various locations were the proximity of the locations to the refineries, other factors of operational convenience like the filling plant capacity available in the region, logistics of supply etc. and not the population of the locations. With the anticipated additional availability of cooking gas, oil industry has plans to cover all district H.Q. locations by March, 1981 followed by the coverage of all towns having a population of over 50,000.

Setting up of a Large Power Plants on the Borders of U.P. and M.P. with Russian Help

2065. SHRI SUBHASH CHANDRA BOSE ALLURI: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that huge power plant on the border of U.P. and Madhya Pradesh is being set up with the help of Russia; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN): (a) and (b): Yes, Sir. An integrated thermal power plant with a capacity of 1000 MW and capable of expansion up to 3000 MW is to be established with Soviet assistance at Waidhan in Madhya Pradesh near the Uttar Pradesh State Border. Soviet assistance will also be extended to the construction of the associated transmission lines for the 1000 MW capacity and the development of coal in stages to match the power requirements at the Nigahi coal mines in the Singrauli region.

Lowering of Voting Age

2066. SHRI P. K. KODIYAN:
SHRI SUBHASH YADAV:
SHRI KRISHNA PRATAP SINGH:

Wil the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the question of lowering voting age to 18 has been examined by Government; and

(b) if so, what decision has been taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR): (a) and (b). The question of lowering voting age from 21 years to 18 years for elections to Lok Sabha and to the Legislative Assemblies of States, which forms part of the comprehensive proposals for Electoral Reforms, is under consideration.

Average Cost of Power Generation from Hydel Thermal Diesel and Atomic Power Stations

2067. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) what is the average cost of power generation in each State from Hydel, Thermal Diesel and Atomic Power Station; and

(b) how do they compare with that from biogas, sun, wind and tide?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN): (a) The average cost of power generation in respect of various State Electricity Boards is given in the statement attached.

(b) No tidal projects have yet been set up in India. As regards energy from solar and wind, the projects are still in a development and demonstration stage and, therefore, the costs of bulk power generation from these sources have not been worked out. Biogas too is not being used commercially for generation of electricity. It is, however, estimated that the cost of power from decentralised biogas for applications in remote rural areas may be comparable to the conventional rural electrification for such remote areas.

Statement

Average cost of Power Generation per KWH (in Paise) as received from various State Electricity Boards

S. No.	Name of State	1979-80			
		Hydro	Thermal	Atomic	Diesel
1	Andhra Pradesh	*6·9	24·95	..	..
2	Assam	..	16·72	..	607
3	Bihar	16·5	22·5	..	..
4	Gujarat	*3·43	*20·26	*16·06	..
5	Haryana	5·3	31·43	..	..
6	Himachal Pradesh	11·1	..	..	380
7	Karnataka	*6·27	..	..	..
8	Kerala	*5·29	..	..	..
9	Madhya Pradesh	*5·31	*12·98	..	1495
10	Maharashtra	*4·89	*16·87	..	..
11	Orissa	*5·45	*18·61	..	..
12	Punjab	*2·8	*27·8	..	297
13	Rajasthan	*5·31	*12·6	..	..
14	Tamil Nadu	*5·47	*32·07	..	..
15	Uttar Pradesh	10·61	22·69	..	..
16	West Bengal	*26·16	11·89	..	*81·37
17	Jammu & Kashmir	15·92	103	..	..
18	Meghalaya	11·45 *	..	..	..

*Where information for the year 1979-80 is not available figures for 1978-79 have been given.

**Average cost of power generation from hydel/diesel for the year 1977-78.

Production of Haldia Fertilizer

2068. SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) is it a fact that Haldia Fertilizer Company in public sector is yet to begin production properly;

(b) if so, what are the impediments and what is being done to remove those;

(c) whether the gas turbine needed for the plant has been supplied;

(d) if not, whose responsibility was it to supply that and what caused the delay; and

(e) when is it expected to be supplied?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e). Non supply of the requir ed power by the West Bengal State Electricity Board is the main impediment for starting production in this