

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3834  
ANSWERED ON:13.12.2001  
SOLAR LANTERNS  
CHANDRAKANT BHAURAO KHAIRE

**Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government have been requested to make available solar lanterns at affordable prices in the open market;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) whether the Government propose to distribute these lanterns under the Government sponsored scheme in some States and Territories during the current and next financial years;
- (d) if so, the details thereof ; and
- (e) if not, the reasons therefor?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF STATE FOR NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (INDEPENDENT CHARGE), (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN)

(a)&(b): The initial cost of a solar lantern is higher than conventional devices like hurricane lantern and wick lamp. However, the solar lantern provides much better illumination, is environment friendly and is easy to use and maintain. As no fuel is required, a solar lantern can be more economical than a kerosene lantern over the life of the product. There are a number of manufacturers of solar lanterns in the country and there are no restrictions on their sale in the open market. The Government has taken several steps to bring down the cost of solar lanterns and make them affordable to people, including :

- (i) reduction in customs duties on key materials
- (ii) exemptions from excise duty
- (iii) expansion of market leading to increased production and lower costs
- (vi) provision of subsidy to users.

(c)&(d): Solar lanterns are being distributed all over the country with subsidy under the Solar Photovoltaic Programme of the Ministry since 1993-94. As on 30.11.2001, about 3.75 lakhs solar lanterns have been distributed in the country with central subsidy. During the current year there is a target for distribution of 85,000 solar lanterns. The programme is proposed to be continued next year also, subject to necessary allocations in the budget.

(e): Does not arise.