

bank erosion. The state Government have been carrying out various measures in the form of spurs, studs, bed bars, rivetments, bank pitching and screen piles.

Unirrigated Land

3075. SHRI SURENDRA PRASAD YADAV (JAHANABAD): Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether more than 70 per cent of agricultural land in the country is still unirrigated; and

(b) the extent to which the irrigation capacity is lying unutilized, due to inland river water disputes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) No, Sir. As per Land Use Statistics brought out by Ministry of Agriculture for the year 1994-95 (latest), 52.9 million hectares of Net Irrigated Area (NIA) in the country out of 142.7 million hectares of Net sown Area (NSA) constitutes about 37%.

(b) Assessment of irrigation capacity lying unutilised due to inland river water disputes has not been made.

Irregularities in Relief Works

3076. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that the office of the Accountant-General, Gwalior observed certain irregularities committed in rescue and relief work after the devastating earthquake in Jabalpur on May 22, 1997;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) to (c) : No report on irregularities committed in rescue and relief work after Jabalpur earthquake of May, 1997 has so been received from Accountant General, Gwalior. However, the Accountant General, Gwalior has been requested to supply the requisite information.

[English]

Kashmir Issue

3077. SHRI RAMKRISHNA BABA PATIL:
SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT:
SHRI MOHAN SINGH:
SHRI K.S. RAO:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of countries who have offered to mediate on Kashmir problem after the nuclear tests;

(b) whether Government has responded to such offers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) : (a) to (c) Government are committed to the establishment of friendly and cooperative relations with Pakistan, and the resolution of all outstanding issues through direct bilateral discussions and negotiations. There is no place for any third party involvement of any kind whatsoever in this process. This view has been made known to the international Community through official statements and interaction at the diplomatic and political levels.

[Translation]

Kailash Mansarovar Yatra

3078. SHRI GAURI SHANKER CHATURBHUI BISEN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any policy for Kailash Mansarovar Yatra;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the amount of per head aid given by the Government to pilgrims going to Kailash Mansarovar;

(d) whether Government propose to enhance the aid; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) The pilgrimage to Kailash and Mansarovar resumed in 1982, under a bilateral agreement with China and takes place between June and September every year. The Yatra is conducted through the Lipulekh Pass (Uttar Pradesh).

Ministry of External Affairs organises the Yatra with the assistance of the Government of Uttar Pradesh and Government of India/State Government agencies such as the Ministries of Railways and Home Affairs, the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam (KMVN), and Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Advertisement in newspapers, television and radio are released every year, inviting applications from Indian nationals for participation in the Yatra. Applications are registered on a 'first-come-first-served' basis. Applicants are required to be physically and medically fit and have to undergo a medical check-up in New Delhi and Gunji, UP, before being permitted to undertake the Yatra.

Facilities provided by the Government to the pilgrims include medical assistance, security and escort cover

through Indo-Tibetan Boarder Police and the Uttar Pradesh State Police, communication links between Delhi and places enroute on Indian side and with China, cost of publicity of the Yatra and partial cost of creation of infrastructure, logistics an facilities on the Indian side. Government also bears expenses for aerial evacuation of pilgrims in case of emergencies. A Liaison Officer is attached by Government with each batch of yatris.

(c) Since 1996, Government has been paying Rupees three thousand two hundred and fifty (3,250/-) per pilgrim to Kumaon Mandal Vikash Nigam for arrangements made by them for the Yatra.

(d) There is no proposal under consideration by the Government to enhance the amount.

(e) Does not arise.

[English]

World Bank Loan

3079. SHRI BHARTRAHARI MAHTAB : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether World Bank has provided any loan to the Government of Orissa for irrigation projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the total area of the State likely to be benefited after completion of these projects;

(d) the time by which the projects are likely to be completed; and

(e) the details of agreement signed between the Government of Orissa and the World Bank?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The 'Orissa Water Resources Consolidation Project' is being implemented with IDA Credit assistance of US \$ 270.587 Million under the Agreement dated 05.01.1995. The project was launched w.e.f. 30.01.1996 and an amount of US \$ 74.993 Million has been utilised upto May, 1998.

(c) On completion of the project an area of 3,29,000 ha. is likely to be benefited.

(d) The project is scheduled for completion by September, 2002.

(e) An Agreement has been signed on 54 January, 1995 between the Government of India and the International Development Association for SDR. 194,800,000 (equipment to US \$ 270.587 Million).

[Translation]

Remunerative Prices/Support Prices

3080. DR. PRABHA THAKUR : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any policy to ensure that farmers get remunerative prices for their crops in time; and

(b) if so, the time by which the policy is likely to be implemented and the criteria proposed to be adopted for determining the support prices of different crops?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) The main objective of the Government's price policy for agricultural produce already being followed aims at ensuring remunerative prices to the grower for their produce with a view to encourage higher investment and production. The Government announces each season minimum support prices for major agricultural commodities and organises purchase operation through public and cooperative agencies. The Government decides on the minimum support prices for various agricultural commodities taking into account the recommendations of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP), the views of State Governments and Central Ministries as also other relevant factors. While formulating its recommendations on price policy, the CACP considers the following important factors;

- (1) Cost of Production.
- (2) Changes in input prices.
- (3) Input/Output price parity.
- (4) Trends in market prices.
- (5) Demand and Supply situation.
- (6) Inter-crop price parity.
- (7) Effect on industrial cost structure.
- (8) Effect on general price level.
- (9) Effect on cost of living.
- (10) International market price situation.
- (11) Parity between price paid and prices received by farmers (Terms of Trade).

[English]

Agricultural Input Cost

3081. DR. ULHAS VASUDEO PATIL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any programme to assess various agricultural input cost;