

ment for giving priority to the wards of freedom fighters in the matter of giving Indane gas agencies; and

(b) if so, the details of the proposal and the date by which it will be implemented?

**THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. C. SETHI):** (a) No, Sir. However, 10 per cent of all LPG distributorships etc. to be put up by the oil companies are reserved for outstanding social workers and/or freedom fighters.

(b) Does not arise.

#### **Gasification of Coal**

**9826. SHRI HARIHAR SOREN:** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the research work has been conducted on behalf of ONGC for the gasification of Coal;

(b) if so, the progress made so far in exploring the possibility of gasification of Coal; and

(c) the details about any other method suggested by the research wing of the ONGC for the gasification work?

**THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. C. SETHI):** (a) and (b). The Oil and Natural Gas Commission's Institute of Reservoir Studies has undertaken preliminary work on in-situ gasification of coal deposits discovered at great depths in Kalol region of Gujarat. An expert team consisting of a representative each of the ONGC, Government of Gujarat, Central Fuel Research Institute and Central Mining Research Station has been constituted to explore the possibilities of underground coal gasification. The team, after visiting certain

foreign countries which have such schemes in operation, will submit a report to Government indicating how underground coal gasification work should be carried out in India.

(c) No other method has been suggested by the above mentioned Institute for underground coal gasification.

#### **Decline in production from underground mines**

**9827. SHRI CHITTA BASU:** Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the production from underground mines has progressively declined in the last six years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether good quality coal, particularly metallurgical coal, are not being lifted in adequate quantity; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

**THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN):** (a) Although production from underground mines in Coal India Limited declined from 1976-77 to 1979-80, the trend was reversed in 1980-81 when the production from underground mines increased by 2 million tonnes over that of 1979-80.

(b) Underground coal production was affected due to the shortage in power, explosives, law and order problems, difficulties in land acquisition for construction of new underground mines to replace the exhausted mines and difficult mining conditions in the deep and gassy mines specially in the Bengal-Bihar region.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.