

(b) if so, the details thereof and the position of the Government thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Bangladesh since 1978, has been proposing to trilateralise the river waters issue by suggesting construction of storage dams in Nepal. Nepal has not shown any inclination to involve themselves in such talks. Government is committed to arriving at an equitable, long-term and comprehensive arrangement on water sharing with Bangladesh through bilateral discussions.

RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL

601. DR. RAMESH CHANDRA TOMAR : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to promote economic and cultural relations with Israel; and

(b) the number of official level talks held with that country in this regard after the establishment of diplomatic relations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) :

(a) A Cultural Agreement and an MOU for Economic Cooperation between India and Israel were signed during the visit of the Israeli Foreign Minister to India. Subsequently, in pursuance of the Cultural Agreement, a Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 1994-96 was signed in September 1993. Drafts of a Trade Agreement and a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement have been exchanged, which will be finalised in due course.

(b) About 20 talks at official level (including ministerial) have been held so far in Israel and India since the establishment of diplomatic relations with Israel in January 1992, covering the fields of agriculture, tourism, science and technology, civil aviation, culture and trade.

NATIONAL HIGHWAYS

602. DR. RAMESH CHAND TOMAR: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) the number of proposals sent to the Government of Uttar Pradesh for widening of the old National Highways in the State during the last three years; and

(b) the action taken by the Union Government on these proposals during each of the last three years ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER) : (a) During the last three years, the U.P. State PWD submitted nine proposals amounting to Rs. 107.88 crores for widening of National Highways.

(b) Three proposals amounting to Rs. 104.21 Crores have been sanctioned. Five proposals have been returned un-sanctioned to U.P. State PWD and one proposal is under examination.

PROHIBITION BY SRI LANKA IN TERRITORIAL WATERS

603. SHRI S. B. SIDNAL
SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH :
SHRI B. DEVARAJAN :

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR
SHASTRI :
SHRI N. DENNIS :

SHRI C. K. KUPPUSWAMY :
Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Sri Lanka have recently promulgated any ordinance regarding prohibition of use of boats in territorial waters from Mannar to Trincomalee;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have taken up this matter with that country;

(d) if so, the response of that country thereto;