

(d) the further steps Government propose to take to solve the issue?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) : (a) to (c) The India-China Joint Working Group (JWG) on the Boundary Question was formed in 1988 to seek a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the boundary question. The JWG is headed by Vice Foreign Minister on the Chinese side and Foreign Secretary on the Indian side. The JWG has met ten times so far, the last being in Delhi in August, 1997. The 11th meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG), scheduled to meet in Beijing in 1998, was not convened by the Chinese side.

It had been proposed that JWG-11 be convened in the last quarter of 1998. The Chinese side, however, suggested that a "preparatory" meeting be convened, before convening of the JWG could be considered. It has since been agreed that Foreign Office Consultations, in the framework of the Protocol on this subject, concluded in August 1997, be held in Beijing on 25-26 February, 1999.

(d) We seek good relations with all our neighbours including China. We remain committed to the process of dialogue to resolve outstanding differences and to the development of friendly, co-operative, good neighbourly and mutually beneficial relationship with China.

Irrigation Projects of Karnataka

303. SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of medium and major

irrigation projects in Karnataka have witnessed abnormal escalation in terms of time and cost over-runs;

(b) if so, the details thereof, project-wise alongwith its original cost;

(c) the main reasons for such high escalation;

(d) the present status, revised cost and time schedule for their completion, project-wise; and

(e) the funds made available during the year 1999-2000 and earmarked for the Ninth Five Year Plan for the completion of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) to (e) Irrigation being a State subject, irrigation projects are taken up for implementation by the State Governments themselves out of their own resources as per their own priorities. The normal completion period is 10-15 years in respect of major projects and 5-10 years in respect of medium irrigation projects. This period and increase in estimated cost of a project depends on various factors such as its size, availability of land, clearance from various appraising agencies, geological conditions, etc. Equally important are the funds allotted by State Governments to individual projects. At present there are 11 on-going major projects and 12 on-going medium projects in Karnataka. A statement indicating their names, approved cost, latest estimated cost, expenditure to the end of VIII plan, expenditure during Annual plan 1997-98, outlay as recommended by Working Group of Planning Commission during IX Plan and revised schedule of completion is enclosed. Outlay during the year 1999-2000 is not available as the Annual Plan 1999-2000 has not yet been finalised.

Statement

Project Lagging Behind Schedule-Karnataka

Sl. No.	Name of Project	Started in Plan	Cost Approved	Latest Estimated	Expenditure		Cumulative Expenditure to end of 3/98 (97-98)	Outlay IX Plan Rec. by working Group	Revised Completion Schedule
					to end of VIII Plan 3/97	& during 1997-98			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>On going Major Project</i>									
1.	Bhadra	I	31.93	155.23	143.06	7.11	150.17	17	1998-99
2.	Tungabhadra Dam I & LBC	I	33.41	230.33	203.69	12.51	216.2	27	1998-99
3.	Tungabhadra Right Bank High Level Canal	II	2.57	62.93	43.33	2.31	45.64	10	1998-99
4.	Kablni (NP)	II	UA	1251	301.07	17.41	318.48	-	
5.	Malaprabha	III	19.91	603.56	427.04	41.41	468.45	190	2002

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
6.	Harangi (NP)	III	UA	310	229.65	18.14	247.79	—	
7.	Hemavathi (NP)	AP 66-69	UA	2484.73	1092.79	134.32	1227.11	—	
8.	Upper Krishna ST-I	IV	58.2	3785.46	2457.07	784.87	3241.94	1450	2000
9.	Karanja	V	98	284.92	162.58	21.55	184.11	98	2002
10.	Bennithore	V	73.25	153	74.02	25.58	99.6	85	1998-99
11.	Hippargi	V	UA	524.21	21.19	4.89	26.08	200	Beyond IX
<i>Medium Project</i>									
1.	Manchanbale	IV	0.77	57.5	47.36	7.89	55.25	12	1997-98
2.	Iggalur (NP)	IV	UA	70	30.21	4.38	34.59	—	
3.	Votehole	V	2.05	47.5	34.02	1.32	35.34	4	
4.	Amarja	V	5.7	79.25	54.28	11.07	65.35	24	1998-99
5.	Lower Mallamarl	V	8.37	100	59.63	16.84	76.47	37	1998-99
6.	Maskinala	V	3.11	25.28	12.96	5.21	10.17	13	1997-98
7.	F.C. Nanikera	V	UA	9.19	8.9	0.29	9.19	0.35	
8.	Chulkinala (NP)	V	3.8	53.5	33.47	10.75	44.22	20	1998-99
9.	Arkavathi	V	UA	106.5	40.03	5.58	45.61	—	
10.	Chicklihole (NP)	AP 78-80	UA	17.35	16.25	0.59	16.84	—	
11.	Uduthore Halla (NP)	AP 78-80	UA	144.1	76.25	6.53	82.78	—	
12.	Hirehalla	VI	6.35	90	67.52	17.12	84.64	23	1998-99

Note : N.P. - Non-Plan Projects in Cauvery Basin.
Outlay has not been provided by Planning Commission.
U.A. - Unapproved.

[Translation]

Passport Fee

304. SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY :
SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI :
Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is increase in passport fee;
(b) if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether the Government propose to streamline the system of issue of passport; and
(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) :
(a) No, Sir. The last revision of passport fees was done in 1993.

- (b) Question does not arise.
(c) and (d) Streamlining the system of issue of passport is an ongoing process. A number of steps have been taken to simplify and streamline the procedures for expeditious issue of passports which, inter-alia, are:
(a) upgradation of office facilities including

- computerisation leading to faster screening and processing of applications;
(b) self-attested documents being accepted.
(c) issue of passports on post-police verification basis in cases where police reports are not received during the prescribed time-limit of four weeks;
(d) a thought scrutiny of application at the acceptance stage itself to check their completeness in all respects;
(e) augmentation of staff strength to reduce and clear pendencies;
(f) provision of issue passports in cases of specified emergencies on out of turn basis on the strength of Verification Certificate issued by authorised officials;
(g) expansion of the list of officials authorised to sign Verification Certificates;
(h) introduction of passports valid for 20 years; and
(i) automatic reissue of passports on expiry on post-police verification basis.