

identifying a suitable area for the Biosphere Reserve and formulate a proper management plan. The socio-economic aspects of the local communities/tribes are also proposed to be studied under this Biosphere project.

Task Force on Super Conductivity

3953. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up any task force for the research in the field of high temperature super conductivity; if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the recommendations made by the task force so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (PROF. M.G.K. MENON): (a) Yes, Sir.

The programme Management Board (PMB) for Super conductivity, constituted in 1987 two Task Groups, one on Basic Research and another on Applications, to evolve and recommend various research and development programmes in the area of high temperature superconductivity, and to provide technical directions. The Basic Research Task Group is headed by Prof. R. Vijayaraghavan, Scientist, Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, and the Applications Task Group by Dr. P.K. Iyengar, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission. Active scientists and technologists in the superconductivity area are among the members of the two Task Groups.

(b) Based on the deliberations and recommendations of the two Task Groups, the PMB has initiated the National Super-

conductivity Programme (NSP) since the financial year 1988-89, which, by March 1990, involves 33 institutions/organisations in implementing 42 Basic Research projects, 23 Technology Development and Applications projects and 4 short term studies.

Construction of Naval Base by Sri Lanka

3954. DR. K. KALIMUTHU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken note of the Naval Base under construction in Kachcha Thivu Island by Sri Lanka; and

(b) if so, the steps taken to counter the security threat posed by the naval base?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. RAJA RAMANNA): (a) While there are reports that the Sri Lanka Government are assessing the feasibility of establishing a Naval Base at Kachcha Thivu Island, no construction activity by Sri Lanka has come to the notice of the Government.

(b) The Government of India always keep a close watch on the developments in the neighbourhood that may have a bearing on the security of the country and take adequate measures from time to time to ensure full defence preparedness.

Equatorial Space Centre at Thumba

3955. SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the space programme during the current year;

(b) whether there is any proposal to develop further the Equatorial Space Centre at Thumba, Trivandrum; and