

(c) The masonry work is 97.6% complete and concreting is 78% complete.

This is an Inter-State Irrigation Project being funded by Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, However, the Union Government has also provided Central Loan Assistance for this project for early completion under Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme. The year-wise releases are Rs. 23.25 crores in 1996-97; Rs. 65.50 crores in 1997-98 and Rs. 37.50 crores in 1998-99 respectively.

(d) The completion date for project is dependent on the priority fixed for this project by the party States and the funds provided by them.

[English]

Indo-Japan Relations

315. SHRI A. GANESHAMURTHI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be please to state:

(a) the steps the Government propose to take to normalise bilateral relations between India and Japan;

(b) the conditions put forth by Japan to ease the restrictions on loans for ongoing projects;

(c) when the last Official talks between India and Japan took place;

(d) whether the ongoing projects funded by Japan are at halt; and

(e) if so, from when and further steps the Government proposed to take to carry on these projects?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) : (a) to (e) We value our relations with Japan. We believe that a composite dialogue encompassing various aspects of our multifaceted relations is to mutual benefit. Since the beginning of this year, a series of official level meetings have been held. This include : Foreign Secretary level talks (January 17-21, 1999). Trade talks (at Commerce Secretary level, February 5-6, 1999) and MEA-MITI dialogue (at Secretary level, February 22, 1999). Other meetings are being scheduled.

In regard to loans for on-going projects, Japan has said that it would review such projects case by case. Japan would like India to take some "positive" steps on the nuclear non-proliferation issue in order to enable positive consideration.

The Japanese Government have frozen Yen-loan programme and grant aid for new projects except grant aid for emergency, humanitarian and grossroot projects. Disbursements for the ongoing projects (both loans and grants) continue. During 1998-99, there will be no impact on disbursements. They will, however, be affected from 1999-2000, if these restrictive measures continue unaltered. Second and subsequent tranches for the ongoing projects are to be committed by the Government of Japan on a case by case basis.

[Translation]

Development of Horticulture and Floriculture

316. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE :

SHRI K. PARYMOHAN :

SHRI MUKUL WASNIK :

SHRI CHINMAYANAND SWAMI :

SHRI C.P.M. GIRIYAPPA :

SHRI RAMPAL UPADHYAY :

SHRI MADAN PATIL :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have prepared any action plan for the development of horticulture and floriculture in the country;

(b) if so, the financial allocation made for the development of horticulture and floriculture during the last three years and also for the current years, State-wise;

(c) whether there is any system to record output to the above crops;

(d) whether the Government have estimated the annual loss of revenue from fruits, vegetables and flowers which perish or suffer during the post harvest handling;

(e) whether the Government sought help to boost the production from other countries like Israel;

(f) if so, the details of the assistance sought;

(g) whether any pilot project for the development of horticulture and floriculture in backward areas of the country is under the consideration of the Government; and

(h) the steps taken by the Government to promote horticulture and floriculture in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) Horticulture development has received focus since VIII Plan and strategies for achieving accelerated growth in area expansion, production and productivity, through central sector/centrally sponsored horticulture schemes have been finalised. These schemes cover horticulture crops of fruits, vegetables, root and tuber crops, mushrooms, flowers, spices, cashew, coconut, cocoa, medicinal and aromatic plants, bee keeping, use of plastics in agriculture and programmes of National Horticulture Board.

(b) The States have been provided assistance to the tune of Rs. 504.51 crores under various horticulture schemes of the Department of Agriculture and Cooperation including floriculture during the period from 1995-96 to 1998-99. (Details furnished in the statement enclosed).