

Antyodaya Programme

*91. SHRI SATISH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of RURAL RECONSTRUCTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to continue with the Antyodaya movement;

(b) if so, allocations proposed for 1980-81 together with its State-wise break-up; and

(c) if the reply to part (a) above be in the negative, the reasons for discontinuing the same?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): (a) The Government of India had not adopted the Antyodaya programme at any time and, therefore, the question of continuing is does not arise. However, the Antyodaya approach of selecting the poorest among the poor has been recommended for providing assistance to beneficiaries under the Integrated Rural Development Programme and similar beneficiary-oriented programmes.

(b) and (c). Does not arise in view of answer to (a) above.

Forest Policy for Hill Regions in U.P.

*92. SHRI T. S. NEGI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether floods in hill districts of Uttar Pradesh have proved disastrous to the country;

(b) if so, what special steps are being taken to control these floods; and

(c) whether Government propose to give an ecological turn to the forest policies to save the agricultural economy in the hill regions of Uttar Pradesh?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): (a) Floods in hill districts of

U.P. have cause great damage in the plains of U.P., Bihar and West Bengal.

(b) Large scale water and soil conservation measures which include afforestation of barren hill side, development of pastures and fruit gardens and construction of engineering structures to prevent heavy and sudden run-off are being taken in catchment area of rivers in the hill districts of UP. Planning Commission, Government of India have allocated a sum of Rs. 90 crores (50:50 sharing basis) under a Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the remaining period of 6th Five Year Plan for treatment of catchment of 18 flood prone rivers of the Indo-Gangetic Basin. The allocation for 1980-81 is Rs. 2 crores.

(c) Large scale afforestation and constructive measures are being taken by Government to reclothe the barren hillsides to prevent land slides and minimise run-off which will go a long way to save the agricultural economy both in hills as well as in plains.

The Government of India has already taken up the revision of national forest policy 1952 and in the proposed draft of the revised forest policy there would be greater emphasis on ecological and environmental considerations.

L.P. Gas Connections in Delhi

*93. SHRI R. L. P. VERMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total number of persons registered in Delhi for L.P. gas as on 31st January, 1979; and

(b) by what time the persons on the waiting list in Delhi are likely to be provided gas connections?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL): (a) The Indian Oil

Corporation, Bharat Petroleum Corporation and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation market Liquefied Petroleum Gas (cooking gas) in the Union Territory of Delhi. The approximate

number of persons waiting for their turn to get new gas connections in respect of the above Companies as on the date indicated against each is given below:—

Indian Oil Corporation	2,08,021 as on 31-3-1979
Hindustan Petroleum Corporation	20,900 as on 31-12-1979
Bharat Petroleum Corporation	72,361 as on 1-1-1980

(b) The availability of cooking gas in the country, as a whole will begin to increase on a significant scale from the end of 1980 with the commissioning progressively of :—

(i) facilities for separation of LPG (Liquefied Petroleum Gas) from Bombay High Associated gas;

(ii) Mathura Refinery;

(iii) Secondary processing facilities at Koyali Refinery; and

(iv) Coker Unit of Bongaigaon Refinery.

In the meantime, besides taking steps to increase production of LPG in the Refineries, Government have plans to import cooking gas to the extent possible to improve its availability.

The release of new gas connections on a large scale in Union Territory of Delhi and elsewhere would be possible only after the supply situation improves as indicated above.

Opening of Branch Post Office in Villages

*94. SHRI RAMSWAROOP RAM: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to open a Branch Post Office in each village having population of fifteen hundred; and

(b) if so, by what time the scheme is going to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI C. M. STEPHEN): (a)

and (b). In opening branch post offices in villages, population is a qualifying factor. Subject to the condition that the village must be beyond three kilo metres from the nearest post office, for the normal village, the minimum population is 2,000 and for tribal, hilly and backward areas it is 1,000. Villages with Gram Panchayat headquarters are considered eligible for post office irrespective of population factor, subject to the condition that there is revenue yielding prospect of 25 per cent of the cost in normal rural area and 10 per cent of the cost in tribal, hilly or backward area. The Department is making effort to expand the postal system on the above basis.

Improvement in Supply of Levy Sugar

*95. PROF. MADHU DANAVATE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken concrete steps to improve the supply of levy sugar from sugar mills to the public distribution system;

(b) if so, what are the salient features of the steps taken; and

(c) the effect of these steps on the available of sugar and dits price?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL RECONSTRUCTION (SHRI BIRENDRA SINGH RAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The steps taken to improve the supply of levy sugar include the following:

(i) On complaints received from Food Corporation of India for delay