

(d) In view of the conflicting opinion of the Government of West Bengal and Coal Companies, the Government of India have decided to set up a Committee to look into the matter.

#### Decision to raise prices of Indigenous Crude

\*340. SHRI B. V. DESAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether following the steep increase in the price of petroleum products, Government have decided to raise the prices of indigenous crude supplied to refineries;

(b) if so, what will be the total increase in the indigenous crude price;

(c) whether increase in the oil natural gas development cess from Rs. 60/-a ton to Rs. 300/-a ton is also being considered; and

(d) if so, what will be its effect?

#### THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS

(SHRI P. C. SETHI): (a) and (b) The onshore and offshore indigenous crude oil prices of Rs. 324.41 per tonne and Rs. 458.50 per tonne respectively, exclusive of octroi, etc. prevailing from 1-4-1981, were increased to Rs. 1182 per tonne with effect from 11-7-1981. This was done keeping in view the steeply rising costs of a greatly expanded oil exploration and development programme, the continuing strain on the balance of payments and the need to moderate the growth of demand for petroleum products and to promote their economic and efficient use.

(c) With effect from 13-7-1981, the cess on indigenous crude oil has been increased from Rs. 60 per tonne to Rs. 100 per tonne. It is proposed to amend the Oil Industry (Development) Act, 1974 with a view to increasing the ceiling rate of cess on crude oil from Rs. 100 per tonne to Rs. 300 per tonne. But no decision has been taken when the cess will be increased beyond Rs. 100 per tonne.

(d) Does not arise.

#### Relay of T.V. Programme through APPLE

\*341. SHRI P. NAMGYAL:  
SHRI M. V. CHANDRASEKARA  
MURTHY:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that APPLE which has been put into orbit this year has started relaying television programmes in many parts of the country;

(b) whether Government propose to extend this facility to the remote areas of the country like Ladakh, Lahaul-Spiti, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Meghalaya, Arunachal Mizoram and Nagaland;

(c) if the reply to (b) above be in the affirmative when the project will be commissioned and if not, the reasons; and

(d) what would be the role of APPLE vis-a-vis INSAT which is likely to be launched in 1982?

#### THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI VASANT SATHE):

(a) and (b) The objectives of APPLE being primarily technological and experimental, Door-darshan have no detailed plans for its use as such. However, during its expected life of one year, it can be used for distribution of TV programmes between TV Centres on Special occasions. So far, it has been utilised for telecasting programmes from different TV Centres simultaneously on three occasions viz:

- (i) Presentation of APPLE satellite to the nation by PM followed by teleconference on 13-8-1981.
  - (ii) President's message to the nation on the eve of Independence Day on 14-8-1981; and
  - (iii) PM's message to the nation from the Red Fort on 15-8-1981.
- (c) Does not arise.

(d) The role of APPLE is technological and experimental whereas INSAT will be used as communication satellite by various departments of the Government

#### Morse (Telegraph) Facilities in Dhenkanal District

\*342. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to lay a statement showing:

(a) whether a number of sub-Division headquarters of Dhenkanal district are without Morse (telegraph) facilities;

(b) if so, the names of such Districts;

(c) the steps taken to provide such facilities; and

(d) when the work will commence?