

(SHRI SUKH RAM) : (a) At present, there is no such proposal.

(b) Does not arise.

Atomic Power Plant in Punjab

4918. SHRI CHARANJIT SINGH WALIA : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Site Selection Committee of the Department of Atomic Energy visited Punjab for selecting a suitable site for the siting up of the Atomic Power Plant in that State;

(b) if so, when;

(c) the names of the places found suitable for the purpose;

(d) when does the Department of Atomic Energy, plan to start this project in Punjab and at what place; and

(e) the reasons for the delay in starting this project ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI SHIVRAJ V. PATIL) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During March 1984.

(c) to (e). The Site Selection Committee's report for the Northern Electricity Region, of which Punjab is a constituent part, is under consideration by the Government.

Rocket Launching Centre in Orissa

4919. SHRI BRAJAMOHAN MOHANTY : Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether there was any discussion between the officials of the Defence Ministry and the representatives from Orissa regarding Baliapal Rocket Launching Centre; if so, details thereof;

(b) when the project is proposed to be initiated and when it is to be completed; and

(c) whether Government are aware of the apprehension of the people of the locality about their safety reflecting in strong resentment and, if so, what is the reaction ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARUN SINGH) : (a) Discussions have been held several times with eminent citizens of Orissa regarding setting up of the National Range Project in Orissa.

(a) The go ahead sanction for the project has been accorded and major part of the project is likely to be completed in this plan period.

(c) The National Range Facility has been planned taking into account all aspects of Range safety requirements for carrying out launchings and tests. Therefore, any fear regarding safety of nearby region is totally unfounded.

Afforestation Programme

4920. DR. K. G. ADIYODI : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) the percentage of grassland available for afforestation in the country, state-wise, with the total affected during the last 3 years;

(b) the proposal during the Seventh Five Year Plan to afforest grassland and the names of Forest species proposed for afforestation;

(c) whether there is any proposal to have shelter belts as wind barriers for afforestation purpose in grassland; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z.R. ANSARI) : (a) Agricultural statistics (1980-81) show approximately 12 million ha. as permanent pastures and other grazing lands. There has been no recent or special survey of such lands. These lands suffer from degradation, encroachment etc. and hence, the statewide extent as well as percentage of grassland available for afforestation in the country is not known.

(b) Rehabilitation of pastures through afforestation, seeding etc. is a part of the

wastelands development effort. The exact area to be treated and the species to be raised therein will depend upon local situation and would be determined by the State/ Union Territories from year to year. Preference will be given to (a) tree species yielding leaf fodder, such as, Subabul, Anjan, Khejri, Neem, Babul Sissoo etc., (b) good fodder grasses, such as Sewan, Paunya, Sheda etc. and (c) fodder legumes.

(c) and (d). The creation of shelter belts is a part of social forestry and will depend on specific local conditions.

Acceptance of Hindi by States as Official Language

4921. SHRI BUSSAIN DALWAI : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the impediments that are coming in the way of switching over the entire administration of the country through the media of its official language;

(b) what efforts have so far been made by the Government to get acceptance of the official language by all the States; and

(c) which of the States of India are not accepting Hindi as an official language ?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. V. NARSIMHA RAO) : (a) According to the provisions of the Constitution Hindi is the official language of Central Government. Efforts are being made to maximise use of Hindi in the Central Government Offices. However according to rule 8 (1) made under the Official Languages Act, 1963 an employee at present has freedom to work either in Hindi or English.

(b) and (c). According to Article 345 of the Constitution States are free to choose their official language. As per the Official Languages Act the use of English has been permitted for official purposes of the Union till legislatures of all States pass resolution for discontinuance of English.

Passport Applications pending at R.P.O. Cochin and Calicut

4922. SHRI P. M. SAYEED :
SHRI SURESH KURUP ;

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of application for passport are at present pending for final action at Regional Passport Offices at Cochin and Calicut;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay;

(c) the number of passport applications pending specially of the applicants from Lakshadweep and since when they are awaiting final action;

(d) the steps Government propose to take to cut out delay in issuing passports at Cochin and Calicut passport offices; and

(e) the number of passport issued from the Cochin Regional Passport Office from 1980 to 1983 ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) Reasons for delay are, largely due to non-receipt of Police clearance reports. In some cases replies are awaited from passport applicants for incomplete applications.

(c) Pending Report applications as on 1st March, 1986;—Passport Office, Cochin—12,327, Passport Office, Calicut—10,611. Applications pending from Lakshadweep Islands—15. Less than three month.

(d) Passport applications are pending for want of police clearance reports or incomplete applications. The Passport Office reminding periodically the Police authorities and the Passport application.

(e) 1980—72,104

1981—1,37,875

1982—1,49,043

1983—1,49,789.

[Translation]

Implementation of Refugee Rehabilitation Programme

4923. SHRI VISHNU MODI :
SHRI SHANTI DHARIWAL :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :