

operated by Neyveli Lignite Corporation Ltd., and Central Government undertaking, and Gujarat Mineral Development Corporation, a State Government undertaking respectively.

Soviet Technology for Controlling Fires in Mines

1144. SHRI D.M. PUTTE GOWDA: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Soviet experts have offered Indian miners an original and reliable technology for controlling fires in mines;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether Government propose to adopt this technology; and

(c) if so, to what extent it will be more useful in this country?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN): (a) and (b). The Soviet side had offered a technology known as 'grouting technology' for control of a section of fire at Mukunda block of Bharat Cooking Coal Limited on an experimental basis. The grouting technology consists of drilling bore-holes along the periphery of the fire and injecting them with special heat resistant grouts thereby isolating the fire. This technology has not been tried for controlling mine fires anywhere but is used for other applications like reduction of water percolation etc. As the Soviet side was not in a position to fully guarantee the success of this technology in controlling fire, its introduction is not contemplated at present.

(c) Does not arise.

Price Fixation of Paraxylene

1145. SHRI LOKANATH CHOUDHARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the question of fixing a reasonable price for paraxylene a basic raw material for production of PTA and DMT, is under consideration of Government; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) and (b). There is no price control over paraxylene, DMT and PTA. BICP and Cost Account Branch have recently carried out cost study and the reports are under study.

[*Translation*]

Living and Working Conditions of Employees of ONGC Engaged In Shot Hole Drilling

1146. SHRI RAM PRASAD CHAUDHARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any scheme is being formulated to improve the working and living conditions of the labourers and employees engaged in shot hole drilling work under the Oil and Natural Gas Commission;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) to (c). The shot hole drilling work during seismic field surveys is done both by the regular employees of ONGC and through job contracts awarded to contractors and cooperative societies. The employees of ONGC engaged in shot hole drilling work are a part of the seismic field party crews of ONGC. The seismic crews, including shot hole drilling employees are entitled to certain facilities like free

tented accommodation, free electricity, etc. There is no plan now to draw up any scheme for improving the condition of shot hole drilling employees only.

As regards the workers engaged by the contractors or cooperative societies, who are awarded job contracts for shot hole drilling, the responsibility of providing wages and other facilities is that of the contractor or cooperative society. ONGC ensures that such wages are paid in accordance with the statutory provisions.

D.A. to Employees of Public Sector Undertakings

1147. SHRI JANARDHAN TIWARI: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any scheme under the consideration of Government to give parity in Dearness Allowance to the employees working in public sector undertakings with the Central Government employees; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Government has taken a policy decision to extend Industrial Dearness Allowance formula to the employees of public sector undertakings, under which Dearness Allowance to all employees increases at a uniform rate per point rise in All India Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers.

[English]

Licences for Industrial Alcohol

1148. SHRI C. SIRNIVASAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Union Government have taken over the powers to issue licences for starting industries with molasses as raw material from State Governments;

(b) the policy of Government for issuing licences for making industrial alcohol and rectified spirit from molasses;

(c) whether there is a great demand for molasses based industries in the country;

(d) how many applications have been received from Tamil Nadu for such licences; and

(e) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) These powers already vest with the Central Government.

(b) Industrial approvals are granted keeping in view the demand and supply position, availability of molasses in the concerned State and other relevant factors.

(c) Sufficiently large capacities for molasses based industries have been approved keeping in view the demand position.

(d) and (e). During the years 1987 to 1989, 18 applications for grant of letters of intent for the manufacture of Industrial Alcohol/Rectified Spirit in the State of Tamil Nadu were received. Out of these, 11 applications have been approved and letters of intent granted to the concerned applicants. Rest of the 7 applications have been rejected.

Losses in State Electricity Boards

1149. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL:
DR. A.K. PATEL:

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state: