

(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.

Statement-I

The list of proposals approved by consensus in the Conference of State Ministers' of Animal Husbandry and Dairying held on 16-17th December, 1996.

1. The conference broadly endorsed the draft National Livestock Policy.
2. Hon'ble Prime Minister announced doubling of the existing financial allocation for this vital sector for socio-economic development of the poor in rural areas.
3. The establishment of a separate Indian Council of Veterinary Research, parallel to ICAR, to support research and extension activities was strongly recommended by the delegates.
4. The conference recommended for setting up atleast 60 thousand artificial insemination centres in all parts of the country for upgradation of genetic potential, and increasing productivity levels of indigenous breeds of cattle and bufaloes.
5. An additional 1 lakh dairy cooperative societies for increasing milk production in areas left out under Operation Flood Programme would be created during the Ninth Plan.
6. Emphasis was laid on rehabilitation of sick dairy cooperatives to enable them to play a meaningful role in competitive markets.
7. The formation of cooperative federations for the development of sheep, goat and poultry was strongly recommended by the delegates.
8. Emphasis was laid for extension of insurance cover to non scheme animals of poor farmers through subsidised premium rates.
9. It was unanimously agreed that infrastructural support facilities, particularly, district regulated markets for improving marketing facilities for livestock and livestock products would also be established on a priority basis.
10. Most of the delegates did not favour the proposal of privatisation of Veterinary

Services in rural areas. While natural market forces may increase privatisation in this sector, the proposal need not be pursued as a matter of Government policy.

11. The conference recommended for the creation of disease free zones for control of foot and mouth disease and rinderpest in areas of concentration of high yielding animals; and in vicinity of export-oriented and modern slaughter houses, to boost the export potential of meat and meat products in this country.

Statement-II

Action Taken Report on the proposals approved by consensus in the Conference of State Minister's of animal Husbandry and Dairying held on 16-17th December, 1996.

1. The evolution of the National Livestock Policy, within the framework of the overall National Agricultural Policy is a time consuming process, involving extensive consultation with the State Governments and all the other Departments/agencies concerned. The Government is pursuing the requisite steps for the evolving of the National Livestock Policy.
2. The Department of AH&D formulated proposals of Rs. 3150.57 crores for the 9th Plan. The Planning Commission has approved Rs. 1072.18 crores for development of animal husbandry and dairy development sector during 9th Plan.

Besides, Rs. 605.70 crores has been transferred from the budget of Department of Agriculture and Cooperation for Fisheries during 9th Plan.
3. A Cabinet note for establishment of Indian Council of Veterinary Research was prepared and circulated for comments. A revised note is being prepared for submission to Committee of Secretaries.
4. A substantially higher allocation has been provided for the schemes Extension Forzen Semen Technology and Progeny Testing Programme (Rs. 200 crores in 9th Plan as against Rs. 19.75 crores in 8th Plan) and National Bull Production Further, these

schemes are being incorporated into comprehensive project on cattle and buffalo breeding proposed to be implemented during 9th Plan to improve the functional efficiency of breeding programmes, and upgradation of the AI system.

5. The Government of India has since proposed a scheme for organising 25,000 village level Dairy Cooperative Societies (DCS) in the Operation Flood Districts but in the areas not actually covered in Operation Flood with a total provision of Rs. 50.00 crores for 9th plan and Rs. 4.00 crores for 1998-99.

Further, the Government is already implementing a Central Sector Plan Scheme IDDP in Non Operation Flood, Hilly and Backward Areas which envisages setting up of about 7900 village level DCS out of which over 4000 DCS have been organised upto 31.03.98.

6. The proposed Central Sector Plan Scheme "Assistance to Cooperatives" which aims at rehabilitation of milk cooperative unions has been prepared, and is now to be posed to Expenditure Finance Committee for consideration after seeking the convenience of Secretary Expenditure.
7. (i) The Department formulated a scheme to support various State Poultry Cooperative Federations and other organisations during 9th Plan. The Scheme was however not favoured by Planning Commission.
- (ii) A scheme for establishment of Sheep/Goat Development Board has been launched during 9th Plan for accelerating the growth of the sector.
8. A scheme is being formulated in consultation with GIC and State Govts. Cover non scheme animals of poor farmers at subsidised premium rates. A plan outlay of Rs. 5 crores has been earmarked under the scheme.
9. The Department of AH&D formulated a scheme for development of regulated markets during 9th Plan. The Planning Commission has however not supported the scheme.

10. The 9th plan proposal on privatisation of veterinary services was dropped in accordance with the recommendation of the conference for State Ministers.
11. Disease Free Zone is one of the sub-components of the ongoing Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Assistance to States for Control of Animal diseases.

A separate project on 'Disease Free Zone' with a view to control inter alia foot and mouth disease and rinderpest has already been approved by the Planning Commission for implementation during the Ninth Plan period. A budget provision of Rs. 50 lakhs has been made for this project during 1998-99.

[English]

Central Ground Water Board

4220. SHRI NRIPEN GOSWAMI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Ground Water Board has conducted any survey to identify dependable source of water in the tribal areas of North-East;

(b) if so, the details and the outcome thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to develop ground water resources in these areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) The Central Ground Water Board has conducted survey and exploration to assess the availability of ground water in various parts, including tribal areas, of the North-East States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Tripura. As per the assessment made by the Board, the total replenishable ground water resources in the North-East States is as indicated below:—

States/Union Territories	Total replenishable ground water resource (m.ha. m/yr)
1	2
1. Arunachal Pradesh	0.14385
2. Assam	2.47192