

expedite the supply of domestic gas to applicants in Ghaziabad?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI DALBIR SINGH):

(a) and (b). The present rate of supply of new gas connections falls short of the requirements including in Ghaziabad and in Delhi. However, the position in Ghaziabad, if judged in the context of the oldest date of registration of customers on the waiting list, is relatively better off than in Delhi. Efforts are being made to progressively increase the production and distribution arrangements of cooking gas. Its demand, however, is so large and is growing at such a fast rate that the normalisation of the situation does not appear to be practicable in the foreseeable future.

Meetings of Ministers of Irrigation of States to decide future Policies Re: Rural Electrification and Energising New Pump-Sets

7923. **SHRI SAMAR GUHA:** Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether meeting of Irrigation Ministers of different States and Union territories was held for deciding future policies in regard to rural electrification and energising new pump-sets; and

(b) whether special preference in regard to expenditure for the above purposes is proposed to be given to the Eastern States of Assam, Manipur, Tripura, West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa having high agricultural potentials?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA): (a) The Sixth Conference of State Ministers of Irrigation and Power held at Srinagar from 29th June to 1st July, 1972, discussed inter alia the progress of rural electrifica-

tion in the Fourth Plan. While noting the rapid progress made the Conference desired that the tempo should be kept up during the remaining period of the Fourth Plan and also urged that steps be taken to extend electricity to the weaker sections of the society.

(b) Programmes for rural electrification are drawing up and implemented by the various State Governments. Besides, additive finances in the form of long term loans at low rates of interest are provided by the Central-Government through the Rural Electrification Corporation for rural electrification schemes of State Electricity Boards. To accelerate the progress of electrification in the backward States substantial allocations have been made in the Fourth Plan. The Rural Electrification Corporation is also laying emphasis for sanctioning more schemes for the backward States. So far the Corporation has sanctioned 465 rural electrification schemes of all the State Electricity Boards for loan assistance of Rs. 213.58 crores. Of these 405 schemes, 94 schemes envisaging loan assistance of Rs. 55.14 crores relate to Eastern States of Assam, Bihar, Meghalaya, Orissa and West Bengal

Assistance to West Bengal for Tista Embankment Scheme

7924. **SHRI SAMAR GUHA:**

SHRI GADADHAR SAHA:

Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state.

(a) whether Central Government have received any request for financial assistance from the Government of West Bengal regarding Tista Embankment scheme to control floods in the Northern Bengal areas; and

(b) if so, the main features thereof and Central Government's reaction thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA): (a) and (b). In August, 1972, the Government of West Bengal had made a request to the Centre for financial assistance of Rs. 335 lakhs during the year 1972-73, for meeting the expenditure on continuing and new flood control schemes (excluding the Karala Diversion Scheme) under the North Bengal Flood Control Commission which included the embankment schemes on the river Teesta. Subsequently, in March, 1973, the requirement of Central finance assistance for these schemes was reduced to Rs. 115 lakhs. No Central assistance could, however, be provided to the State Government for these schemes during 1972-73.

The Karala Diversion Scheme under the North Bengal Flood Control Commission, is included in the priority flood control works, for which special financial assistance is given by the Centre. The requirements of Central assistance indicated by the State Government of West Bengal for 1972-73 for this Scheme was Rs. 35 lakhs and this was included in the total of Rs. 3 crores released to West Bengal Government for the priority flood control schemes during 1972-73.

Discovery of Oil-Fields in Orissa

7925. SHRI SAMAR GUHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether new oil-fields have been discovered in Orissa; and

(b) if so, where?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI DALBIR SINGH): (a) and (b). No oil field has so far been discovered in Orissa.

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Memorandum from the Marwar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Jodhpur Regarding Increase in Demurrage and Wharfage Charges, Jodhpur Division (Northern Railway)

7926. SHRIMATI KRISHNA KUMARI OF JODHPUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any memorandum from the Marwar Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Jodhpur, regarding the recent increase in demurrage and wharfage charges in Jodhpur Division;

(b) if so, whether Government propose to reduce the above rates in view of the fact that the increase in these rates has served as a great disincentive to the industrialists and also that the region is very backward; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI): (a) Yes.

(b) No.

(c) The rates of demurrage and wharfage charges have been standardised for all stations on the Indian Railways. There is no ground for making any exception in the case of Jodhpur Division.

The rates have been enhanced not with a view to augmenting railway revenues but for the purpose of securing quicker release of wagons and speedier removal of consignments from railway premises.

Amenities for Railway Colony, Delhi Kishan Ganj

7928. DR. LAXMINARAIN PANDEYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railway colony in Kishan Ganj, Delhi does not have proper sanitation and lighting arrangements; and