

to them in high focus areas identified in their States. Special projects have also been sanctioned and allocation of targets made to some of these regions in the framework of the photovoltaic programme. Among the projects under implementation are the electrification of 286 villages in the hill districts of Uttar Pradesh, 50 villages in Rajasthan, and three villages in West Bengal.

[English]

CTBT

3899. SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV :

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE :

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister in his address to the recent UN-General Assembly Session at New York while offering to sign CTBT, also called for matching steps by other nuclear countries; and

(b) if so, the details of the matching steps India has in mind?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) : (a) and (b) In an address to the UN General Assembly on 24 September 1998, Prime Minister stated that "India is now engaged in discussions with key interlocutors on a range of issues, including the CTBT. We are prepared to bring these discussions to a successful conclusion, so that the entry into force of the CTBT is not delayed beyond September 1999. We expect that other countries as indicated in Article XIV of the CTBT, will adhere to the Treaty without conditions". In a statement in Parliament on 15 December, Prime Minister further elaborated that "for the successful conclusion of the talks, creation of a positive environment by our interlocutors is a necessary ingredient".

Financial Links with Kashmiri Ultras

3900. SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Laden's financial links with Jammu and Kashmir ultras exposed" appearing in 'Hindustan Times' dated 24 August, 1998;

(b) if so, the facts reported in the news-item; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that Kashmiri militants do not get funds from foreign agencies?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government are aware of Osama Bin Laden's links with terrorist groups in Jammu & Kashmir. Government are closely monitoring the situation and taking all necessary steps.

Drip Irrigation System

3901. SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed and financial assistance provided to Madhya Pradesh by the Union Government for setting up of drip irrigation system in Agriculture during 1997-98;

(b) whether the State Government has sent a proposal to the Union Government to raise the targets and provide additional assistance for drip irrigation for the said period;

(c) if so, the decision taken by the Union Government thereon;

(d) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(e) whether the Union Government are likely to provide more financial assistance to the State and raise the targets in this regard during the next financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) A target of 100 hectares involving an outlay of Rs. 25.88 lakhs were fixed for Madhya Pradesh Government during 1997-98 under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Use of Plastics in Agriculture.

(b) The Government of Madhya Pradesh had sent a proposal for covering 1500 hectares during 1997-98 at an outlay of Rs. 291.45 lakhs.

(c) After taking into account the unspent balance available with the State Government, the target for drip irrigation was enhanced to 300 hectares with an outlay of Rs. 70.61 lakhs for 1997-98.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) During 1998-99 a target of 1000 hectares has been fixed for Madhya Pradesh State with an outlay of Rs. 245.38 lakhs as Central share.

Irregularities in Allotment of STD/PCO Booths

3902. SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Government have received any complaints regarding the irregularities committed in the allotment of STD/PCO booths in Pathardl District, Ahmadnagar (Maharashtra Telecom Circle);