

High Level US Delegation

*8. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT :
SHRI R. SAMBASIVA RAO :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether high level US delegation led by Bill Richardson visited India and had meeting with various leaders;

(b) if so, the issues discussed;

(c) whether test firing of Ghauri missile and development of Ghaznavi with nuclear warhead by Pakistan and with Chinese assistance came up for talks;

(d) if so, the response of US Government thereto;

(e) whether US delegation promised to take up this issue with Islamabad;

(f) whether India propose to counter the Pakistan missile threat; and

(g) if so, the manner in which it is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (g) A delegation led by Ambassador Bill Richardson, Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the UN visited India from April 14-15, 1998. Delegation level talks were held in the Ministry of External Affairs. The US delegation also called on the Prime Minister, Home Minister, Defence Minister and Minister of State for External Affairs.

The visit of the delegation was in the context of the broad-based dialogue in which the United States and India have been engaged over the last several months. During their several meetings in Delhi, many aspects of Indo-US bilateral relations as well as regional and global issues were discussed.

Since the visit of the US delegation came soon after Pakistan's claim of having test-fired and intermediate range missile dubbed "Ghauri", this development was also discussed. The US side referred to its statement regretting the missile test. It also urged India to continue to exercise restraint, and conveyed that the delegation would discuss the missile test during its visit to Islamabad. It was conveyed from our side that the testing of the Ghauri missile was not an isolated event, but part of Pakistan's on-going programme to acquire missile capability with external assistance. As on earlier occasions, it was further conveyed that Government will continue to monitor developments that have a bearing on India's security environment.

Government will take all steps necessary to ensure national security in an effective and timely manner. India has an Integrated Guided Missile Development programme

on missiles of various range and capabilities, work on which is continuing with high priority.

Water Crisis

*9. PROF. P.J. KURIEN :
SHRI RAMKRISHNA BABA PATIL :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to a recent UN Report in which it has been stated that India is heading towards water crisis;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL) : (a) and (b) In a Report jointly brought out by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) titled "Fresh water for India Children and Nature" (April, 1998), it is indicated that progressive reduction in per capita availability of fresh water in India will lead to water scarcity by 2003 AD and water stress by 2013 AD.

(c) and (d) Any situation of water availability of less than 1000 cubic metres per capita is considered as scarcity condition. As per assessment made by the Central Water Commission, the total annual renewable fresh water available in India is 1869 billion cubic metres and the per capita water availability for different years are as under :-

Year	Per capita water availability (in cubic metres)
1991	2213
1996	2000
2000	1875
2016	1479

There is, therefore, a decreasing trend in the per capita water availability due to increase in population and rapid growth in urbanisation and industrialisation. However, as indicated above, the per capita water availability by the end of year 2016 AD on an average for the country as a whole will still be higher than 1000 cubic metres and as such India would not be facing water scarcity by the year 2013 AD. Keeping in view the future needs of water, the Government has taken various policy and programme initiatives. These include adoption of National Water Policy (1987), preparation of National Perspectives for transfer of Water from surplus basins to water deficit areas, water management practices promoting efficient and economic

use of water for various purposes, emphasis on water conservation through various methods including use of latest technologies and peoples' participation in management of water for diverse uses as well as launching of Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme since 1996-97 for expeditious completion of selected on-going major and medium irrigation and multipurpose projects. Government is also promoting rain water harvesting and watershed management.

Wheat Production

*10. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE :
SHRI RANJIB BISWAL :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn towards the News-item captioned "ICAR Ko is Saal Genhu Utpadan ka Lakshya Haansil Hone Ki Ummid Nahin" appearing in 'Dainik Jagran' dated April 13, 1998;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and the targets set for wheat production during 1997-98 and comparative figures for the previous two years;

(c) whether the Government have made necessary arrangements to meet the shortage of wheat; and

(d) if so, the details thereof including import of wheat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) As per the said news items, Director General, ICAR had given his assessment of wheat production at 67-68 million tonnes for 1997-98. According to the official estimates brought out by Directorate of Economics and Statistics, wheat production as per the latest available information is estimated to be 66.4 million tonnes. The targets and achievements in the production of wheat for the years 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98 are as follows :

(in million tonnes)		
Years	Target	Achievement
1995-96	60.0	62.1
1996-97	65.0	69.3
1997-98	68.5	66.4

(c) and (d) The Government constantly reviews the stock position of foodgrains in the Central Pool vis-a-vis the prescribed minimum buffer norms, production of foodgrains in the country, procurement trend, requirement for Public Distribution System/Other Welfare Schemes, open market prices etc. and decisions to import foodgrains (wheat and rice) are taken depending on the situation. After reviewing

the wheat production during 1997-98 (Rabi season), the Government had decided to import upto 2 million tonnes of wheat during 1998-99. The State Trading Corporation (STC) has been authorised to take steps to import wheat on behalf of the Food Corporation of India (FCI). Accordingly, the STC has finalised contracts for import of 1.5 million tonnes of wheat from Australia during 1998-99. It has been decided not to import the balance quantity of 0.5 million tonnes at present.

Foodgrains Production

*11. SHRI ASHOK NAMDEORAO MOHOL :
SHRI MADHAV RAO PATIL :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have assessed the total quantum of foodgrains produced in various States during each of the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and foodgrain-wise including cash crops;

(c) whether the Government have also assessed the average production of foodgrains per hectare in the States and the steps taken to increase the production of foodgrains; and

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and the estimated average production of foodgrains per hectare during the current year in each State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (d) The statements I-IX showing production and yields of various foodgrains (rice, wheat, coarse cereals, pulses and total foodgrains) and those of cash crops (oilseeds, cotton, sugarcane and jute & mesta) for the last three years and the current year are annexed.

To increase the production and productivity of foodgrains, the Government is implementing various centrally sponsored programmes, viz. Integrated Cereals Development Programmes in Rice, Wheat and Coarse Cereals Based Cropping System Areas; Accelerated Maize Development Programme; and National Pulses Development Project. Besides this, Minkit Programme of Rice, Wheat and Coarse Cereals are also being implemented in the country to popularise the location specific high yielding varieties/hybrids of seeds of various crops so as to increase the productivity and thereby production of various foodgrains crops.

The steps being taken to increase the production include increased area coverage under high yielding varieties/hybrids, increasing the water use efficiency through adoption of Sprinkler irrigation system in some crops, adoption of improved crop production technologies etc. Price and market support operation are also undertaken to encourage farmers to raise production and productivity.