

The principal measures taken/contemplated are:

- (i) Desilting of the canal, as and when necessary, is done. Suction dredgers have also been obtained to have the desilting work done continuously.
- (ii) The canal is closed when the sediment concentration at the head regulator is high (exceeding 3,000 parts/million).
- (iii) A silt objector has been commissioned in 1971 to exclude a portion of the silt entering the main canal.
- (iv) Improvements have been effected in the Barrage regulation schedule.
- (v) Barrage upstream guide bund has been extended. This will improve sediment exclusion.
- (vi) Proposals for a second silt ejector/silting basin are under examination.

It is observed that a result of improvements undertaken, the silt deposit in the canal has now come down in recent years.

A Technical Committee of experts headed by Shri Y. K. Murthy, Acting Chairman, Central Water and Power Commission, suggested in December, 1973, various short-term and long-term remedial measures to overcome the silting problem of the Kosi Canal. These are under consideration of the State Government for implementation.

(c) The Government of Bihar have reported that upto 1973 an expenditure of Rs. 1.3 crore was incurred for desilting of the Kosi Canal. No expenditure has been incurred in desilting Kosi Barrage.

Fixing of reasonable rate of commission for M/s. A. H. Wheelers

4606. SHRI S. C. SAMANTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether M/s. A. H. Wheelers are charging exorbitant rates of Commission for selling books, magazines and Railways time tables from private publishers;

(b) the reasons why Government are not fixing reasonable rates of commission;

(c) the reasons why A. H. Wheelers are enjoying almost position of monopoly on a large number of Railway platforms; and

(d) by what time things are likely to improve?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI): (a) and (b). Rates of commission for selling books are settled on the basis of mutual agreements between the publishers and M/s. A. H. Wheeler & Co. Hence, the Government does not come into the picture.

(c) M/s. A. H. Wheeler & Co. do not have a monopoly. A large number of contractors other than M/s. Wheelers run bookstalls at a number of railway stations. Even at some of the stations where M/s. Wheeler & Co. have stalls, other book-sellers like Gita Press and Sarvodaya are functioning.

(b) Things are by and large working satisfactorily at present. However, the policy now being followed is to award bookstall contracts at (i) stations having no bookstalls at present, (ii) at new stations which may be opened in future and where bookstalls may be considered necessary, and (iii) at stations where vacancies might arise in future to co-operatives/registered Associations Partnership enterprises formed by unemployed graduates.

Additional Assistance to Karnataka for Irrigation and Power

4607. SHRI K. MALLANNA: Will the Minister of IRRIGATION AND POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Karnataka Government and Central Government have agreed regarding the State's additional resources

mobilisation target of Rs. 5 crores in order to make larger provisions for irrigation and power; and

(b) if so, the financial assistance Central Government propose to sanction for the irrigation projects, separately?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI SIDDHESHWAR PRASAD): (a). In assessing the resources for the Annual Plan 1974-75 of Karnataka State, Rs. 5 crores have been taken into account as additional accruals on account of measures to be taken by the State Government for additional resource mobilisation in 1974-75.

(b). Central assistance to State Plans is given in the form of block loans and grants and is not related to any individual sector of development or project. The plan outlay of the State for 1974-75 is completed at Rs. 110.75 crores, out of which Central assistance is Rs. 35.46 crores:

Increase in Demand for Diesel in Bihar

4608. SHRI SUKHDEO PRASAD VERMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the kerosene price-hike, the demand for high speed diesel has gone up in the State of Bihar; and

(b) if so, the necessary steps taken by the Central Government to increase the supply of diesel considering the agricultural requirements of the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN): (a). With the near equalisation of prices of Kerosene and High Speed Diesel Oil, demand for the latter product has increased.

(b). The production of High Speed Diesel Oil has been increased at the Refineries by reducing kerosene production. Priority is also being given to HSD movement over other white oil products.

Seminar on 'Energy Crisis and the Role of Indian Industry'

4609. SHRI M. S. PURTY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any seminar on 'Energy Crisis and the Role of Indian Industry' to meet the demand for petroleum products had been held recently; and

(b) if so, broad features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN): (a). Yes, Sir.

(b). The main features of the Seminar have been reported to be as under:—

(1) Need was stressed not only for the conservation of energy but also for finding new sources of energy;

(2) conversion of oil firing equipment to coal firing;

(3) improvements in mining and transportation of coal, oil exploration etc.;

(4) stepping up productivity in coal mining and transportation;

(5) research for better use of available energy resources (including nuclear energy) and development of new resources like solar energy, wind and tide, hydrogen as fuel etc.;

(6) need for paying more attention to maintenance of boiler and other equipment of the thermal stations;

(7) stabilization of oil consumption at the present level; and

(8) constitution of a National Energy Board which would formulate a clear, co-ordinated and viable energy policy; draft a comprehensive energy programme and ensure its execution through appropriate State Level Energy Boards.