

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to set up such a Technology Mission; and

(d) if so, the modalities and other details thereof?

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRIDEVI LAL): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. All India Cotton Federation Limited have sent representations for establishing a Technology Mission for Cotton.

(c) The issue has been examined by the Government of India and it is felt that Technology Mission approach is not feasible for reaching the goal for maximising cotton production.

(d) Question does not arise.

[Translation]

Indo-Nepal Relations

*52. SHRI JAGDISH SINGH KUSHWAHA:
SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the basis on which the Indo-Nepal trade agreement was entered into by Government;

(b) the reasons for which the agreement was not renewed;

(c) whether Government have taken any concrete steps to strengthen the bilateral relations between the two countries; and

(d) if so, the details and outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) Indo-Nepal Trade Agreements, entered into from time to time, are based on the traditional, uniquely close Indo-Nepal relationship, as formalised in the 1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship.

(b) A new Indo-Nepal Trade Treaty, initiated in October, 1988 had included certain commitments by the Government of Nepal. These were not fulfilled. Therefore, the new Treaty could not be signed. The old Treaty, which had been given ad-hoc extensions since March 1988, lapsed on March 23, 1989.

(c) and (d). Government have taken initiatives to improve our relations with Nepal. The Nepalese Foreign Minister, Shri S.K. Upadhyay, visited India from January 3 to 5, 1990. The discussions during his visit contributed to greater understanding of each other's interests and concerns. As a follow-up to this visit, a wide range of subjects of mutual interest were covered in the official level talks held in New Delhi from February 19-22, 1990. These included trade, transit, economic and industrial cooperation, security perceptions, treatment of each other's nationals etc. Progress was made towards a comprehensive solution of all outstanding problems. During the next round of official talks, work will begin on the documents that would comprise the framework of the close and age-old Indo-Nepal relationship and strengthen it on an enduring basis.

[English]

Indo-Sri Lanka Friendship Treaty

*53. DR. K. KALIMUTHU:
SHRI ERA ANBARASU:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has offered recently a

friendship treaty to Sri Lanka;

(b) whether the proposed treaty is in total substitution of the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord concluded in 1987;

(c) whether the treaty makes the devolution of power a pre-condition for withdrawal of Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) from Sri Lanka;

(d) whether the treaty has been accepted by Sri Lanka; and

(e) if not, the present status of the treaty?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) The proposal for a Friendship Treaty came from the Sri Lanka Government. On their repeated urgings we had forwarded our draft response on 12th January, 1990.

(b) No Sir, A mutually agreed Treaty could replace only the Letters Exchanged on July 29, 1987 at the time of the signing of the Indo Sri Lanka Agreement.

(c) No Sir.

(d) and (e) A formal response from the Sri Lanka Government to the Indian Draft is awaited.

Expansion of Rural Telecommunications Services

*54. SHRI DHARMESH PRASAD VARMA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government have prepared a plan to expand rural telecommunication services; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Annual Plan 1990-91 envisages gross commissioning of 1.35 lakh lines of Local Switching Capacity in addition to opening of 15000 Long Distance Public Telephones and 1000 combined Telegraph Offices at an anticipated outlay of about Rs. 380 crores.

Pak Move to Raise Kashmir issue in UN

*55. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the statement made by a senior federal minister of Pakistan that Pakistan is examining the option of raising the Kashmir issue in the United Nations as reported in the 'Indian Express', dated 13 February, 1990; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to balk down in time this reported move which runs counter to the Simla Agreement and to counteract the false propaganda being made by Pakistan against India on the Kashmir issue in the Muslim countries of West Asia?

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

(b) We have conveyed to the world community that recent Pakistani actions and statements in regard to Kashmir are in clear violation of the Simla Agreement which, inter-alia, calls for settlement of all differences peacefully and through bilateral negotiations.

Construction of National Highways in Maharashtra

*56. SHRI ARVIND TULSHIRAM KAMBLE: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state: