

collaborate in solving problems of common interest relating to agriculture and utilizing agricultural research opportunities available.

Private Power Development Policy

1323. SHRI RAM KAPSE : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government have not yet cleared the proposal to set up an expert panel to review the Private Power Development Policy and its incentive package; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL): (a) and (b) . The Government have already taken several major new policy decisions for Private Power Development including policy on mega power projects, private sector participation in renovation & modernisation, captive/co-generation plants etc. One area which needs some additional study is the tariff structure. The Government have, therefore, set up an inter-ministerial committee to study alternative tariff structures and suggest changes that may be necessary, with the ultimate objective of enabling availability of least cost power to the State Electricity Boards. The Committee is deliberating on the issues.

Patents of Life Forms

1324. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken note of the statement made by the Nobel Laureate Norman E. Borlaug, on February 8, 1996 regarding patenting of life forms or ownership of the plant varieties; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government to the philosophy of patenting of the genetic material?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AYUB KHAN): (a) and (b) . Government are aware of the statement made by Nobel Laureate Norman E. Borlaug regarding patenting of life forms or ownership of plant varieties. At present, micro-organisms and plant varieties are not patentable in India. However, it has been decided to evolve a sui-generis system for the protection of plant varieties. The proposed sui-generis system, *inter alia*, seeks to protect the traditional rights of the farmers as well as rights of the plant breeders and researchers.

[Translation]

Constitution of Energy Committees

1325. SHRI VISHWANATH SHASTRI : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to constitute Legal Regulatory Committees in various States in the power sector;

(b) whether the Government also propose to make amendment in the Central Electricity Act;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL): (a) Certain States have initiated the process of reforming/restructuring the power industry at the State level. Amongst the measures under their consideration is setting up of State level regulatory bodies, as has been done in Orissa under the Orissa Electricity Reform Act, 1995.

(b) to (d) . To facilitate setting up of such State level regulatory bodies, amendments to certain existing provisions of the Central Acts are necessary. If a number of States desire to set up such commissions/bodies, Central Government could consider making enabling provisions in the Central Acts.

[English]

Delhi Milk Scheme

1326. SHRI R. SURENDER REDDY : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the latest position in regard to the transfer of the Delhi Milk Scheme (DMS) to the Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi, and

(b) the impediments coming in way of the transfer?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AYUB KHAN): (a) and (b) . The Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi to which the Delhi Milk Scheme (DMS) was proposed to be transferred has not come up with a specific proposal.

[Translation]

Modernisation of Hydel Power Projects

1327. SHRI RAJENDRA KUMAR SHARMA : Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Electricity Board have formulated any scheme for the renovation, modernisation and improvement of Hydel Power Stations;

(b) if so, the number of such projects in Uttar Pradesh to which sanction has been accorded; and

(c) the additional power capacity in M.W. and M.U. likely to be generated every year from these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL):