

(a) the names of the Ministers who have undertaken foreign trips since the Government assumed office;

(b) the countries visited and the duration of each visit;

(c) the total expenditure incurred on each of these visits in rupees and in foreign currencies; and

(d) the expenditure on the persons who accompanied the Ministers on each of these visits ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Augmentation of CRF

247. SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Ministry had devised a long-term strategy for augmentation of Central Road Fund, private participation and enhancement of vehicle registration fee, etc.;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the stage at which the implementation of the scheme stands at present,

(c) whether the plan for investment in road sector has been delayed; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor and the steps being taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) to (d) A Revised Resolution for augmenting the Central Road Fund has been passed by the two houses of Parliament in the year 1988. However, its implementation is still under the consideration of the Government. As regards private participation, Government has taken certain measures recently to attract private investment in the road sector. Guidelines have been finalised for taking up projects through Private Sector. There is no long term strategy for augmentation of Vehicle Registration Fee.

Emigration Racket

248. SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Touts would rather see emigrants die than return" appearing in the 'Times of India' dated January 16, 1997;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken to check such emigration racket ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) On receipt of information relating to malpractices of this nature described in the article, the concerned agencies of Government are immediately alerted. The concerned agencies undertake the necessary investigations in order to prosecute those who are found guilty of such offences.

[Translation]

Swaranrekha Irrigation Project

249. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state :

(a) whether all the families displaced by Swaranrekha Irrigation Project have not been given jobs, compensation and other facilities, even after several years;

(b) if so, the number of displaced families who have been given jobs, compensation and other facilities, and those who are still deprived of these facilities, till date;

(c) the reasons for not giving these facilities; and

(d) the efforts made by the Union Government to provide these facilities to all displaced families ?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.

[English]

Visit by Foreign Dignitaries

250. SHRI V. PRADEEP DEV : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the names of foreign dignitaries who had visited India since December 1, 1996;

(b) the nature of talks held with them and the details of agreements signed; and

(c) the names of the countries, which have extended invitation to Prime Minister and the President to visit their countries and details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL) : (a) and (b) A statement on foreign dignitaries who visited India since December 1, 1996 is enclosed.

(c) It is customary during such visits that invitations to the President and Prime Minister are extended by the visiting dignitaries to visit their respective country.

Statement

Foreign Dignitaries who visited India since December 1, 1996

Sl. No.	Name of Dignitary	Discussions held and Agreements Signed
1	2	3
1.	Mr. Thabo Mbeki, Dy. President of South Africa (3—7.12.96)	Discussions were held on strengthening bilateral relations and on issues of regional and international interest. Agreements were signed on (i) Convention for Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal evasion with respect to taxes on Income and Capital gains, (ii) Cultural Cooperation, (iii) MoU on cooperation in the Field of Defence Equipment.
2.	Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev, President of Kazakstan (9—11.12.96)	Delegation level talks were held between our Prime Minister and President Nazarbayev, Vice President, External Affairs Minister and Finance Minister called on President Nazarbayev. President Nazarbayev also called on our President.
3.	HE Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh (9—12.12.96)	Talks covered all issues of importance in bilateral relations. A Thirty-year Treaty on sharing of Ganga water at Farakka was signed during the visit.
4.	Sahabzada Yakub Khan, Caretaker Foreign Minister of Pakistan (18—21.12.96)	Attended SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting. Also had informal meeting with External Affairs Minister.
5.	Dr. P.C. Lohani, Foreign Minister of Nepal (18—21.12.96)	Attended SAARC Ministerial Conference. Opportunity was utilised to have an exchange of views on matters of mutual interest and identifying further opportunities for strengthening bilateral relations.
6.	Mr. Dawa Tsering, Foreign Minister of Bhutan (18—23.12.96)	-do-
7.	Mr. Abdus Samad Azad, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh (18—21.12.96)	Attended SAARC Council of Ministers Meeting. Also had informal meeting with External Affairs Minister.
8.	Mr. Fathullah Jameel, Foreign Minister of Maldives (18—21.12.96)	-do-
9.	Mr. Lakshman Kadirgamar, Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka (18—21.12.96)	-do-
10.	HE Dato Dr. Mahathir Bin Mohamad, P.M. of Malaysia (19—22.12.96)	Bilateral talks on matters of mutual interest were held between the two Prime Ministers.
11.	Mr. Ezer Weizman, President of Israel (29.12.96—5.1.97)	Talks focussed on review of bilateral relations, consideration of measures for further strengthening bilateral relations and exchange of views on important issues of mutual interest and major international issues. Four agreements were signed during the visit. (i) Agreement on Technical Cooperation including exchange of experts and provision of training facilities, (ii) Memorandum of intent for a joint high-tech agricultural demonstration cooperation project, (iii) Umbrella agreement on development of cooperation in the field of Industrial and Technological Research and Development, and (iv) Programme for

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3

- Cultural and Educational Cooperation containing agreement under the programme of exchanges in these areas for the years 1997-1999.
12. Mr. Lloyd Axworthy,
Foreign Minister of Canada
(7—15.1.97)
- Discussions were held on a wide range of bilateral issues and regional and international matters of mutual interest. Notes were exchanged to establish Joint Ministerial Committee for intensifying cooperation and consultation between the two countries in political, economic and commercial fields.
13. Mr. John Major,
Prime Minister of U.K.
(9—12.1.97)
- Discussions were held to explore ways of strengthening bilateral relations. Views were exchanged on current international issues. An agreement on cooperation in coal sector was signed.
14. Dr. Klaus Kinkel,
Foreign Minister of Germany
- Discussions were held to explore ways of strengthening bilateral relations. Views were exchanged on current international issues.
15. Shri Basdeo Pandey,
P.M. of Trinidad & Tobago
(23.1.97—4.2.97)
- Talks were held on strengthening bilateral/political and economic relations as also exchange of views on international issues of mutual interest. Six agreements were signed during the visit.
(i) Agreement on Technical cooperation, (ii) Agreement on Trade, (iii) MOU on cooperation and assistance in the field of housing, (iv) MOUs on cooperation for development of small scale industries in Trinidad & Tobago, (v) MOU on bilateral consultation between MEA and Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Trinidad & Tobago, (vi) MOU on cooperation in the field of medical research.
16. Mr. Jaime Gama,
Foreign Minister of Portugal
- Discussions were held to explore ways of strengthening bilateral relations. A Civil Aviation Agreement with Portuguese Government was signed during the visit.
17. Mr. Glafcos Clerides,
President of Cyprus
- Discussions were held to explore ways of strengthening bilateral relations. An Agreement on Merchant Shipping was signed with the Cypriot Government during the visit.
18. Dr. Sam Nujoma,
President of Namibia
(13—18.2.97)
- Discussions were held on strengthening bilateral relations and on issues of regional and international interest. A Convention for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect of Taxes on Income and Capital Gains was signed.
19. HE Sheikh Hasina,
P.M. of Bangladesh.
(14—16.2.97)
- Attended IPU Conference on 'Towards Partnership between Men and Women in Politics'.
20. Mr. Eric Derycke,
Foreign Minister of Belgium
- Discussions were held to explore ways of strengthening bilateral relations.
21. Mr. Niels Helveg Petersen,
Foreign Minister of Denmark
- do-
22. Mr. Abdou Diouf,
President of Senegal
(16—19.2.97)
- Discussions were held on strengthening bilateral relations and on issues of regional and international interest. An agreement on Establishment of Joint Commission for economic, technical, political and cultural cooperation and a MOU for establishment of an Agricultural Development Project in Senegal were signed.
23. Mr. Eriya Kategaya,
First Dy. Prime Minister and
Foreign Minister of Uganda
- Discussions were held on strengthening bilateral relations and on issues of regional and international interest.