

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir. Secretary level talks were held between India and Bangladesh at New Delhi from January 13 to 15, 1982 on some bilateral issues, including the terms of lease-in-perpetuity in respect of Tin Bigha.

(b) The lease-terms were not finalised at this meeting. Discussions between the two Governments on the subject will continue.

Talks held with PLO Chairman

194. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether during the visit of the PLO leader Mr. Yasser Arafat in the third week of May (May, 21, 1982) this year, the Prime Minister and State Government representatives had talks with him and his team on the question of continuing war between Iraq and Iran and the unresolved Palestinian issue;

(b) if so, what decisions were taken as a result thereof to resolve these issues; and

(c) what steps have since been taken in pursuance thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) India and the Palestine Liberation Organisation expressed their serious concern over the Iraq-Iran conflict and called upon Iraq and Iran to urgently resolve their differences peacefully.

On the Palestinian issue, India and the PLO reiterated their firm conviction that a comprehensive, just and durable peace in the Middle East can be achieved only on the basis of the immediate and complete withdrawal of Israel from all occupied Arab and Palestine territories, including Jerusalem; and the restoration of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian

people, including the right to return to their homeland and to establish their independent state. India reiterated its full support for the Palestine Liberation Organisation, the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people and for its participation as a full and equal party in all efforts towards the achievement of a just and lasting peace in the region within the framework of the United Nations.

(c) Close cooperation in international forums and regular exchanges of views and consultations between India and the PLO are continuing.

F.M.'s visit to Bangladesh

195. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether he visited Dacca in the third/fourth week of May 1982 and discussed various issues with regard to Indo-Bangladesh relations with Chief Martial Law Administrator of Bangladesh Mr. H. M. Ershad; and

(b) if so, what was the outcome of the talks on the various issues?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO): (a) and (b). I visited Dacca from May 22 to 23, 1982 on an invitation of the Bangladesh Government, renewed recently by H.E. Lt. Gen. H. M. Ershad, the Chief Martial Law Administrator of Bangladesh. My discussions at Dacca were general and positive in nature. In respect of Ganga waters it was conveyed that in view of the expiry of the 1977 Agreement on Farakka in November 1982 it was desirable for both sides to arrive at a fresh sharing arrangement, taking into account the interests of both the countries. At the same time, the need for augmentation of Ganga waters was also stressed. Other bilateral matters were touched upon but not discussed in detail. It was decided that pending issues would be taken up subsequently by both Governments at the mutual convenience.