

(b) if so, whether these ships are useless and their cost will be higher;

(c) if so, how far this is true that the ships were purchased only to avoid the grant lapses; and

(d) if so, whether the cost of maintenance of these ships will be much higher than their use?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING AND TRANSPORT (SHRI CHANDRAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d). The ships are liner type and of the size required for the S.C.I.'s fleet. They are also functionally and technically suited to the Shipping Corporation of India's requirements. While it is true that the British Government did express anxiety about under-utilisation of British aid extended to India in the last 2-3 years, our overall decision was based on our established requirements and suitability of these ships. However, it is a fact that the prices quoted for the British ships are higher than those prevailing in some Far Eastern shipyards. But it is proposed to ensure that for the Shipping Corporation, the financial burden is the same as in respect of a purchase from a competitive supplier. Their maintenance cost will not be higher than that of any other similar vessel from any other yard.

Supply of Nuclear Fuel to India by U.S.A.

1271. **SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN:**
SHRI VASANT SATHE:

Will the Minister of **ATOMIC ENERGY** be pleased to state:

(a) whether no agreement has been reached between India and U.S.A. after President Carter's visit to India with regard to Nuclear Fuel supply to India;

(b) if so, the differences between the two countries on this issue;

(c) whether U.S.A. has made it clear that Nuclear Fuel will not be supplied unless India signs the N.P.T. and

(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI MORARJI DESAI): (a) to (d). The supply of nuclear fuel by the United States of America for the Tarapur Atomic Power Station is governed by an Agreement between the Governments of India and the U.S.A. which was signed in August, 1963 and remains in force. We understand that the authorities concerned in the U.S.A. are presently processing an export licence application for 7.6 tonne of enriched uranium for the Tarapur Atomic Power Station.

Chief Ministers' Conference on Law and Order

1272. **SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN:**

SHRI PRASANNBHAI MEHTA:

SHRI P. K. KODIYAN:

SHRI AMARSINH V. RATHWA:

Will the Minister of **HOME AFFAIRS** be pleased to state:

(a) whether he proposes to call the Chief Ministers' conference to discuss the law and order situation in the country;

(b) if so, when the same is likely to be held; and

(c) the main reasons for delay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI DHANIK LAL MANDAL): (a) to (c). In the meeting of the Consultative Committee of Parliament for the Ministry of Home Affairs held on 19th January, 1978,

a suggestion was made for convening a conference of Chief Ministers to discuss the law and order situation in the country. It is under consideration.

Corruption charges against former Prime Minister

1273. SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Home Minister stated to the press at Madras as reported by A.I.R. on 7-2-1978 that two corruption charges against the former Prime Minister are being investigated into; and

(b) if so, facts thereabout?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. D. PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The CBI has registered two cases against, among others, Smt. Indira Gandhi, former Prime Minister of India, for offences punishable under section 120-B IPC r/w section 5(2) r/w section 5(1)(d) of Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947, and substantive offences under section (5)(2) r/w section 5(1)(d) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1947, in respect of the allegations—

(i) The accused conspired and abused their position in inducing some industrial concerns/companies to purchase jeeps out of their funds and deliver the same at No. 1, Akbar Road, the residence of the then Prime Minister of India, for being utilised during the Lok Sabha Elections of March, 1977, for furthering the election prospects of Smt. Indira Gandhi and her son.

(ii) The accused conspired to cause an agreement being entered into between ONGC and CFP, a French firm for consultancy services in respect of oil drilling at Bombay High, in utter disregard of a similar cheaper offer of GEOMAN, an American Firm. The accused

by corrupt or illegal means or by otherwise abusing their position as public servants, thus obtained for themselves and/or for CFP pecuniary advantage resulting in wrongful loss to the Government of India to the extent of Rs. 11 crores.

The investigations in'to these cases are in progress.

Power Crisis in West Bengal and Bihar

1274. SHRI SAMAR GUHA:

SHRI SAUGATA ROY:

SHRI ROBIN SEN.

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a report published in the Calcutta edition of 'Statesman' dated 30th January, 1978 giving the background of the causes for power crisis in West Bengal and Bihar;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereabout and the reasons according to Government for the serious power crisis in West Bengal;

(c) whether steps have been or will be taken to resolve power crisis in the State; and

(d) if so, the facts thereabout?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (d). Yes, Sir. Government is aware of the power situation both in West Bengal and Bihar. West Bengal has been experiencing power shortages due to reduced assistance from D.V.C., poor performance of generating units at Santaldih, low utilisation of installed capacity at Durgapur Projects Ltd., reduced generation from plants of Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation because of ageing, delay in commissioning of new projects and lack of integrated operation between West Bengal State Electricity Board system