

(c) by when this route is likely to be opened in the interest of export of Indian goods to Bangladesh?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) The Government of India and Bangladesh have agreed to operate a land route for trade with Bangladesh through Haldibair-Chilahati. At the India-Bangladesh Trade Review Talks held in Dhaka on 8-9 December, 1998, it was noted that the work to operationalise land custom stations at, inter alia, Haldibari-Chilahati was being carried out. It is not possible to fix a definite time-frame for opening the route at this stage.

Computer Hardware Technology

2753. DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have made any significant development in the computer hardware technology; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES & PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M.R. JANARTHANAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) an autonomous Society under the Department of Electronics has recently built general purpose PARAM 10000 High Performance Computer, having a peak computing power of 100 billion mathematical operations per second. Application specific systems in this area have also been developed by Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Defence Research and Development Organisation and National Aerospace Laboratories.

[Translation]

Generation of Power from Cow Urine/Dung

2754. SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a demonstration of running small domestic electrical equipments like wall clock, television, radio by cow urine and cow dung was conducted in the State Conference of 'Go Raksha Andolan Samittee' organised in Shrimuni Vidyalaya in Govind Nagar, Kanpur (U.P.);

(b) whether cow urine can be used in place of 12 volt battery and can work for 15 days; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and steps likely to be taken for popularisation of this technology?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : (a) to (c) According to information contained in a booklet published by Bhartiya Govansh Rakshan Samvardhan Parishad, New Delhi, an experiment was conducted in Shrikrishna Prayogshala, Shrimuni Vidyalaya Parisar, Govind Nagar, Kanpur (U.P.), to demonstrate that clock, low voltage electric bulb, transistor, tape-recorder, small television can be run from electricity produced using cow urine or cow dung, filled in a new 12 volt battery. However, the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources is promoting use of cow dung to produce biogas, which is utilised mainly for cooking and lighting applications.

[English]

Victims of Mansarovar Pilgrims

2755. SHRI SUNIL KHAN :
 SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA :
 SHRI AJOY MUKHOPADHYAY :
 SHRI BIKASH CHOWDHURY :
 DR. ASIM BALA :
 SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :
 SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA :
 SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE :
 SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH :
 SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL :
 SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK :
 SHRI VITHAL TUPE :
 SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL :
 SHRI D.S. AHIRE :
 SHRI ABHAYSINH S. BHONSLE :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Purv chetavani ki andekhi ka natteeja hai pahad ki tabahi" published in the 'Dainik Jagaran' dated August 20, 1998 and the report published in weekly magazine India Today dated September 7, 1998;

(b) if so, the facts of the matter reported therein and the details of the loss of life, property and live-stock caused by heavy rains and landslides recently in hilly areas of the country;

(c) the financial assistance provided to the families of those killed in these landslides;

(d) whether the Geologists had fore-warned the concerned authorities about the frail and crumbly rocks on the way to Kailash Mansarovar;

(e) whether any enquiry committee has been constituted to enquire into the Malpa tragedy; and

(f) if so, the findings thereof and the measures taken by the Government to prevent such tragedies in future and action taken against the guilty officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha. However, the Government of Uttar Pradesh has reported that due to unprecedented heavy rains on 17/18 August, 1998, landslides occurred near Malpa village in Pithoragarh district in which 202 persons lost their life in the hilly areas of the State and about 1000 houses were damaged, besides loss of public properties worth about Rs. 200 crore.

(c) Out of Rs. 5.54 crore allotted to hill districts of the State for providing relief to the victims, Rs. 1.22 crore was distributed in Pithoragarh district towards ex-gratia payment to the bereaved families.

(d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(e) and (f) The State Government has reportedly got conducted a Magisterial enquiry. The persons missing or the persons whose dead bodies were not traced have been treated as dead in this enquiry. According to the State Government, no official was found guilty.

Haj Subsidy

2756. SHRI ABHAYSINH S. BHONSLE : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have to cut the Haj subsidy;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) A decision on the exact amount of subsidy will be taken shortly.

Detention of Fishermen

2757. SHRI N. DENNIS : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state the details of steps taken by the Government to prevent the frequent occurrences of arrest and detention of our fishermen carrying on fishing in the sea between India and Srilanka?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) : Problems faced by Indian fishermen in Sri Lankan waters have been regularly discussed between the two Governments. These matters were most recently taken up by the Prime Minister with the Sri Lankan President during his visit to Colombo in July, 1998. Both countries agree on the need to deal with these matters in a spirit of compassion and understanding. The Sri Lankan Government has released all Indian fishermen in their custody excepting those who have been detained under specific charges such as smuggling of contraband etc..

Kesho and Panchkhero Reservoirs

2758. SHRI R.L.P. VERMA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that even after five years of starting the construction work on Kesho and Panchkhero reservoir projects in Koderma district of Bihar, the construction work have not been completed so far;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reasons for delay in completing the projects;

(c) the details of funds released and incurred thereon so far; and

(d) the time by which the projects are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) to (c) The Kesho and Panchkhero reservoir projects of Bihar have not been