

(b) if so, likely date of launching?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Antrix, the commercial wing of Department of Space has signed a launch services agreement, on behalf of ISRO with Verhaert Design & Development N.V., Belgium for launching a 100 kg. Auxiliary satellite, PROBA. The PROBA mission is a European Space Agency Project.

The PROBA mission is scheduled on PSLV mission during mid-2000.

Bilateral Talks

4217. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the G-8 in their meeting in London in June this year issued a communiqué *inter alia* suggested an international engagement parallel to bilateral talks proposed to be held between India and Pakistan to sort out outstanding Bilateral issues between the two countries;

(b) if so, whether Government rejected the plea for parallel international engagement alongside bilateral talks between India and Pakistan; and

(c) the precise terms of such proposals made and responded to by both the Governments?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) Government have seen the communiqué issued after the G-8 Foreign Ministers' meeting in London on 12 June, 1998. Government have made their views known on the communiqué through a statement of the Official Spokesman on 13 June, 1998. The statement noted, *inter alia*, that there is no place for third party involvement of any kind whatsoever in the bilateral talks between India and Pakistan.

Improve Economic Relations

4218. SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Iran decided to improve the economic relations;

(b) if so, to what extent India and Iran signed the agreements to improve the relations; and

(c) if so, the details thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) India and Iran are working together to utilise all available opportunities for mutually beneficial economic and commercial cooperation. The vehicle for such bilateral cooperation is the Indo-Iran Joint Commission which was established in 1983 and consists of six committees which oversee cooperation in Agriculture & Rural Development; Industry; Trade; Transport; Culture; Science & Technology; and petroleum. In addition, Indo-Iran Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Indo-Iran Joint Business Council are also engaged in promoting economic and commercial cooperation.

The significant agreements in the recent past are: (i) Indo-Iran Maritime Agreement signed on January 3, 1995; (ii) A Terilateral Agreement on International Transit of Goods between India, Iran and Turkmenistan signed on February 22, 1997; (iii) Indo-Iran MOU on Animal health signed on October, 5, 1997.

[Translation]

Conference of Ministers

4219. SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the proposals approved unanimously in the conference of Ministers of State for Animal Husbandry during the year 1996-97; and

(b) the action taken by the Government for the implementation of those proposals as on date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) The proposals approved unanimously in the conference are placed in the statement in the Statement-I attached.

(b) The Action Taken on these proposals is placed in the statement in the Statement-II attached.