

arrangements have not yet been tied up.

**SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN:** This is really a larger question. There is an alarming gap between supply and demand in the country; and it is a common sight, every day, you see long queues of trucks before the petrol stations for diesel, for petrol and long queues for kerosene and quarrels arising therefrom. So, what is the extent of gap and how does the hon. Minister propose to fill up that gap, because, in spite of hike in prices we do not see the demand coming down at all; and the demand has been rising at the old rate? Though, for the moment, it is a very serious problem, you may be able to tide it over later on. At present, what concrete measures does the hon. Minister propose to take to tide over the crisis?

**SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA:** The present crisis is really one born out of an unfortunate situation on the question of supply of the basic energy resource, that is, coal, both for thermal generation as well as domestic purpose. That has increased an unrealistic demand of petrol products. Obviously, the petroleum products cannot be substituted for coal, but exactly what is being asked now is that shortage of coal should be met from out of domestic purpose of kerosene oil and shortage of coal for generation of electricity should be met by supply of high speed diesel. It is not that we have not given it to the States.

In spite of the shortage we have been able to manage more supplies to the States in the first four or five months of this year than compared to the same period last year. But the whole point is that there are power cuts in South India. For example in Karnataka, in Tamilnadu, in West Bengal and many other States those power cuts are 30 per cent, 40 per cent effective. People now want to have high speed diesel oil. But it has so happened that high speed diesel oil has been found in short supply. Therefore, I have requested the Chief Ministers of the States to fix up inter-sectoral sort of distribution so

that transport, agriculture, generation of power and so on could always be managed within the resources available. That will have to be done. But so far as the other States are concerned, we are trying to increase our supply and make up the shortage of crude of which we are suffering.

**SHRI K. MALLANNA:** These oil producing countries are charging surcharge in an arbitrary manner and it varies from country to country.

We have entered into agreements with so many countries—Iran, Saudi Arabia, Russia and Libya. These agreements also vary from country to country. May I know from the hon. Minister, what are the terms and conditions of the agreement between India and Libya? When compared to the other countries is it favourable or otherwise?

**SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA:** So far as Libya is concerned, we will get two types of crude from there. One is Zueitina crude oil @ 18.30 per barrel f.o.b. loading port and the second is Brega crude oil @ 18.25 per barrel f.o.b. loading port. This includes surcharge.

#### Power Ministers' Conference

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\*1039. **SHRI C. R. MAHATA:**

**SHRI A. R. BADRINARAYAN:**

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to lay a statement showing:

(a) the outcome of the Power Ministers' Conference held recently in New Delhi and the Central Government's reaction to the critical power situation in the Eastern States and particularly in West Bengal;

(b) if so, whether the programme for the commissioning of new generating capacity during the next four years was also discussed;

(c) how many State Governments attended the meeting; and

(d) what was the outcome of the Conference?

**THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN):** (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**Statement**

(a) No meeting of the Power Ministers' was held recently. However, a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Power Ministers' Conference was held at New Delhi on 7th April, 1979 under the Chairmanship of Union Minister for Energy. The important points/conclusions resulting from the discussions, are given below:—

(i) There was a need for setting up a suitable machinery for the objective selection of Chairmen/Members of the Boards.

(ii) Uniformity in the matter of selection of Chairmen/Members should be maintained by all the Boards and for this purpose, certain guidelines might be drawn up.

(iii) It was necessary for the States to take concerned action for commissioning of sanctioned projects in time and, if possible, ahead of the schedule by reducing the gestation period.

(iv) Arrangements had been made to ensure that materials, e.g. cement, steel, were made available to the State Electricity Boards in time.

The power position in the country, including the Eastern Region, was generally discussed at the meeting of the Standing Committee. The recent power crisis in West Bengal had arisen due to simultaneous outage of thermal generating units at Santaldih and Bandel and lower generation level from Durgapur Projects Ltd. This had resulted in wide-spread load-shedding to the extent of about 230 MW. The State Government issued a Power Control Order under which all industries having power supply at 3.3 KV and above were not allowed to use power for 5 days from 10th April to 14th April, 1979. Arrangements were made by the Central Government for supply of power to West Bengal to the extent of 30 to 40 MW

from the Northern Region and 40-50 MW from Orissa. In addition, D.V.C. was also asked to step up the power supply to Calcutta area. With some improvement in power situation, power supply to industries was restored from 15th April, 1979 with an additional 10 per cent cut, as well as restrictions on use of power during peak load hours.

As regards Bihar, the State is having peaking shortage and load shedding to the extent of 50 MW to 100 MW was being done during peak load hours. There has been no worsening of the situation recently. Two units of 110 MW each at Patratu and two units of 110 MW at Barauni are under installation. In addition, two new power stations, one at Muzaffarpur with 2 x 110 MW and one at Tenughat with 2 x 210 MW have also recently been sanctioned. One unit at Subernarekha hydro electric project is also expected to be commissioned during 1979-80. With the commissioning of these units and with the improvement in the performance of thermal power stations at Patratu and Barauni, the power situation in Bihar is expected to improve considerably.

(b) Yes, Sir. This was discussed at the meeting of the Standing Committee.

(c) The meeting of the Standing Committee was attended by all Members States, viz., Chief Minister, Bihar (who is also incharge of Power portfolio in that State), Power Ministers of Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, U.P. and Finance Minister, West Bengal (in place of Chief Minister, West Bengal, who is also incharge of Power portfolio in that State).

(d) The information is given against part (a) above.

**SHRI C. R. MAHATA:** The Eastern parts of India, particularly West Bengal has critical power position. As a result of that factories are closed, drinking water is not available. Trams are not plying in Calcutta regularly. The industrial units are losing crores of rupees due to shortage of power

every day. I want to know from the hon. Minister what positive or concrete steps are you going to take to overcome the present power crisis particularly in West Bengal?

**SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN:** The power position in West Bengal is not satisfactory. I would like to impress upon the House that it is primarily the responsibility of the State Government. The State Electricity Boards generate power and distribute them. Wherever the Central Government is expected to assist them they are prepared to assist.

With regard to West Bengal, when the critical power position has come up, we have tried to help them by taking some power from Orissa, from Andhra, from Uttar Pradesh and also increase the assistance from D.V.C. for the West Bengal area. In spite of our best efforts, unless the West Bengal Electricity Board and the DPL generate more power, it will be very difficult to meet the deficit. In fact, the West Bengal Electricity Board as well as the DPL which are supplying power to West Bengal area....

**PROF. SAMAR GUHA:** Is there any DPL? The DPL is completely defunct. Is it not?

**SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN:** The hon. Member knows it better.

So, the power position will be very difficult for the coming few months also. Unless the State Government comes forward to rectify those deficiencies, I don't think I can hold out any hope for the improvement in the power situation there.

**SHRI C. R. MAHATA:** May I know from the Minister of Energy what are the reasons that Santaldih units 3 and 4 (each unit has capacity of 120 MW) and Kolaghat units 1, 2 and 3 have not been commissioned by 1977? Is there lack of funds or any other reason thereof?

**SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN:** Sir, nearly 1,500 MW of on-going schemes are there in West Bengal and some of the schemes have been sanctioned long ago and they have not been completed

and if those schemes have been completed in time, this power position in West Bengal would have been comfortable and I am not aware of the reasons as to what is the position of the West Bengal finance and other things. Whatever might be the reasons, the on-going schemes have not been completed on time. That is the main thing.

**SHRI A. R. BADRINARAYAN:** Sir, regarding the question of shortage of fuel and power, it is a vicious circle. From the paucity of coal there is a curtailment of goods traffic, from the curtailment of goods traffic, there is the incapacity to lift more coal and then they have got to resort to trucks for lifting the coal. Then there is a consumption of diesel oil. So it is a vicious circle—one department accusing the other Department, the Railway Ministry accusing the Power Ministry and so on, and it is mutually recriminative. Why don't there be a Cabinet Sub-Committee which will go into all these loopholes and try to evolve a solution so that there won't be any deficiency in the power supply?

**SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN:** In fact, recently the Prime Minister himself has called a meeting where all the Ministers concerned with various Departments were present and coordinating efforts are being made to see that the coal is supplied to the power stations and everything is speeded up to see that the power stations do not suffer on that score.

**SHRI S. K. SARKAR:** I would like to tell the hon. Minister that we do not want to see who is at fault, but we want to get a concrete reply from him whether in the foreseeable future we get any relief so that the consumers in West Bengal do not suffer and what is the exact time by which relief can come.

**SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN:** Sir, as I told earlier, we are trying our best to help West Bengal and the solutions have to be found at the State level and if those power stations do not generate enough power for some reason or other, we are prepared to help them by sending experts to assist repairing and all

those things. That we can do, but the main maintenance has to be done by the State Government, the management has to be done by the State Government. If they do it well and if they need any assistance, we are prepared to go to their help.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: I am not aware whether the hon. Minister knows or understands the situation in West Bengal. If he knew it, perhaps, he would have at least once visited Calcutta. I do not know how to describe the situation there. It is horrible, horrible, horrible; if three times using that word has any meaning, it is so horrible. The whole economic life is getting collapsed. In general industry, engineering industry, in scientific institutions, in hospitals and everywhere, everything is getting collapsed. The production is less than one-third. All the educational institutions are getting collapsed. A horrible situation has been created in West Bengal and it is due not only to shortage of power but almost acute and complete failure. DPL has got the latest equipment, latest machinery, but all its units are defunct. Santaldih plant is also defunct.

MR. SPEAKER: What is your question?

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: I want to know from the Minister whether West Bengal exists in the map of India and secondly whether Calcutta is known as the commercial capital of Eastern India and whether energy, which deals with Electricity as well, is a concurrent subject and if so, whether the Central Government has any responsibility in such a situation where a State in Eastern India which is in such an advanced industrial stage is getting collapsed. It is facing a disaster. I will be misunderstood if I say that the only honourable course for the West Bengal Ministry is that they should quit till this problem is resolved by the Centre and then they should come back. (Interruptions) I would have said so, but I will not make that suggestion. I know the political implications of it. But the point is, such a serious situation exists in West Bengal.

I would like to know whether the Minister will request the hon. Prime Minister that a special meeting be convened between the hon. Prime Minister and the Chief Minister of West Bengal in which the Minister will also be present to find out how the Centre can help at the moment to resolve the crisis in West Bengal. I want to know whether he would take that step. I tell you, if he does not take the step promptly....

MR. SPEAKER: Please come to the question.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: The situation is very serious in West Bengal. Every day, three-column or 4-column article appears in the press. People are suffering. I would like to know whether the Minister will take initiative to convene a meeting between the Prime Minister, the Chief Minister of West Bengal and himself and thrash out all the problems, all the difficulties and evolve methods to overcome the crisis. As a temporary or immediate solution, you must supply power from other States, and see how to deal with the problems there and also how the long term issues can be solved. I want to know whether this kind of a step will be taken by the Government.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Whatever I have told earlier, I think, explains the problems of West Bengal. If the Prime Minister's convening a meeting will help the situation, definitely, I will request him to convene a meeting. But how is it going to help unless the State Government comes forward with concrete proposals to solve the problem.

PROF. SAMAR GUHA: It is a concurrent subject.

SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN: Even if it is a concurrent subject, I do not think that we can interfere in all the minute details of the working of the State Electricity Boards. It is very difficult and embarrassing. In fact, I am in constant touch with the West Bengal....

**PROF. SAMAR GUHA:** It is a disaster there.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Disaster is here.

**PROF. SAMAR GUHA:** It is a concurrent subject. I am one of the humble representatives of West Bengal and I have a right to present the situation there. They are almost facing a disaster.

**SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN:** I am in constant touch with the State Government. In fact, I am sending my own Member of the CEA to visit Calcutta as and when required to be there and he is trying to assist the West Bengal State Electricity Board and see whether anything is to be done for them. When they asked us to supply some power, we are trying to help them by speaking to the UP Electricity Board and also Orissa and Andhra and we are trying to help them by supplying power from places where it is available. I do not know what other steps we can take in this direction.

**SHRI BIJOY SINGH NAHAR:** As stated by the hon. Minister, the Centre is trying to give all help to West Bengal. But the State Electricity Board or the Government of West Bengal is not doing the work properly, rather they are sabotaging the whole thing and the result is that the people are not getting adequate power supply. What steps is he going to take if there is sabotaging by the Government itself? They themselves are trying to create a situation by which every item in the State becomes scarce. What steps are you going to take to remedy the situation? If you say 'We cannot help; let the State Government go on doing things in their own way' you will completely eradicate West Bengal from the map of India.

**SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN:** I do not know what type of answer I should give.

**SHRI CHITTA BASU:** This relates to part (b) of the question. There is no doubt that scarcity of electric power has retarded industrial production in the State of West Bengal. May I know from the Hon. Minister whe-

ther the Government, as a whole, has got a perspective programme for installing additional power capacity in the Eastern and North-eastern region? During the Sixth Five Year Plan, for the western region of our country allocation has been made to the tune of 5055 megawatts, for the northern sector of the country it was 4055, for the southern sector it was 4260 but, in the case of the eastern region and the north-eastern region taken together, the total allotment has been of the order of 3107 megawatts. Is this not a lop-sided development programme of the Energy Department? If so, what steps are being taken to correct this lop-sidedness and thereby assure fuller implementation of additional capacity in the States of West Bengal, Assam and other north-eastern regions?

**SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN:** Addition to the capacity will depend on the demand for power in the particular region, and it is after studying that, that we sanction scheme. But here, in the case of West Bengal, it is not that we are trying to neglect West Bengal or refuse to sanction schemes, but the whole point is, there are schemes which were sanctioned even six or seven years ago but they have not been implemented and the machines are lying in some projects; they have not been installed. Because they wanted gas turbines to be sanctioned as a short-term measure, we even sanctioned gas turbines to the tune of 100 Megawatts. But the point is there are schemes for nearly 1500 capacity which have been sanctioned, which are on-going and which are slipping every year: they have not implemented them. Definitely, the Energy Department of the Central Government will not hesitate to sanction more schemes provided they are needed. I can give that assurance. But what we want is that the West Bengal Government should complete the schemes already sanctioned, and the existing plants also must be able to generate more power. For instance, the DFL

have enough installed capacity but they are generating only 40, 50 or 60 megawatts as against 280 megawatts. So what is it that we can do? Santal Deep and Bande are also schemes which are not generating enough power through the existing capacity and the additional capacity which has been sanctioned has also not been implemented. If they implement them and then want some more schemes, definitely we will not hesitate to sanction them.

**SHRI MUKUNDA MANDAL:** Is it a fact that the previous Government has not at all implemented the ongoing plans and, as a consequence of that, the present Government is facing a serious crisis of electricity in West Bengal?

**SHRI P. RAMACHANDRAN:** I do not know. Whatever it is, the previous Government have not implemented it. The present Government, I hope, will implement quickly all the schemes.

**Memorandum from Punjab Small Industries Association regarding Non-availability of Steel**

\*1040. **SHRI M. N. GOVINDAN NAIR:** Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any memorandum from the Federation of Punjab Small Industries Association regarding non-availability of steel at fixed price;

(b) if so, the details; and

(c) steps being taken in the matter?

**THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI BIJU PATNAIK):** (a) to (d). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**Statement**

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Federation has represented about the shortage of steel materials essentially at Ludhiana Stockyard and the sudden spurt in their prices as also against the functioning the Punjab State Small Industries Corporation.

It may, however, be mentioned that deliveries from Ludhiana Stockyard have been more during 1978-79 as compared with 1977-78 as would be evident from the table below:—

The position of delivery of materials from Ludhiana Stockyard during 1977-78 and 1978-79 is as follows:—

Sl.No.	Category	1977-78	1978-79
			m/t
1	Pig Iron*	21,682	*21,480
2	Re-rollables/Billets	6,257	9,283
3	Rounds	9,392	18,910
4	Torsteel	102	542
5	Wire rods	4,747	11,356
6	Lt. Structural	4,702	5,202
7	Med. Structural	1,749	1,263
8	Heavy Structural	96	375
9	GP/GC Sheets	1,464	222
10	Skelp	2,900	4,092