

Emission of Helium Gas From Hot Spirit at Bakreshwar

*599. SHRI RADHIKA RANJAN RAMANIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the emission of Helium gas from the Hot Spring at Bakreshwar in West Bengal is due to the cold fusion;

(b) if so, whether the Government have constituted a team of scientists to study this phenomenon;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken to tap the whole of the Helium gas emitting therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) Emission of helium gas from hot springs happens at many places in the world including at Bakreshwar in West Bengal. There is no evidence for ascribing it to cold fusion.

(b) Work in recovering helium gas from Bakreshwar has been an ongoing project for some time now. There is no reason to study cold fusion phenomenon at Bakreshwar.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) A team is already working at Bakreshwar and other hot springs sites in West Bengal to collect helium gas.

[*Translation*]

Central Public Sector Undertakings in Maharashtra

*600. SHRI VILASRAO NAGNATHRAO GUNDEWAR: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have identified those Central Public Sector Undertakings which are not functioning satisfactorily in Maharashtra during the last two years; and

(b) the reasons for the same and the steps taken by the Government to improve their efficiency?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI P.K. THUNGON): (a) 8 out of 28 Central Public Sector Enterprises having their registered Offices in the State of Maharashtra have incurred losses during the last 2 years, i.e. 1989-90 and 1988-89 upto which period only the information is available.

(b) The reasons attributable to losses by public sector enterprises are escalation in input costs, low capacity utilisation, out-dated plant and machinery, shortage of power, excess man-power, high incidence of interest on outstanding loans, demand variations etc. Improving working of Central Public Sector Enterprises is a continuous process. Enterprise specific action is taken by the concerned administrative Ministry/Department and the enterprise to improve the performance. Some of the measures taken are modernisation and rehabilitation plans, financial managerial and organisational restructuring, change in product-mix, energy conservation, technological upgradation, signing of MOU with the Government, etc.

Public Distribution System in Adivasi Areas of Bihar

*601. SHRI BHUVNESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA:
SHRI KARIA MUNDA:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Adivasis living in forests

and in the hills in Chotanagpur Santhal Pargana area of Bihar get the essential commodities being distributed under the Public Distribution System;

(b) if not, whether the Adivasis have to pay higher prices as a result thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to take concrete steps to provide the benefits of Public Distribution System to these Adivasis and the people living in the remote rural area; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d). Bihar Government has reported that Adivasis and other people living in remote rural areas get the benefits of Public Distribution System. The population living in Integrated Tribal Development Project areas get foodgrains at Specially subsidised prices which are below the normal PDS prices. The Government have decided to focus attention on the strengthening PDS in selected hill areas, desert areas, tribal areas and drought prone areas.

[English]

Red Oil Palm Cultivation

*602. SHRI VIRENDRA SINGH:
SHRI RAMESH CHAND
TOMAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have called upon some States to introduce

red oil palm cultivation so as to increase the production of edible oil;

(b) if so, the names of these States; and

(c) the assistance proposed to be provided to these States?

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The States which have been called upon to introduce red oil palm cultivation are—Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil nadu, Kerala, Maharashtra, West Bengal, Orissa, Assam and Tripura.

(c) The State Governments have been assured of full assistance of the Central Government in the formulation of the scheme, and help by way of arranging to supply plantation material and also arranging financial assistance through Organisations like NABARD.

Tariff Structure of State Electricity Boards

*603. SHRI PRATAPRAO B.
BHONSLE:
SHRI S.B. SIDNAL:

Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has issued some directives to the State Governments to improve the tariff structure of State Electricity Boards;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these directives also include supply of electricity at reasonable rates,