

(a) whether the Government propose to take over the Indian Council of World Affairs;

(b) if so, the details indicating the reasons and its objectives;

(c) whether an ordinance in this subject issued in 1990 was struck down by the High Court as *Ultra vires* of the Constitution; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI MASUNDHARA RAJE) : (a) and (b) In its report of July 1990, the Standing Committee of Parliament on External Affairs has expressed the view that "unless ICWA is taken over by the Government, there would be further deterioration in this institution." The Committee recommended that the Ministry of External Affairs should come forward and make efforts to revive the proposal of take over of ICWA by Government. The proposal is under examination of the Government.

(c) and (d) In June 1990, Government promulgated the Indian Council of World Affairs Ordinance on the basis of which, ICWA was declared an institution of national importance and converted into an incorporated autonomous body. By its judgement of 10.09.1990, however, a Single Judge Bench of the Punjab and Haryana High Court, allowed a Writ Petition declaring the Ordinance *ultra vires* the Constitution, beyond the competence of Parliament as well as violative of Article 14, 19 (i) a and 19(i) (c) of the Constitution.

Delayed Mega Projects

3311. SHRI ABHAYSINH S. BHONSLE :

SHRI VITHAL TUPE :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether 60% of mega public sector projects are running behind schedule;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether their costs have been escalated by more than 50%;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the action being taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to remedy the situation?

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) Yes, Sir.

(b) As on January 1999, out of 39 projects, 23 projects were running behind schedule with respect to their latest approved schedule.

(c) 12 out of 39 mega projects are having cost escalation of more than 50%.

(d) The reasons for delay vary from project to project. However, in general, the reasons include: delay in land acquisition, delay in obtaining environmental and other clearances, inadequate funds, delay in award of work contracts and packages, failure of civil contractors, delay in supply of equipment and law and order problems.

(e) The projects face various types of problems during the course of implementation. The exact measures taken to ensure speedy implementation depend on the nature of the problems being faced by the projects. The important measures being taken, in general, are as follows:

(i) Monthly as well as quarterly monitoring by the Government. This enables the monitoring agencies to identify constraints and help the management in taking remedial measures.

(ii) In-depth critical review of the progress by the Project Authorities and Administrative Ministries with the State Government, equipment suppliers, contractors, consultants and other concerned agencies to minimise delays.

(iii) Inter-ministerial coordination.

(iv) Setting up of Empowered Committees for speedy finalisation of contract packages solving of land acquisition and other problems.

(v) Making funds available to complete the projects on schedule.

Indo-Sri Lanka Ties

3312. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of pacts signed between India and Sri Lanka during the last three years ;

(b) whether the Government have received these agreements ; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) : (a) During the last three years, three agreements have been signed between India and Sri Lanka.