

Meeting was the 'Role of the Commonwealth in the 1990s and beyond'. Other major subjects discussed were: Global political trends in the light of recent changes in international relations, South Africa, disarmament, Uruguay Round, Environment and Commonwealth Functional Cooperation.

The Harare Declaration reaffirms traditional emphasis on such issues as the struggle against apartheid and cooperation for development; at the same time it stresses the importance of democratic institutions, human rights and the rule of law.

On South Africa, the CHOGM endorsed the recommendations of the New Delhi meeting of the Commonwealth Committee of Foreign Ministers for a 'programmed management' and phased easing of sanctions.

The Indian delegation led by the Prime Minister, and which included the External Affairs Minister, played an active and constructive part. As a lead speaker on Global Political Review, the Prime Minister put across the perspective of the developing countries on the challenges of a changing world. The Indian Delegation contributed to securing a balanced declaration in line with our view of the future priorities of the Commonwealth.

The issues such as linking of economic aid to human rights were raised by some countries. Many countries, including India, do not consider such linkages appropriate. The CHOGM Communiqué does not contain any reference to such linkages.

Revision in Price of Steel

* 117. SHRI CHETAN P.S.
CHAUHAN:
SHRIMATI BHAVNA
CHIKHLIA:

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Steel Authority of India Ltd. and the Tata Iron & Steel Company

Limited have approached the Union Government for revision in the price of steel;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the decision taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Steel Authority of India has forwarded the proposal for revision of steel prices to the Ministry of steel. Tata Iron & Steel Company has forwarded the same to Chairman, Joint Plant Committee (JPC).

(b) It is not in the public interest to disclose the details.

(c) The proposals are under examination by the JPC.

Drought in Maharashtra and Gujarat

* 118. SHRI SHARAD DIGHE:
SHRI RAM NAIK:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Maharashtra and Gujarat are facing unprecedented drought conditions at present;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these States have sought additional assistance from the Union Government to tackle the situation; and

(d) if so, the response of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): (a) and (b). The State Government of Maharashtra reported that drought conditions have affected 12607 villages in 19 districts 141.47 lakh population and cropped area of 58.6 lakh hectares.

Government of Gujarat has reported that about 10,000 villages in 16 districts are

facing drought conditions.

(c) and (d). The State Government of Maharashtra submitted a Memorandum seeking additional Central assistance of Rs. 576.58 crores for 1991-92 and Rs. 212.83 crores for 1992-93 for meeting expenditure on management of drought. Request of the State Government has been considered in the light of existing policy for financing relief expenditure and it was felt that no additional Central assistance can be provided for this purpose at this juncture. The State Government of Maharashtra has been advised to meet the expenditure on management of the drought out of the corpus of the Calamity Relief Fund. Ministry of Finance has been requested to release the fourth installment of the Central share of the Calamity Relief Fund amounting to Rs. 8.25 crores in advance which in normal course would have been released in January, 1992.

The State Government of Gujarat has written to this Ministry on 23.11.1991 seeking additional Central assistance of about Rs. 600.00 crores for drought relief operations. The request of the State Government of Gujarat is being examined in the light of the existing policy for financing relief expenditure.

Draft National Policy on Agriculture

*119. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES:
SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the State Governments/ Union Territories and Agricultural Universities have forwarded their comments to the Union Government on the Draft National Policy on Agriculture;

(b) if so, the broad details thereof; and

(c) the likely date by which the Government propose to introduce this policy and the salient features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI BALRAM JAKHAR): (a) and (b). Fourteen States/Union Territories and nine

agricultural universities have sent their comments so far. They have generally agreed with the broad framework of the policy and have made suggestions which are mostly in the nature of specific programmes relating to geographical and functional areas.

(c) State Governments/Agricultural Universities have been again reminded to send their comments immediately.

Further action on the draft Agricultural Policy Resolution will be taken after the receipt of comments from the State Governments.

[Translation]

Irrigation Projects and Dams in Uttar Pradesh

*120. SHRI ARJUN SINGH YADAV:
SHRI HARI KEWAL PRASAD:
Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the irrigation projects and dams in Uttar Pradesh pending clearance with the Union Government;

(b) whether some of these proposals pertain to the districts of Bundelkhand region in Uttar Pradesh;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the reasons for delay in according clearance to these projects and the time by which they are likely to be cleared;

(e) whether some of the ongoing projects in the state are running behind schedule;

(f) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(g) the extent of cost escalation as a result of delay?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI VIDYACHARAN SHUKLA): (a) to (g). A Statement I & II are laid on the Table of the House.