

- (iv) Testing of an indigenously designed and developed acoustic tide gauge is in progress.
- (v) Mathematical model to predict changes of the coast line, is being developed.

6. Basic Research and Manpower Development

- (i) A number of research projects are sponsored to Universities and R and D Institutions to encourage basic research and build up facilities.
- (ii) A national programme for identification of bioactive substances from marine organisms with participation of 10 institutions, is in progress. So far 134 organisms were screened for bio-activity and 5 were identified for further development.
- (iii) A special course on Air-Sea Interaction studies is sponsored in the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.
- (iv) Assistance was given to the Andhra University to start Post Graduate Degree and Diploma courses on Coastal Agriculture and Marine Biotechnology.
- (v) A number of fellowships and associateships have been awarded in Universities at R and D Institutions for development of specialised manpower in the fields of Ocean science and technology.

7. Information and Awareness

- (i) 14 National Marine Data Centres to collect, store and disseminate ocean related data have been established.
- (ii) Periodical exhibitions are conducted for popularisation of ocean sciences.
- (iii) Writing books on ocean sciences in Hindi are encouraged.
- (iv) A project to establish an Oceanarium in Goa is conceived on Build, Own, Operate and Maintain (BOOM) basis.

8. International Co-operation and Programmes

- (i) India has ratified United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea in 1995 and was elected as a member in the Council of Internal Seabed Authority under Investors category.
- (ii) An action plan for protection and management of marine environment in the South Asian Seas region was adopted in 1995.
- (iii) A Memorandum of Understanding between Government of India and the Sea Fisheries

Institute, Poland, was signed in 1995, for getting expert help during the expedition for the assessment of krill and other marine living resources in the Antarctic waters.

- (iv) A Memorandum of Understanding between Government of India and the Russian Federation was signed in 1996, for co-operation in the field of Deep seabed exploration and mining.
- (v) India ratified the Protocol on Environment Protection to the Antarctic Treaty in 1996, thus upholding its commitment to preserve the pristine nature of Antarctica.

Renewable Energy Policy

*295. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

- (a) whether the Government are contemplating to formulate a comprehensive renewable energy policy;
- (b) if so, the broad features thereof; and
- (c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) to (c). The Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources has initiated action for formulation of a comprehensive Renewable energy policy, which aims at utilising the large potential of renewable Energy in the country. The broad features of the Renewable Energy Policy include financial and fiscal incentives for investors, generation of resources, priority purchase of power from renewable energy sources by utilities, research and development, industrial development, human resource development and institutional arrangements at the national and State levels, among others. The policy aims at ensuring greater use of renewable energy in rural and urban areas to reduce dependence on non-renewable fossil fuel resources, and to reduce environmental pollution.

Wasteland Development Project

*296. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH BHATI :
SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA :

Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the details of the projects sanctioned/approved under the Wasteland Development Programme pertaining to the Rajasthan;

(b) the details of the projects not sanctioned/approved;