

Indo-UK Relations

2286. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE : Will the Minister of External Affairs be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have taken any steps to strengthen further Indo-UK bilateral ties during the last two years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Prime Minister paid a visit to UK from 13-16 March 1994, the first Prime Ministerial visit from India since 1985. The visit marked a new era of relations between India and the UK, reinforcing trends towards a long term partnership based on mutual confidence and trust, shared values and mutual benefits. Prime Minister's interaction with British leaders provided a basis for a broad consensus in the UK on the importance of relations with India. A Bilateral Investment Protection Agreement was concluded with the UK during the visit, the first signed by India with any country, giving a further boost to economic relations and investments.

Prime Minister met his British counterpart Mr. John Major again in New York during the UN General Assembly (UNGA) session in October 1995 during which he discussed bilateral, regional and international matters of mutual interest.

External Affairs Minister met Mr. Douglas Hurd, the then British Foreign Secretary in May 1995, during his visit to the UK for the VE Day Commemorative Events. He met his current counterpart, Mr. Malcolm Rifkind at the UNGA Session in New York in September 1995 and once again in November 1995 when he paid an official visit to the UK. External Affairs Minister alongwith the British Minister of Defence and Home Affairs. In addition, he met leaders of the opposition parties. In all his meetings, External Affairs Minister was able to discuss bilateral issues and ways and means of further strengthening Indo-UK bilateral ties. He was also able to convey to the British leadership India's views on matters of vital concern to us.

Over the past two years, a number of British Ministers representing their specific areas of responsibility have visited India and held meetings with their counterparts and other dignitaries in India. Similarly, a number of Ministers from India representing sectors such as Finance, Home Affairs, Surface Transport, Environment and Forests, Power, Civil Aviation & Tourism, Human Resource Development also visited the UK and held meetings with their British counterparts.

At the official level, eight rounds of Foreign Secretary level talks have been held so far, the most recent of which

was in September 1995 during the visit of the British Permanent Under Secretary of State to India.

India and UK have also established a Defence Consultative Group with the objective of strengthening bilateral cooperation in the defence field. The first meeting of the Group took place in May 1995 in London.

Mekedatu Hydel Power project at Bangalore

2287. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to set up "MEKEDATU" Hydel Power Project near Bangalore as Karnataka has been facing acute power shortage in the recent years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL):

(a) No proposal for Mekedatu hydro-electric project has been received in the Central Electricity Authority.

(b) Does not arise.

New Liberalisation Industrial Policy

2288. SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES be pleased to state :

(a) the number of memoranda registered for processing of milk in Punjab, Haryana, U.P. and Delhi under the "New Liberalisation Industrial Policy";

(b) the aggregate requirement of these milk plants. State wise; and

(c) the steps proposed to be taken to procure optimum quantities of fluid milk for these milk plants ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO) :

(a) Govt. has received 589 Industrial Entrepreneurs Memoranda (IEM) upto October, 95 for setting up of units including substantial expansion for the processing of milk and manufacturing of milk products in Punjab, Haryana, U.P. and Delhi out of which 33 units have intimated the commencement of commercial production.

(b) and (c) Since the plants are to be set up by private and co-operative sector, it is for the entrepreneurs of these projects to make necessary arrangement for procuring the milk for their projects. Most of the IEMs indicate flexibility of processing of milk and milk products which makes it difficult to make exact assumption of requirement of milk. However, if all projects are implemented, approximately, the rough estimate of requirement of milk will be 110 lakh litres/day in Punjab, 200 lakh litres/day in Haryana, 300 lakh litres/day in U.P. and 20 lakh litres/day in Delhi.