

LOK SABHA

Monday, April 23, 1962/Vaisakha 3,
1884 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the
Clock

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

MEMBERS SWORN

1. Shri P. Maruthaiah (Melur).
2. Shri B. K. Dhaon (Lucknow).

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Assam Natural Gas

*80. Shri D. C. Sharma: Will the Minister of Mines and Fuel be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal to set up a chemical plant for using Assam natural gas for the production of acetylene and methanol is under consideration; and

(b) if so, the results achieved?

The Minister of Mines and Fuel (Shri K. D. Malaviya): (a) and (b). A scheme submitted by a private firm for the manufacture of Acrylonitrile (including Acetylene, Hydrogen cyanide required as raw material) and polyacrylonitrile is under consideration.

Shri D. C. Sharma: May I know at what stage the consideration of this scheme is at present?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: As a matter of fact, the gas that is available at present from Assam oil fields is committed to industries in which acrylo-

nitrile does not come in. So most probably this scheme will not be considered for implementation for the time being.

Shri D. C. Sharma: If this scheme will not be undertaken in the public sector, what are the reasons why the private sector is going to be entrusted with it?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: The gas available today is, as I said, all committed to industries other than acrylonitrile. Therefore, whether it will be in the public sector or the private sector is a question which can be taken up only when there is more gas available in the Assam oil fields.

Shri Vidya Charan Shukla: May I know since what date gas has been available in Assam and why it has not been put to any use till now?

Shri K. D. Malaviya: The moment the first well starts giving oil or gas, some gas is always available, and the usual practice all over the world is to let that gas be flared so long as a permanent scheme with project and detailed investigation is not ready. It takes two or three years, sometimes more, depending upon the availability of finance and know-how before the gas begins to be exploited.

Shri Basumatari: May I know the name of the private firm with which arrangement has been made so far.

Shri K. D. Malaviya: There are some schemes in Assam which are being handled by the Assam Government themselves and also private firms, and this information is also available with the Assam Government. We in the Ministry are not doing anything on our own at present.