

with them. Opportunity was also taken during these discussions to briefly review the official level discussions held earlier on different multi-purpose projects such as Karnali, Pancheshwar etc. Both sides emphasised the need for further extension of mutually beneficial bilateral cooperation in the area of water resources development.

Allotment of Diesel to Madhya Pradesh

221. SHRI SHIV KUMAR SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) what is total amount of diesel allotted to Madhya Pradesh between January and December, 1980; and

(b) how does it compare with allocations in the last two years?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. C. SETHI): (a) A quantity of about 4.45 lakh tonnes of High Speed Diesel (HSD) was allotted to Madhya Pradesh between January and December, 1980.

(b) The system of monthly allocations of diesel was started only with effect from October, 1979. The total allocation of diesel in 1980 for Madhya Pradesh was about 4,45,000 tonnes against sales of about 4,03,000 tonnes in 1979.

Joint Oil Exploration Work by India and U.S.S.R.

*222. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA RATH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether oil exploration work has been launched by India and Soviet Union jointly in our country;

(b) whether any agreement has been signed between both the countries for carrying such oil exploration work;

(c) the places in our country where such exploration works are going on;

(d) whether Government have any fresh proposal to have talks with Soviet Union for expanding such exploration programme; and

(e) the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. C. SETHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Presently one Soviet-Indian team is drilling the Rokhia exploratory well in Tripura.

(d) and (e). In accordance with the agreement on Economic and Technical Cooperation signed on 10th December, 1980 the Soviet Side would render cooperation to the Indian Side in execution in one of the promising onshore areas in India of integrated work for oil and gas including geophysical exploration and drilling works, elaboration of basic technical concepts of development of the deposit and the installation of production facilities. The area will be chosen by mutual agreement between the Indian and Soviet Sides.

Visit by a French Consultancy Company to Bombay High

*223. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARI;

SHRI LAKSHMAN MALLICK:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a French Consultancy Company has visited Bombay High to study the possibility of increasing India's oil production;

(b) if so, details of the company's proposal to Government in this regard; and

(c) reaction of Government to it?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. C. SETHI): (a) No, Sir. During the periodic consultations which the

CFP have with the ONGC under the existing consultancy agreement, possible extension of the agreement and enlargement of its scope, etc., were discussed in general.

(b) and (c) The details have yet to be discussed and negotiated.

Power Stations Facing Acute Coal Shortage

*224. SHRI HARINATH MISRA: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that thermal power stations are facing acute shortage of coal;

(b) whether any review has been made by Government on infrastructure for movement of coal to thermal power stations in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) improvement in power generation effected during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI A. B. A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURY): (a) Although some of the thermal power stations had been getting short supply of coal as compared to the linked quantities, during the first half of last year, the supply of coal to thermal power stations has been improving from October 1980 onwards and the coal supply position to most of the thermal power stations is at present by and large, satisfactory.

(b) and (c). The Government is regularly reviewing the infrastructure inputs like power, coal and wagons required for supply of coal to thermal power stations. A Cabinet Committee on Infrastructure has also been set up by the Government to monitor the infrastructure inputs. This is backed by special official support.

(d) The total thermal energy generation during the period April 1980 to January 1981 has been 7.1 per cent more over the generation in the corres-

ponding period last year. However, during the months of November, December, 80 and January 81, total generation has increased by about 20 per cent, 16.3 per cent, and 9.5 per cent over the generation in the corresponding months last year and the thermal energy generation increased by 21.8 per cent, 22.3 per cent and 14.6 per cent over the thermal generation in the corresponding months of last year.

Priority to Scheduled Castes/Tribes for L.P.G. Distributorships

*225. SHRI K. KUNHAMBU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued any directives to the Indian Oil Corporation about priority to be given to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes applicants for distributorship of cooking gas;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the total number of people who were given distributorship during the last year and the number of Scheduled Castes and Tribes among them?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. C. SETHI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The policy of reserving 25 per cent of all types of agencies/dealerships for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes except for 'B' site retail outlets (dealer-owned and dealer-operated) has been in force in the Indian Oil Corporation since January 1, 1974. Since September 23, 1977 the policy is to reserve 25 per cent of all types of agencies/dealerships for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in all public sector oil companies including the Indian Oil Corporation.

(c) Out of a total of 58 LPG agencies awarded by the Oil companies during the year 1979-80, 25 agencies are reported to have been given to