

to 6000 seats per week in each direction; to permit Nepalese airlines to operate on two additional points in India—Bangalore and Lucknow; to grant Fifth Freedom traffic rights beyond Kathmandu to two additional points to the Indian carrier and to permit multiple designations of airlines for both sides.

4. All steps are being taken to further strengthen and broaden bilateral ties with Nepal and Bhutan, two of India's closest neighbours and friends.

#### **Pakistan:**

The then Prime Minister, Shri H.D. Deve Gowda in his letter of felicitations on the assumption of office of the Nawaz Sharif Government in Pakistan proposed a comprehensive and wide-ranging dialogue between the two countries at an appropriate level on issues of mutual concern. This initiative resulted in the resumption of Foreign Secretary level talks in New Delhi from 28-31 March, 1997. The Pakistan Foreign Minister, during the visit to New Delhi for NAM Ministerial meeting, had discussion with the External Affairs Minister on 9th April, 1997. This was followed by a meeting between the Prime Ministers of India and Pakistan on 12th May, 1997 in Male during the SAARC Summit. All these contacts were positive and constructive. The Prime Ministers, after their meeting in Male, directed the Foreign Secretaries to continue their discussions to work out all aspects on the basis of which the bilateral dialogue between the two countries was to move ahead. The Foreign Secretaries met in Islamabad from 19-23 June, 1997. The discussions led to a Joint Statement which lists out the issues to be discussed between the two countries and provides a mechanism, including working group, for the same. The Statement provides the basis for a comprehensive, wide-ranging and sustained dialogue between the two countries. We look upon it as a first step in our efforts to engage Pakistan on a wide front with the objective of establishing a relationship of trust, friendship and cooperation.

2. The next round of Foreign Secretary level talks between India and Pakistan will be held in September, 1997.

#### **Bangladesh:**

The Government has signed with the Government of Bangladesh the "Treaty on sharing of the Ganga waters at Farakka" in December, 1996.

2. A visit by the Minister for Water Resources and the convening of the 32nd Meeting of the Joint Rivers Commission has been scheduled. It would review the working of the treaty on Ganga waters and also discuss other issues of mutual interest in regard to water resources. Efforts would continue towards institutionalising the dialogue on security related issues. We would continue our facilitation role in the repatriation of Chakma refugees from Tripura. We will continue to work towards improving trade and transportation links with Bangladesh. People to people interactions would be enhanced.

#### **Sri Lanka:**

The dialogue with the Shri Lankan Government on the problems faced by fishermen straying into each others territorial waters would be continued. The announcement made by our Prime Minister in his capacity as the External Affairs Minister in January, 1997 to remove quantitative restrictions and reduce tariffs on a substantial number of items of export interest to Sri Lanka would be implemented in coordination with our Ministry of Commerce. Interaction between the private sectors of the two countries would be permitted with a view to encourage two way flow of investments. Further cultural exchanges would also be encouraged.

#### **Maldives:**

Our efforts would continue at consolidating existing cordial bilateral ties. Maldives would be provided with assistance in its efforts to develop its human resources. In this connection it is proposed to start up distance education in Maldives with the assistance of Indira Gandhi National Open University.

#### **Myanmar:**

Relations with the Government of Myanmar would be developed in order to achieve India's national priorities in terms of improved border management, security, border trade and control of smuggling of narcotics, arms and other illegal commodities. The construction of the Tamu-Kalemoy Road would be taken up.

#### **China:**

In recent years India-China relations have acquired maturity and substance. While continuing to address outstanding issues including the boundary question, we have sought to expand mutually beneficial cooperation in all areas. We have agreed to work towards a constructive and cooperative relationship. India and China have agreed to impart a much greater economic and technological content to the relationship. It has been agreed to convene the next meeting of the Joint Economic Group to work for a significant expansion of economic cooperation and trade between the two countries. The India-China sub-group on Science and Technology will meet to look at opportunities for enhancing functional cooperation between the two sides. The two countries are also strengthening social and cultural ties.

#### **District Cancer Control Programme**

53. SHRI SHIVAJI VITHALRAO KAMBLE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Maharashtra has requested the Union Government to provide assistance for the prevention and early detection of cancer under the project "District Cancer Control Programme" to Tata Memorial Cancer Research Centre and Nargis Dutt Memorial Cancer Hospital, Barshi both managed by Ashwini Rural Cancer Research and Relief Society, Barshi;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which decision is likely to be taken by the Government to provide assistance to the above mentioned Institutes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[*Translation*]

#### Plan Allocation

54. SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Bihar and U.P. are the most backward States in the country; and

(b) if so, whether in view of the backwardness in these two States the Union Government propose to increase the plan allocation for these States to enable them to improve the living conditions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRIMATI RATNMALA D. SAVANOR): (a) and (b) Taking into account various socio-economic indicators the States of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are lagging behind vis-a-vis national average. The Gadgil-Mukherjee formula for allocation of normal Central assistance among States gives weightage to backwardness of the States. In addition to this Special Area Programme like Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) and Hill Area Development Programme (HADP) in Uttar Pradesh are also being implemented. These States are also benefitting through allocation of larger Central assistance for Basic Minimum Services (BMS) which is being given keeping in view the gaps in provision of these services. Besides, Central assistance given to States for poverty alleviation programmes like Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) takes into account the incidence of poverty. As such, plan allocation to these States gives weightage to their backwardness.

#### Malaria Eradication Programme

55. SHRI ANNASAHIB M.K. PATIL:

SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT:

SHRI NAMDEO DIWATHE:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have reviewed the implementation of National Malaria Eradication Programme during the last three years with the States Agencies in terms of the target sets and achievements made so far;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether implementation of National Malaria Eradication Programme in the country has miserably failed;

(d) if so, the reasons for the failure and magnitude of the problem;

(e) the details of the time bound new strategies worked out for effective implementation of the programme; and

(f) the details of funds proposed to be made available by the Central Government as well as by the World Bank to control the malaria during 1997-98 to the State Governments, indicating revise target set for, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) and (b) The National Malaria Eradication Programme (NMEP) is being monitored regularly with the State Health Authorities through periodic reports, frequent meetings with the State Programme Officers and field visits by Technical Experts and Officers from Govt. of India.

(c) to (e) No, Sir. With the implementation of the Modified Plan of Operations for control of Malaria, the incidence of Malaria has been brought down from 6.47 million cases in 1976 to around 2 million cases per annum since 1984.

The following specific steps have been undertaken for effective implementation of the programme:-

- 100% central assistance is being provided to the 7 North Eastern States since December, 1994.
- Early diagnosis and prompt treatment of malaria cases through Primary Health Care system, Hospitals, Dispensaries, Malaria Clinics etc. and Drug Distribution Centres, Fever Treatment Depots at the village level, is undertaken by the State Govts.
- Vector control through insecticidal spray in rural areas and anti-larval cooperation in urban areas as per schedule on the basis of technical assessment.
- Intensification of information, Education and Communication activities for mobilising active community participation.
- Observance of anti-malaria Month in June every year beginning from June, 1997 to create public awareness about prevention and containment of malaria and other vector borne diseases and to propagate theme "Malaria Control Everyone's Concern" to make it a people's movement in the country.

Further, an enhanced Malaria Control Project with the World Bank support to cover 100 districts in 7 States of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and Rajasthan as well as 19 towns/cities having high endemicity of malaria has since been negotiated with the World Bank.

(f) Under the NMEP Rs. 150 crores has been