-industry in which the prospects are promising.

Kanhar Irrigation Project

*656. SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the agreement entered between Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh permits submergence of only 390 acres of land in Madhya Pradesh for Kanhar Irrigation Project in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) whether this area of submergence is likely to exceed; and

(c) if so, the action taken by the Government to ensure that this additional submergence does not occur in Madhya Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMEN-TARY AFFAIRS (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) In September, 1992, the Government of Uttar Pradesh has revised the area of submergence in Madhya Pradesh as 258 hectares (637 acres).

(c) The Government of Uttar Pradesh has to obtain the concurrence of Government of Madhya Pradesh for submergence of its area.