

Government's efforts for Negotiated settlement of Sri Lankan issue

650. DR. H.P. SHARMA : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's efforts during the past three months to bring the Sri Lankan Government and the Tamil groups in Sri Lanka to the negotiating table and to bring about a negotiated settlement of the ethnic crisis has been successful; if not, what extent; and

1) what further steps are contemplated in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI B. R. BHAGAT) : (a) Since the adjournment of the direct talks between Sri Lanka Government and Sri Lanka Tamil groups in August, government have sought to ensure that an effective cease-fire is maintained as this is a necessary condition for negotiations, and also to keep the talks going through a process of indirect negotiations, with India talking to both sides. The Sri Lanka government and Tamil groups have accepted an extension of the earlier cease fire accord and the Sri Lanka Government has set up a Monitoring Committee to monitor the cease-fire. A draft framework for a political settlement prepared by the Sri Lanka delegation after discussions in New Delhi at the end of August has been handed over to the Tamil groups. Their views on the issue have been conveyed to the Government of Sri Lanka. The process of negotiations is continuing and Government's efforts have been successful to this extent.

(b) Government have kept their good offices open to both sides and negotiations through India will be continued.

Scheme for Cleaning Ganga

651. SHRI DINKARRAO GOVINDRAO PATIL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have taken steps to implement the scheme for cleaning Ganga ;

(b) what are the phase-wise details of the scheme indicating the cost of each and the schedule fixed therefor; and

(c) what action has so far been taken and progress made to implement the scheme ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI) : (a) Yes, Sir. A programme of works costing Rs. 292.31 crore has been prepared by the three State Governments of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal and approved by the Central Ganga Authority.

(b) Out of the above schemes as can be completed during the 7th Plan period, within a total expenditure of Rs. 240 crores are being taken up.

(c) (i) The Central Ganga Authority under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister and Steering Committee have been constituted for overall guidance, control and superintendence.

(ii) Ganga Project Directorate has been formed in the Department of Environment, Forests and Wildlife for appraisal, approval, co-ordination of implementation and monitoring of the schemes

(iii) In the three State Governments of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal, nodal Departments have been identified and agencies designated for implementation of the schemes.