

taking into account the royalty payable to the sugar mills for bagasse and the cost of conversion of bagasse fired boilers into coal fired boilers are to be worked out after State Government finalise their negotiations with the existing sugar mills regarding conversion of boilers and the resultant quantum of bagasse available for the scheme.

Community Centres for Harijans and Adivasis

3503. SHRI KUNWAR RAM: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any scheme for establishing community centres for the Harijans and Adivasis in villages; and

(b) if so, the details of the scheme and the progress made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) and (b). Under the Centrally Sponsored programmes there is no specific scheme for the construction of community centres for the Harijans and Adivasis in villages. However, some State Governments include such schemes in their Tribal Sub Plans and the Special Component Plans which are mainly financed through the State Plan resources and supplemented by the Special Central Assistance of the Ministry of Home Affairs. The details of the schemes vary from State to State.

Demand for Recognition of Urdu

3504. SHRI BHIKHU RAM JAIN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newspaper reports in which a demand has been made for recognising Urdu as a second language in the States; and

(b) the steps being taken by Government for providing fullfledged status to Urdu?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement

Urdu is already the official language in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. It is the second official language in the Telengana region of Andhra Pradesh. Recently, it has appeared in the press that the Government of Bihar has declared Urdu as second official language in the districts of Sitamarhi, Madhubani, Darbhanga, Katihar, Purnea and Bhagalpur. The State Government is being requested to confirm it. Urdu can be given the status of official language elsewhere in accordance with the criteria evolved in the Conference of Chief Ministers and Central Ministers held in August 1961, for recognition of minority languages for official purposes. According to the recommendations made by the Conference, a State is considered unilingual if about 70 per cent or more of its population speak one language and if there is a substantial minority, constituting 30 per cent or more of the population of the State, such a State is considered bilingual. At the district level where 60 per cent of the population speaks or uses a language other than the official language of the State, that language of the minority group is to be recognised as an official language.

2. The Government of India is now proposing to review the entire matter.

Alternative source of Energy in place of Petrol

3505. SHRI PRATAP BHANU SHARMA:
SHRI A. A. RAHIM:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Central Government are encouraging to develop an alternative source of energy in place of petrol;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the National Research Laboratory has been instructed to go ahead in this direction; and

(d) what amount Government propose to invest in this research and development programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI C. P. N. SINGH): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

(d) An allocation of Rs. 225 lakhs has been made in the Department of Science & Technology Budget for 1980-81 for research and development in overall area of New Energy Sources.

Statement

The development of appropriate technologies for harnessing solar energy for a wide range of potential applications, including those where petroleum is currently being used, has been accorded high priority by Government. Most of these programmes are still at the Research, Development and Demonstration stages. A great deal of further research and development work will be necessary before usage on significant scale can materialise.

In the area of transportation, the principal use of petroleum is for diesel locomotives and as petrol and diesel used for road transport vehicles. In this sector, it will be rather difficult for solar energy to make a major direct contribution. The changes will have to be in terms of: electrification of the railroad system, shift from long haulage road transport to rail transport; the use of battery operated vehicles for shorter hauls; and the possibility of using alcohol as a fuel. Alcohol can be generated by conversion of bio-mass which in turn can be produced by photosynthesis based on solar energy.

The Department of Science and Technology has constituted a National Steering Committee to examine,

identify and formulate research and development programmes related to production of biomass and conversion of biomass of fuels. Two projects, one on bioconversion of methane to methanol, and another for studying conversion of cellulosic material to ethanol, have been taken up at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi. Also, a project for introduction, screening cultivation of potential petrocrops (latex bearing plants) and the conversion of this latex into petroleum hydro-carbons has been initiated by the Department of Science and Technology at the National Botanical Research Institute, Lucknow jointly with the Indian Institute of Petroleum, Dehradun.

Research and Development has been taken up in the area of battery operated vehicles to ultimately largely replace petrol/diesel driven vehicles. Vehicles Research and Development Establishment, Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd., Research Design and Standards Organisation, Central Electro-chemical Research Institute etc., are participating in this programme.

Another long-term possibility is to use solar energy for production of hydrogen which can be used as a substitute for petroleum in the transportation sector. The Department of Science and Technology has constituted a Hydrogen Energy Task Force to identify research and development programmes relating to production, storage and utilisation of hydrogen. The work in this area is still at the laboratory stage.

The Department of Science and Technology has taken up development of solar cells and modules which convert solar energy directly into electricity, which can then be used, in place of diesel, to power agricultural pump sets. The Central Electronics Ltd., the National Physical Laboratory, several Institutes of Technology and others are participating in this programme.