

[English]

Bilateral Relations

5147. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE :
SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether any negotiations between India and Nepal to improve bilateral relations and trade have taken place following the visit of the President of India to that country;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the agreements and protocols, if any, reached as a result thereof;

(c) the follow up action since taken in the light thereof;

(d) whether any disputes for sharing of river water and power between the two countries is pending; and

(e) if so, the stage at which they stand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) :
(a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Following the President's visit to Nepal, the 2nd meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) on Border Management was held in Delhi from 16-17 June, 1998. At the meeting, a number of decisions with the objective of preventing misuse of the open border between India and Nepal by undesirable elements, were taken by the two sides. The meeting was followed up by Home Secretary level talks on June 18, which, inter alia, reviewed the decisions taken by the JWG.

The First Director General level talks on Customs Cooperation were held in New Delhi from 15-16 June, 1998 to discuss mechanism to monitor and effectively combat smuggling activities across the open India-Nepal border.

No formal agreements or protocols were concluded following the above meetings. Negotiations for the renewal of the Transit Treaty, the validity of which expires in December, 1998, are expected to commence in the course of the coming months. During the visit to Nepal, the President had conveyed our decision to agree to the Nepalese proposal for use of the Phulbari transit route to Bangladesh on all seven days of the week. Necessary notifications in this regard have since issued.

(d) and (e) A "Treaty concerning the Integrated Development of the Mahakali River, including Sarda Barrage, Tanakpur Barrage and Pancheswar Project" was signed between India and Nepal in February 1996. The

Mahakali Treaty provides the framework of cooperation in water resources of Mahakali river and has laid down the broad parameters of such cooperation in sharing of river water and power between the two countries. The Pancheswar Detailed Project Report (DPR) is under preparation jointly by experts of both countries, and negotiations are continuing.

Joint working Group on Kashmir

5148. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Pak Government has demanded to set up a joint working group on Kashmir with India;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government on such demand made by Pak Government; and

(c) to what extent the question of Kashmir particularly Pak is to be solved by setting up the working group?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE) :
(a) to (c) In the context of the India-Pakistan Joint State-ment of 23 June, 1997, or otherwise, there is no proposal to set up a joint working group on Jammu & Kashmir.

Flood Control

5149. SHRI RANJIB BISWAL :
SHRI MOHAN RAWALE :
SHRI RAMVILAS VEDANTI :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the details of States which have been adversely affected by the floods during the last three years;

(b) the assistance provided by the Union Government to the State Governments for flood control during the period, State-wise;

(c) the achievements made by the Union Government in exercise of flood control in the country; and

(d) the future plan of the Union Government in respect of controlling floods in the Country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) Most parts of the country are affected by floods out of which some parts are severely flood affected. List of states affected by floods during the last three years is annexed in the statement.

(b) Assistance provided by the Union Government to various states for flood control during the last three years is as under :