

nuclear power (ii) assistance in setting up of a training centre in Vietnam (iii) exchange of scientists (iv) setting up of a semi-pilot plant for manufacture, controlling and assessing the quality of UO₂ ceramic (v) co-operation in exploration of uranium ore mines in Vietnam and (vi) Visit of VAEC delegation in early 2000 to India.

Upgrading and Modification of ECCS

2519. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a 1979 or/and 1987 safety assessment report prepared by the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) had called for urgent upgrading and modification of the Emergency Core Cooling System (ECCS) in the Madras Atomic Power Station (MAPS) Units -1&2.

(b) if so, whether this modification has been carried on MAPS-1&2 so far; and

(c) if not, whether MAPS-1&2 are being run at serious risk to public safety without this modification, and what are the plans of Government to immediately rectify this situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir. DAE has carried out safety assessments of its units through specially appointed committees. While noting that the Emergency Core Cooling System (ECCS), found to be adequate during design of the plant, already exists, the assessment has suggested the desirability of upgrading the ECCS at Rajasthan Atomic Power Station (RAPS) and Madras Atomic Power Station (MAPS).

(b) Upgradation of the existing system arising out of the evolving safety criteria are generally carried out during periods of long shut down. This is an internationally accepted practice. The required upgradation has since been carried out in RAPS

Unit-2 during the major shutdown that was taken during 1995-98 for en-masse replacement of coolant channels. A similar approach has been proposed with respect to MAPS, i.e. for upgradation of the ECCS to be

implemented during a long shut down that would be necessary when MAPS will undergo en-masse coolant channel replacement.

(c) No, Sir. The existing ECCS is designed to provide adequate safety if an unlikely event were to demand its actuation.

Safety of Nuclear Establishments

2520. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have reviewed the safety aspect of various nuclear establishments in the country;

(b) if so, the plant-wise steps taken thereon; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir. The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) is an independent regulatory body meant for review and regulation of safety aspects of all the nuclear establishments in the country.

(b) and (c) The review of safety aspects of all nuclear establishments in the country is a continuous process. For this purpose, a three tier safety review process is adopted under the overall control of the AERB. Firstly, each plant has a Unit Safety Committee which looks into every safety related event/aspect by means of carrying out periodic safety review and regulatory inspections at the various nuclear establishments/plants. Secondly, the reports thereof and the issues of higher safety significance are reviewed/examined by the Safety Review Committee for Operating Plants (SARCOP) of AERB. The third tier in this review process is the AERB itself. The recommendations made by the Safety Committee i.e. SARCOP and AERB are binding on all nuclear establishments in the country and are implemented in a time-bound manner.

Setting up of Nuclear Safety Research Institute

2521. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has recently

set up a nuclear safety research institute in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the purpose of setting up such institute and to what extent it will suggest ways and means to provide safety to our nuclear installations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) has set up a Safety Research Institute (SRI) at Kalpakkam, Tamil Nadu. Selected aspects of research relating to nuclear power plant safety, radiological and environmental safety, fire and industrial safety will be addressed during the initial phase of the project. The main objective of the SRI will be to carry out and promote safety related research in selected areas of relevance to regulatory decision making. SRI will bring together designers, operators and regulators for implementation of research programmes aimed at resolving safety related issues.

Bilateral relations with France

2522. **SHRI ANANTA SETHI:** Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Govt. have any proposal to improve bilateral relations with France;

(b) if so, the various steps taken in the direction during last three years;

(c) the outcome thereof;

(d) the fresh negotiations proposed to be made thereof; and

(e) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, The Government have taken a number of steps for upgrading the bilateral relationship with France. A number of agreements have been signed and high level visits exchanged between the two countries, including that of President Chirac of France to India in January, 1998 and our Prime Minister to Paris in September, 1998.

Mr. Jean Claude Gaysot, the French Cabinet Minister for Capital Works, Housing & Transport visited India from 1—4 February, 1999. During the visit a Protocol of Intent for Cooperation in the Road Sector and a Protocol of Intent for Cooperation in Railways were signed.

An indo-French Forum has also been established to advise the two governments on ways and means for augmenting mutually beneficial bilateral linkages.

(c) There has been an increase in educational, scientific, cultural, commercial and economic exchanges between the two countries.

(d) and (e) The process of bilateral consultations is proposed to be continued and expanded further to the mutual benefit of both countries.

सुरक्षा परिषद् में सदस्यता के लिए समर्थन जुटाने हेतु विदेश यात्रा

2523. **श्री गोपाल सिंह जी सोलंकी:** क्या विदेश मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) सुरक्षा परिषद् में सदस्यता हेतु भारत के प्रयासों के लिए समर्थन जुटाने/निमित्त प्रचार करने की दृष्टि से अब तक विदेश मंत्रालय के कितने अधिकारियों ने विदेश यात्राएँ की हैं;

(ख) उस अधिकारियों ने कौन-कौन से देशों की यात्रा की और वे वहाँ पर किन-किन अधिकारियों से मिले; और

(ग) इन अधिकारियों द्वारा अपने दौर के संबंध में प्रस्तुत प्रतिवेदन का ब्यौरा क्या है; और यदि नहीं तो इसके क्या कारण हैं?

विदेश मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्रीमती वसुन्धरा राजे):

(क) से (ग) संयुक्त राष्ट्र सुरक्षा परिषद् के पुनर्गठन पर संयुक्त राष्ट्र महासभा के ओपन एन्डिड कार्यकारी दल में बहस जारी है। संयुक्त राष्ट्र सुरक्षा परिषद् के विस्तार या सुधार के मसले पर अभी तक कोई सहमति नहीं हुई है। यद्यपि स्थायी सदस्यता के लिए भारत की उम्मीदवारी की बात संयुक्त राष्ट्र महासभा के 53वें सत्र को संबोधित करते हुए प्रधानमंत्री ने अपने भाषण में दोहराई थी और इस मामले को द्विपक्षीय यात्राओं के दौरान भी उठाया गया था, तथापि विदेश मंत्रालय इस चरण पर संयुक्त राष्ट्र सुरक्षा परिषद् की स्थायी सदस्यता हेतु भारत की उम्मीदवारी