

employees who acquire flats through membership of cooperative group housing societies.

The information in regard to financial assistance being given for this purpose by the Banks is being ascertained.

Development of farm technology

1313. SHR IK. V. R. S. BALA SUBBA RAO : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) what steps Government are taking in the field of farm technology to ensure triple farm output; and

(b) the amount being spent on research in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (RAO BIRENDRA SINGH) : (a) and (b) The information is being collected and will be placed on the Table of the Rajya Sabha as soon as it is available.

Indian Nationals in Iran

1314. SHRI KHUSHWANT SINGH : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Indian nationals residing in Iran at present;

(b) whether Government have received representations from Indian nationals, residing in Iran, regarding difficulties faced by them in renewal of their visas; and

(c) what assistance the Indian Embassy in Tehran is extending to the Indian nationals in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO) : (a) There are approximately 2000 Indian medical personnel in Iran, a few score engineers and technicians etc. and around 300 heads of families constituting the Indian trading communities in Iran out of which around 200 are now normally resident in Iran.

(b) This is not a problem relating to visas as such. The Government have

received representations from some members of the resident Indian trading community in Iran regarding difficulties faced by them in renewal of residence and work permits. So far as other categories such as medical personnel are concerned, there have been hardly any instance of such problems.

(c) Government and the Indian Embassy in Tehran have taken up the cases of this affected category of Indian nationals vigorously at various levels. Foreign Minister discussed it with Iranian Foreign Minister who promised to take corrective action. As a result of these efforts the situation has improved considerably.

Prime Minister's discussions with the Sri Lanka President

1315. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA. Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether his attention has been invited to the news item captioned "Tamils pin hopes on Jayewardene's talks", appearing in the "Times of India" New Delhi, dated the 19th November, 1983;

(b) whether Prime Minister discussed with the Sri Lankan President the issue of a peaceful settlement of the ethnic problem; and

(c) if so, the broad outlines of the settlement worked out, if any, during this meeting; if not, the stage at which the matter was left for further discussion?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARASIMHA RAO) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(a) and (c) During the second visit of the Prime Minister's Special Envoy to Sri Lanka, tentative proposals were formulated, on the basis of discussions with President Jayewardene for a solution of the Tamil's problem in Sri Lanka.

Since the TULF leaders were not present during the second visit, the Special Envoy has discussed these proposals with them in Delhi and their response has been communicated by him to the President of