

(b) and (c). Due to difficult nature of foundation work and late receipt of mild steel plates & structurals required for the work, there has been delay in the completion of this bridge, and it is likely to be completed by May 1977, depending on the availability of funds.

Protocol with PLO

2530. SHRI C. K. CHANRAPPAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the main provisions of the protocol signed by India and PLO at Beirut recently; and

(b) what is the status and what are the facilities offered to the PLO Mission in Delhi?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI BIPINPAL DAS): (a) and (b): Letters exchange recently at Beirut provide for the establishment of an Office by the Palestine Liberation Organisation in New Delhi. The Letters also provide for such technical and other facilities as are necessary for the establishment and efficient functioning of the office.

Exposure of our villagers to Health Hazards

2531. SHRI NIBALKAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Health Organization has pointed out that more than 20 per cent of our villagers are exposed to health hazards;

(b) what remedies Government propose to take in this regard;

(c) what help it can expect from the World Health Organization; and

(d) whether our own medical profession is prepared to come to their aid?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY PLANNING (SHRI A.K.M. ISHAQUE): (a) Yes. Government's attention has been drawn to the recent survey of the World Health Organisation in which it has been estimated that about 120,000 villages out of a total of 576,000 suffer from scarcity of drinking water supply, health hazards, cholera or special problems such as salinity or an excess of iron or fluorides.

(b) Increasing importance is attached by the Government of India to the environmental problems facing the country, including the lack of adequate and protected water supply and provision of integrated health services to cover the minimum needs of the people, especially in rural and backward areas. The main objectives under the Minimum Needs Programmes are as follows:

- (i) Setting up of one Primary Health Centre for each Community Development Block and one sub-centre for a population Unit of 10,000.
- (ii) Making up the backlog and deficiencies in buildings, staff and equipment, etc. for Primary Health Centres and Sub-Centres in a phased manner.
- (iii) Provision of drugs worth Rs. 12,000 per annum per Primary Health Centre and Rs. 2,000 per annum per Sub-Centre.
- (iv) Upgradation of one in four Primary Health Centres to 30 bedded rural Hospitals.
- (v) Introduction of Multipurpose Health Workers capable of delivering a package of health services to the community.
- (vi) Provision of drinking water to the villagers suffering from chronic scarcity or having to rely upon unsafe sources of water. Attempts shall be made to deal

with villages falling in the following categories:

a. those which do not have an assured source of drinking water within a reasonable distance (say 1.6 km);

b. those where the sources of water supply are endemic to water borne diseases like cholera and guinea worms, or

c. those which suffer from excess of salinity, iron or fluorides.

Preference would be given to villages inhabited by weaker sections of society, such as tribals, scheduled caste and other backward classes

(c) World Health Organisation is already assisting various projects particularly those connected with rural water supply and sanitation, control of communicable diseases, training of health personnel, etc.

(d) Yes.

Effect on our defence strategy of Tourism in closed areas

2532. SHRI RAJDEO SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the liberal attitude adopted by the Government of India and U.P. Government toeing it by permitting tourism to hitherto closed areas into Himalayas beyond the inner line will have no effects on our defence strategy;

(b) whether tourism allowed penetration in Ladakh and other areas are in the form of conducted tours; and

(c) if so, the policy of this step?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SWARAN SINGH): (a) No, Sir. While opening these areas to tourists, the needs of military security have been taken into consideration.

(b) Tourists are permitted to visit Ladakh and other areas either in groups or individually.

(c) The relaxations have been made so as to encourage mountaineering and promote visits to different spots and important shrines by tourists and pilgrims.

Iron ore deposits in Kozhikode region of Kerala

2533. SHRI A.K. GOPALAN: Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to the news item in the Press on 9th January, 1975 stating that the iron ore deposits in the Kozhikode region (Kerala) are sufficient to achieve an annual output of 1,00,000 tonnes of pig iron or sponge iron;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) whether Government have received any communication from the Kerala Government with this effect; and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF SEEL AND MINES (SHRI SUKHDEV PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to the investigation carried out by the Geological Survey of India, the reserves of iron ore in Kozhikode district of Kerala are estimated at about 59 million tonnes with Fe content ranging from 31.5 per cent to 41.2 per cent. Some tests will have to be carried out to determine the amenability of the ore to beneficiation.

(c) A communication was received from the Government of Kerala in October, 1974, suggesting the establishment of a steel plant in Kerala; and

(d) The establishment of a steel plant to utilize the iron ore deposits in Kozhikode district of Kerala can be considered only after the suitability