

of an Emergency and Trauma Centre at Bir Hospital, Kathmandu, etc. It would decide on any new projects that could be undertaken. The Government also intends to continue negotiations on the Mahakali Treaty with the aim of concluding the Draft Project Report on the Pancheshwar Project at the earliest possible.

Government has every intention of continuing such high level initiatives with a view to strengthening and consolidating close cooperation that exists between the two countries.

#### BHUTAN

The Prime Minister and His Majesty the King of Bhutan have exchanged letters on a number of occasions since Prime Minister's assumption of office. The letters reiterate the commitment of both countries to continue the traditional and unique ties of close cooperation and friendship that exist between India and Bhutan. Government accords high priority to deepening and further extending the wide-ranging cooperation between India and Bhutan.

Bhutan has unequivocally supported India's decision to conduct nuclear tests. The King of Bhutan sent a congratulatory letter on this account to Prime Minister.

India and Bhutan have a long history of extensive and mutually beneficial economic cooperation. There is a complete free trade regime between the two countries. The India-Bhutan Trade & Commerce Agreement was renewed in March 1995 and is effective for a ten year period. India has been the principal contributor to Bhutan's development. For Bhutan's Eighth Five Year Plan, India's contribution would be Rs. 900 crores. Besides this, India will be funding three major projects in Bhutan -- Tala and Kurichu Hydroelectric projects and Dungsom Cement Plant.

#### CHINA

In recent years, India-China relations have developed steadily. The momentum of high level dialogue has been maintained and there is growing functional cooperation between the two countries in diverse fields. The two countries have agreed to work towards a constructive and cooperative relationship oriented towards the 21st century. The bilateral trade reached US\$ 1.8 billion in 1997.

Various issues of mutual interest, including the boundary question, are being discussed in the framework of the India-China Joint Working Group and India-China Expert Group. The last meeting of the JWG (10th) was held in Delhi in August, 1997.

*[Translation]*

#### Under Ground Water

1. SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the availability of potable water has been

adversely affected due to shortfall in the level of under ground water in some areas of Uttar Pradesh during the recent years; and

(b) if so, the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Union Government to provide financial and technical assistance to the Government of Uttar Pradesh for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Water supply is a state subject. The Central Government supplements the efforts of State Governments for providing safe drinking water by providing Central assistance. An amount of Rs. 552.37 lakh has so far been provided as Central assistance to the Government of Uttar Pradesh for constructing water harvesting structures. A copy of the Manual on artificial recharge of ground water prepared by the Central Ground Water Board has also been given to the State Government to serve as guidelines to formulate area specific artificial recharge schemes to check the declining trend in ground water levels.

*[English]*

#### Satellite for Oceanographic Studies

2. SHRI S.S. OWASI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government plan to launch into orbit the first indigenous satellite for oceanographic studies;

(b) if so, the time by which it is likely to be launched;

(c) whether this satellite is likely to help India's attempts to harness marine wealth;

(d) if so, details thereof; and

(e) the other main benefits likely to be accrued by launching this satellite, particularly in the coastal States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The first indigenous satellite for oceanographic studies, Oceansat-1 (IRS-P4) is planned to be launched by end 1998/early 1999.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Oceansat -1 (IRS-P4) will carry two on-board sensors viz., an Ocean-Colour Monitor (OCM) and a Multi-frequency Scanning Microwave Radiometer (MSMR), optimised mainly for oceanographic applications. OCM will assist in harnessing marine wealth through location of areas of fish forages (phytoplankton), which indirectly indicates the availability of fish schools. The information will be useful in providing integrated fishery forecast on the likely availability of fish more accurately.

(e) The other main benefits from Oceansat - 1 (IRS-P4) mission are :

- detection and monitoring of phytoplankton blooms and suspended sediment distribution in the coastal waters;
- inputs for providing sea state forecasting and understanding monsoon systems & cyclogenesis studies through retrieval of ocean parameters such as wind speed, sea surface temperature, atmospheric water vapour and cloud liquid water; and
- assessment of coastal and ocean primary productivity estimates for use in understanding the global carbon cycle and the ocean's role in climate.

#### **Missile Programme**

3. SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to lay a statement showing :

(a) whether the Government are aware of reports that an American firm has helped Pakistan in its missile and nuclear proliferation programme;

(b) if so, whether this matter has been raised with the U.S. Administration; and

(c) if so, the response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE):

(a) to (c) Government have seen a report in the media regarding construction of a new nuclear weapon testing facility in Pakistan with assistance by a American firm Holmes & Narver. The report, based on "private industry sources" reveals that Holmes & Narver are building a "Contained Firing Facility" based on "blue prints with a similar, but smaller, facility at the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) in California". The report adds that the construction is being supervised by scientists of Pakistan origin. The data produced in the Contained Firing Facility (CFF) is "used to refine the nuclear weapons, whether bombs or missile warheads".

Holmes & Narver, according to the report, "is a 65 year old corporation engaged in architectural, construction and programme management, environmental, operations and maintenance organisation". The corporation's clients include the US Department of Defence and Department of Energy.

India has continuously monitored trends, acquisitions and developments in nuclear and missile related activity by countries in our region. It has been India's assessment that Pakistan's pursuit of its clandestine nuclear weapons and missile programme continues unabated despite the declared efforts of many countries to control their (Pakistan's) illegitimate and clandestine efforts. These reports in the media only serve to highlight our contention that Pakistan's

efforts to acquire nuclear weapons are being aided by external sources.

India and the United States are engaged in high level discussions on matters of mutual interest with the objective of deepening bilateral relations. The issue of proliferation of nuclear materials and technologies in our region forms a part of this on-going dialogue.

#### **Production of Milk**

4. SHRI T. GOVINDAN : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are considering any Centrally sponsored schemes to be implemented in the State of Kerala for the development of milk production during the year 1998-99;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the name of districts in Kerala covered under this scheme; and

(c) the estimated expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) No Sir.

(b) and (c) Question does not arise.

*[Translation]*

#### **Clearance of Projects**

5. SHRI MOTILAL VORA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the number of proposals relating to the Department of Animal Husbandry, Madhya Pradesh pending with various departments of the Union Government since 1995 for clearance;

(b) the reasons for delay in clearance of these proposals; and

(c) the time by which these proposals are likely to be cleared ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) to (c) The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House shortly.

*[English]*

#### **Allocation for Hilly Areas of Assam**

6. DR. JAYANTA RONGPI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the plan allocation made for hilly areas of Assam (Scheduled areas) during each of the last three years;