

Minister of Punjab asking for white tigers and other animals for the Chhat Bir Zoo in Punjab; and

(b) The action proposed to be taken on this request?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI R. V. SWAMINATHAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Government of India have recently decided to distribute white tigers among the selected zoos in the country having suitable expertise and experience in breeding tigers. No white tiger is proposed to be given to the Chhat Bir Zoo at present. As for other animals, the State Government of Punjab have been advised to finalise an exchange proposal with the Nandan Kanan Zoo in Orissa. The Delhi Zoological Park, New Delhi, has been helping the Chhat Bir Zoo by giving animals and birds which it could spare.

Utilisation of Gas from the Bombay High

821. SHRIMATI PRAMILA DANDAVATE:

SHRI R. K. MHALGI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any final decision with regard to the utilisation of Gas from the Bombay High;

(b) if so, whether the sharing of this Gas has been objected to by the States concerned; and

(c) if so, what is the reaction of Government to these objections?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL): (a) The present policy of the Government is as far as practicable to utilise the off shore gas as feedstock for the production of fertilizers, petrochemicals and for extraction of LPG, etc. To the extent the gas cannot be used immediately for these purposes it can be diverted for other purposes such as power generation, etc., purely as a fall-back

arrangement on a temporary basis till the fertilizer and petrochemical plants are able to utilise it fully.

However, in view of the increased availability of offshore gas, a Working Group was constituted in March last year to recommend *inter-alia* the most economic and optimal utilisation of offshore gas. The report of the Working Group has already been received and is under consideration.

(b) Requests for sharing of offshore gas have been received from some States.

(c) Offshore gas reserves are a national resource and their utilisation would have to be governed by the overall national considerations and keeping in view their optimum utility in the interest of the country's economy.

Increase in price of Sugar

822. SHRIMATI PRAMILA DANDAVATE:

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY:

SHRI JITENDRA PRASAD:

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU:

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA:

SHRI DHARAMDAS SHASTRI:

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE:

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA:

SHRI BALA SAHEB VIKHE PATIL:

SHRI TARIQ ANWAR:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the price of sugar has considerably increased during the months of January and first two weeks of February, 1980;

(b) if so, what is the actual increase;

(c) what was the price/average during the year 1979; and

(d) the reasons for the steep rise in the price of sugar?