

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

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1964
ANSWERED ON:08.03.2006
SOLAR LANTERNS IN TRIBAL AREAS
Ahir Shri Hansraj Gangaram

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

- (a) whether universal use of plants and equipment run on solar energy is not gaining momentum due to their being expensive;
- (b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the steps being taken by the Union Government to reduce their price;
- (c) whether the Government proposes to distribute solar lanterns in tribal and forest areas in order to reduce the consumption of fuel; and;
- (d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR)

(a) &(b): Yes Sir. At present the initial cost of solar energy systems is higher compared to the cost of conventional energy systems, which is limiting their large scale use. This is partly on account of the fact that solar energy systems use expensive materials, some of which are imported.

The Government has taken several measures to reduce the cost of solar energy systems, which include:

- (i) research and development to improve their performance and reduce the consumption of materials,
- (ii) subsidy on selected solar energy systems;
- (iii) interest subsidy to provide soft loan to users and the manufacturers;
- (iv) concessional import duty on some of the raw materials, components and products;
- (v) excise duty exemption; and
- (vi) 80% accelerated depreciation in the first year etc

(c)& (d): The Government has recently announced a scheme to provide subsidy on solar lanterns in the un-electrified villages, including the un-electrified tribal and forest villages, of the seven north-eastern states and the states of Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal. Under the scheme all category of individual beneficiaries, limited to one solar lantern per family, and the non-profit institutions are eligible for a subsidy of Rs. 2,400 per solar lantern. The state agencies have been asked to submit proposals in this regard.