

agreement on pre-notification of flight-testing of missiles; and to take steps to release fishermen and civilian prisoners in each other's custody; to work towards an MoU to institutionalize cooperation between the Narcotics Control Authorities of the two countries. It was also agreed in principle to re-establish the Consulates General in Karachi and Mumbai.

Proposed rail link between New Delhi and Hanoi

1697. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA:

SHRI MOTILAL VORA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is considering a proposal for rail link to connect New Delhi with Hanoi;

(b) if so, the complete details of the proposal with estimated cost to be incurred on the said proposal; and

(c) whether any agreement has been signed on the proposed rail link by the Indian Government with the Chinese Government during the recent visit of Prime Minister to China, and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) During the third Ministerial Meeting of the Mekong Ganga Cooperation (MGC) in Phnom Penh in June, 2003, the member countries, namely India, Myanmar, Thailand, Lao PDR, Cambodia and Vietnam, agreed to the desirability of a rail link from New Delhi to Hanoi. This idea was also touched upon in the discussions at the 2nd India-ASEAN Summit in Bali in October, 2003.

(b) The Government have commissioned a feasibility study, costing Rs. 35.43 lakhs, by Rail India Technical and Economic Services Ltd. (RITES) to examine the technical feasibility of laying the missing link of about 200 km. between Jiribam in Manipur and Kalay in Myanmar. Laying of missing links and restoration/upgradation of existing rail links in Myanmar-Thailand-Cambodia-Vietnam are expected to be covered under the ASEAN Rail Connectivity Program.

(c) No such agreement has been signed with the Chinese Government.