

(b) & (c). A number of steps are being taken to improve the working of the washeries. These include modification of the plants to beneficiate the fines, installation of the balancing facilities to optimise the plant operation etc. Modernisation scheme has been completed in some of the washeries while in others, preliminary work has been taken up and the modernisation scheme is expected to be completed between two to three years time.

Allocation of kerosene to Orissa

329. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the total allocation of kerosene made to Orissa in 1985 and also proposed to be made upto February 1986 ;

(b) whether it is a fact that kerosene allocated to Orissa from Central pool is much inadequate ;

(c) if so, whether Government propose to increase the allocation of kerosene in 1986 ; and

(d) if so, to what extent ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH) : (a) A total quantity of 106,630 tonnes of kerosene was allotted to Orissa State during 1985, apart from 10,105 tonnes per month allocated for January and February, 1986.

(b) to (d). Under the present policy, the requirement of kerosene of States/ Union Territories, including Orissa State, is normally assessed by allowing a 5% growth over the allocation made during the corresponding period of the previous year on a four-month-block basis. However, keeping in view the persistent requests from the State Government, Orissa State has been allocated a quantity of 106,630 tonnes of kerosene during 1985 which is about 6.0% more than the allocation of 100,900 tonnes made in 1984. Allocations during the remaining part of 1986 will be made on the basis of the policy mentioned above.

Increase in price of Newsprint

330. DR. T. KALPANA DEVI :
SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether representations have been received by Government from the Indian and Eastern Newspapers society regarding recent steep hikes in the price of newsprint causing an unbearable burden on the newspapers ;

(b) if so, the details thereof ;

(c) whether the working of the public sector units manufacturing newsprint had been thoroughly investigated before deciding to increase the price of newsprint ;

(d) if so, the outcome of the investigations ; and

(e) the measures proposed to be taken by Government to ensure supply of adequate quantities of newsprint to the newspapers at reasonable prices ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM) : (a) & (b). Representations have been received from the Indian and Eastern Newspaper Society stating that the recent increase in the price of indigenous newsprint has adversely affected the economic viability of the newspaper industry, and that it should be withdrawn.

(c) & (d). The claims of the indigenous newsprint manufacturers for revision of their ex-mill prices on account of the escalations in the cost of raw materials and other inputs were got examined by the B.I.C.P. before Government decided to permit the price increase. A large part of the escalations in costs claimed by the manufacturers was on account of the increase in working costs for forest raw materials and related taxes, increases in royalties, hikes in power rates and increases in tax on self-generated power. The views of the representatives of IENS with regard to the review of price of indigenous newsprint were also taken into account.

by the BICP while finalising their recommendations on the increase to be allowed to the indigenous manufacturers.

(e) As a result of the various measures taken by Government in the past, installed capacity for manufacture of newsprint has increased from the level of 75,000 tonnes in 1981 to 2.80 lakh tonnes in 1985. The indigenous industry is working to more than 90% capacity utilisation. An additional capacity to the extent of 7.46 lakh tonnes has been approved, which is in various stages of implementation. In order to make up the short fall in indigenous supply of newsprint, sizeable quantities of newsprint are being imported. While the prices of imported newsprint is fixed on the recommendation of the Newsprint price Fixation Advisory Committee, the indigenous newsprint manufacturers are allowed to charge only the prices based on normative criteria and as recommended by the BICP.

Vacancies of chief executive and functional directors in public enterprises

331. PROF. RAMKRISHNA MORE :
SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY :

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that despite the selection of the incumbents by the Public Enterprises Selection Board, appointments of as many as 44 Chief Executives and Functional Directors in Public Enterprises are yet to be made by Government ;

(b) if so, the reasons for delay in making these appointments ; and

(c) the impact on the overall performance of the units by delay in making these appointments ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. ARUNA-CHALAM) : (a) According to available information, the number of vacancies at the level of Chief Executives (full-time Chairmen/Managing Directors) and Functional Directors in Central Public Enter-

prises, for which the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) have made recommendations but appointments are yet to be made by Government are 21 and 24 respectively.

(b) Delay in making appointments arises on account of various factors such as vigilance clearance, verification of character and antecedents of individuals prior to their appointment and time involved in placing the cases before the appropriate authorities etc.

(c) In regard to the existing vacancies, officiating arrangements have been made so that the work of these enterprises does not suffer.

[*Translation*]

Demand for gas at reduced price by tea companies

332. SHRI DILEEP SINGH BHURIA :
Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Tea Companies have made a demand to reduce the prices of natural gas ;

(b) whether these companies are even prepared to bear the cost of laying pipelines ;

(c) whether it is a fact that the Oil and Natural Gas Commission has been destroying gas worth crores of rupees daily due to lack of adequate storage facility ; and

(d) the reasons for not supplying gas to Tea Companies ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Does not arise, as gas is already being supplied to the tea companies either through their own pipelines, or through pipelines laid by the gas transportation agency.