

Development Corporation (AIDC) and Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL). The project, estimated to cost about Rs. 3600 crores, is expected to be completed within 44 months from the date of signing of the Gas Supply Agreement and handing over of entire land to RAPL. The Gas Supply Agreement between RAPL and OIL is at an advanced stage of finalisation. Government of Assam have identified 1262 acres of land for the project at Tengakhat in Dibrugarh District of Assam. 128 acres of land has been handed over to RAPL and the remaining land is under acquisition. RAPL have started recruitment process and so far 65 graduate engineers from the State of Assam have been recruited who are undergoing training at RIL. Government of Assam have reported that change of promoter is not envisaged now, but in the event of the project being delayed indefinitely, State Government will consider substituting the co-promoter.

Minority Status to Hindus

3009. SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU:
SHRI TARIQ ANWAR:
SHRI MOHAN RAWALE:
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Commission for Minorities has asked to grant minority status to Hindus residing in several States; and

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) and (b) The National Commission for Minorities has, inter alia, recommended that the Hindus in Jammu & Kashmir, along with the Hindus of the States of Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Punjab and the Union Territories of Chandigarh and Lakshadweep be accorded the status of formally and legally recognised State-level Minorities and necessary Laws be enacted for this purpose without any delay. The matter is under examination.

Demand Production of Edible Oils

3010. SHRI ANANT KUMAR HEGDE:
SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the demand, production and supply of edible oils during each of the last three years and the current year;

(b) whether country is producing the required quantity of edible oils; and

(c) if not, the steps taken by the Government to make self-sufficiency in production of edible oils?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) The demand for edible oils is highly income and price elastic. When the prices are low the demand is higher and when the prices are relatively higher the demand falls. The demand for edible oils consequently has ranged between 76 lakh MT to 84 lakh MT in the last three years.

The domestic availability of edible oils and supply during the last three years has been as follows:—

	Availability of edible oils from domestic sources	Total Availability of edible oils from domestic as well as imported sources
1995-96	64	76
1996-97	71	84
1997-98	62	81
1998-99	68 (estimated)	82 (estimated)

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Some of the steps taken by the Government to achieve self-sufficiency in production of oilseeds/edible oils are:—

- (i) A Centrally Sponsored Oilseeds Production Programme (OPP) is in operation in 23 States covering 381 selected districts in the country. Under the scheme, financial assistance is provided for the critical inputs like production and distribution of seed, distribution of seed minikits, sprinkler sets, improved farm implements, gypsum pyrites, micro-nutrients and rhyzobium culture etc. to the farmers through State Governments. In addition to this, frontline and general demonstrations are also organised on the farmer's fields to disseminate the improved production and protection technologies.