

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

- (b) Does not arise.
- (c) In order to safeguard the interest of coconut farmers, following steps are taken:-
- (i) Minimum Support Price (MSP) for copra is fixed to ensure remunerative prices to the farmers. The MSP fixed for 1999 Season at Rs. 3100/- per quintal for milling copra and Rs. 3325/- per quintal for ball copra are Rs. 200/- per quintal higher than for the previous year.
- (ii) In order to fetch higher prices the farmers are provided financial assistance limited to 10,000/- or 50% the cost for installation of modern copra dryers for production of quality copra.
- (iii) For promoting product diversification, the Coconut Development Board has developed technologies for various coconut products.
- (iv) For control of pests and diseases, assistance is provided to farmers @ Rs. 200/- per palm for cutting and removal of diseased/senile palms; Rs. 8/- per palm for promoting use of plant protection chemicals and fertilizers; and Rs. 200/- per ha. for adoption of multi-species cropping under the project "Integrated farming in coconut holdings for productivity improvement."
- (v) Parasite breeding laboratories are established/maintained for biological control of leaf eating caterpillar in coconut;
- (vi) Assistance is provided @ Rs. 6,000/- per ha. in 3 annual instalments for area expansion with package of practices.
- (vii) Farmers are supported to the extent of Rs. 25,000/- per ha. for installations of drip irrigation units.

#### China, India and Russia Axis

313. SHRI BHARTRAHARI MAHTAB :

SHRI C.P.M. GIRIYAPPA :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government subscribe to the idea propagated by Prime Minister of Russian Federation, Mr. Primakov to form an axis between China, India and Russia;
- (b) if so, the specific points made by the Government and the Russian counterpart's reaction to it;
- (c) whether the Government is aware about the reaction of Chinese Government to it;
- (d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the follow up steps taken for the confidence building measures vis-a-vis Russia and China?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) : (a) No such formal proposal was made by the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Mr. Y.M. Primakov during his official visit to India on 20-22 December 1998. However, while responding to the media on 21 December 1998, Mr. Primakov referred in general to the idea of such trilateral cooperation, nothing that "much in the region depends on the policies pursued by Russia, India and China", and adding that "it will be good for security and stability in the region."

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) During his visit to Egypt on January 3-5, 1999, the Chinese Foreign Minister Mr. Tang Jiaxuan, reportedly stated in response to a press query from Al Ahram, a prominent Egyptian daily - on the reference to an India-China-Russia strategic alliance by Russian Prime Minister Primakov in New Delhi - that Russia had not consulted China beforehand on this "proposal", nor was it necessary for China to enter any alliances.

(e) Does not arise.

#### [Translation]

#### Bansagar Irrigation Project

314. SHRI CHANDRAMANI TRIPATHI :

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be please to state:

- (a) when the construction work on Bansagar Inter-State Irrigation Project was started;
- (b) the estimated cost at the inception of the project and total expenditure incurred thereon till date;
- (c) the latest position of the project at present and measures being taken by the Government for its expeditious completion; and
- (d) the time by which the project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) The construction work on Bansagar Inter-State Irrigation Project was started in the year 1978.

(b) The estimated cost at the inception of the project in the year 1978 was Rs. 91.3 crores and the total expenditure was Rs. 556.10 crores on Bansagar Dam Project upto December 1998 including for land acquisition and rehabilitation.