

(b) Coal is the cheapest among the feedstocks at their present prices for use in fertiliser industry.

Manufacture of Potash

9764. SHRI P. RAJGOPALA NAIDU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether potash is being manufactured in India;

(b) if so, how much; and

(c) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The potential indigenous sources from which potash could be extracted have not been found to be commercially viable for large scale operation.

Inadequate facilities for A.I.R. Staff, Leh

9765. SHRI P. NAMGYAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Ladakhi news bulletins are already being broadcast from the Leh Station of A.I.R. with effect from the middle of September, 1981;

(b) whether it is also a fact that due to non-existence of monitorial staff, adequate office and residential accommodation, independent telephone and other essential facilities, the skeleton staff is facing great hardship; and

(c) if the replies to the above be in the affirmative, what steps Government propose to take to provide these essential facilities and when these are likely to be made available?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a): Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). No, Sir. It may be mentioned, however, that the proposals for additional facilities of a technical and non-technical nature have been included for implementation in the current Five Year Plan.

Amount released to Karnataka Electricity Board for carrying out Rural Electrification Works

9766. SHRI G. DEVARAYA NAIK: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) the amount released to Karnataka Electricity Board for Rural Electrification work for the years 1979-80, and 1980-81;

(b) whether the amount released for rural electrification work in the State for the years 1979-80 and 1980-81 has been utilised; and

(c) if it has not been fully utilised the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN): (a) Rural Electrification Corporation which provides financial assistance to the State Electricity Boards for implementation of rural electrification schemes, had disbursed loan instalments amounting to Rs. 432 lakhs during 1979-80 and Rs. 576 lakhs during 1980-81, to the Karnataka State Electricity Board in respect of Rural Electrification Schemes sanctioned in Karnataka.

(b) and (c). Out of the total amount of Rs. 1008 lakhs disbursed by Rural Electrification Corporation to Karnataka State Electricity Board during the years 1979-80 and 1980-81, the expenditure incurred is reported to be of Rs. 930 lakhs. The balance amount of Rs. 78 lakhs represents un-utilised funds, on account of slow progress in execution of projects which is mainly due to organisational and administrative constraints of the State Electricity Board, draught conditions in some parts of the State such as Raichur district, excess rains in some other parts of the State such as North Kanara and delay in forest clearance, in some areas covered under the rural electrification schemes such as North Kanara, Chikmagalur, Shimoga and Corg Districts.

News Item Captioned "Gujarat, Bihar U. C. G. Projects Fail To Take-Off"

9767. SHRI HARINATHA MISRA Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Gujarat, Bihar, U.C.G, projects fail to take-off" in the Economic Times dated 31st March, 1982;

(b) if so, whether the Under-ground Coal Gasification (UCG) projects proposed to be undertaken in Gujarat and Bihar on a pilot scale have failed to even get off the ground;

(c) whether the Indian response to Soviet proposals for technical collaboration for setting up of a couple of shallow-depth UCG projects in the abandoned coal belts of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh has been extremely tardy;

(d) whether instead of quickly responding to offers of technical tie-ups in this newly developing area of know-how with a vast potential, Government are engaged in squabble about jurisdiction of UCG projects; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER) (a) Yes, Sir,

(b) No specific proposal is under consideration.

(c) to (e). The Embassy of the USSR in India had sounded the Government of India for availing technical assistance of that country in setting up of underground coal gasification at shallow depths. As the Government of India have not yet taken a decision to undertake any project for underground gasification at shallow depths in the country, the proposal or USSR assistance could not be considered at this stage.

News-Item Captioned "D. V. C. Revival"

9768. SHRI HARINATHA MISRA : Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the editorial comments under the caption "DVC revival" as published in the Economic Times in its issue dated 24 March, 1982;

(b) if so, whether as against a total energy generation of 4,269 million units in 1980-81 the DVC has already generated 5,770 million units of energy till March, 16 this year without having extra generating capacity in the system;