

will the hon. Minister take effective steps ?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : If the hon. Member had asked me specifically about Tripura and Agartala, I would have given him a reply in greater detail. But even in the answer that I have given, there are two items which would be of interest to the hon. Member. Large manual exchanges are being replaced by automatic exchanges. Then Subscriber Trunk Dialling is being introduced between Agartala and Calcutta. This is one of the important things which we want to implement. Then under heading 'Expansion programme of the existing exchanges', it has been stated that the Agartala Automatic Exchange is being expanded from 240 lines to 3,000 lines. What I mean to say is that we are making all efforts to improve the tele-communication system in the north-eastern region.

As regards sending a Special Team, it is not necessary because we know the problems there and we are making all efforts to rectify the faults. A Special Task Force has been created for the north-eastern region—which has not been done for any other part and its head quarters are in Gauhati. The General Manager of the Task Force and his staff have been specially assigned the task of pushing through the various schemes in the north-eastern region.

The hon. Member has brought to the notice of the House through you, Sir, the special problems of Agartala. I can assure him that we will look into them in detail and try to see how we can improve the position there.

SHRI AJOY BISWAS : The hon. Minister says that a Task Force is already there. What is the report of the Task Force ? My second supplementary is this. This State Capital should have links with New Delhi by STD. I must say that no such system is there in Agartala or in other parts of the North Eastern Region. In his recent reply Minister said that will be done at the end of the 7th Plan. Sir, what is this, at least the State Capital should be

linked with New Delhi by STD immediately. He can take up other things later on.

MR. SPEAKER : He said that it is going to be linked.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : We are giving top priority for connecting the important towns including the capitals of the North Eastern Region with Delhi and other places on the national STD. That is one of our important endeavours under the 7th Plan ? In do not want to enter into debate as to how big is the 7th Plan, how much money we will get, that is all a different point.

SHRI AJOY BISWAS : What you are going to do ? N. E. Region is a sensitive area.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : We cannot say anything.

MR. SPEAKER : Even if you are in a hurry, it takes time. They say that they are trying to do it. They will do it.

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : I cannot give a specific time frame. Every thing depends on the plan allocation that we get.

[*Translation*]

SHRIMATI USHA THAKKAR : Kutch Bujh is a major city in Gujarat. Telecommunication system there is manually operated. An automatic exchange has now been sanctioned for that place, but tenders for the building have not been invited as yet. As a result, the equipment lying there is getting rusted. Therefore, I want to ask what he is doing in this regard ?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : Exchange will be set up where the equipment has reached. I will start functioning also.

[*English*]

Short supply of Bombay high gas to Industrial consumers in Maharashtra

*206. **SHRI D. B. PATIL :** Will the Minister of PETROLEUM be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Oil and Natural Gas Commission has cut down the supply of Bombay High Associated Gas to all industrial consumers in Maharashtra, in particular to Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers' Thal plant project and gas turbines of Maharashtra State Electricity Board at Ural;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for cutting down the gas supply; and

(c) what is the quantum of gas that has been cut down?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM (SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA): (a) to (c). A statement is given below.

Statement

(a) and (b). Oil and Natural Gas Commission has been supplying associated gas from Bombay High to Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers (RCF) Trom-

bay, RCF Thal and Deepak Fertilizer and Petrochemicals Corporation Limited (DFPCL) Taloja on regular basis to the extent of their requirement from time to time; and to Maharashtra State Electricity Board (MSEB), Tata Electric Company (TEC) Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) on fall-back basis, subject to availability of surplus gas after meeting the gas requirements of priority users on regular basis. With the increase in offtake by RCF, Thal and DFPCL, Taloja, availability of surplus associated gas for supply to fall-back users has come down. ONGC has been advised to give priority to MSEB over all other fall-back users.

(c) The information for the period from April 1985 to June 1985, for which figures are available, is furnished below, monthwise. (Figures in Million Cubic Metres Per Day of Gas).

Consumers	Maximum Requirement	Supply in the month of		
		April	May	June
(i) <i>Regular Users</i>				
RCF Trombay	1.80	1.30	1.45	1.00
RCF Thal	3.00	1.97	2.45	2.19
DFPCL Taloja	0.30	0.28	0.21	0.30
(ii) <i>Fall back Users</i>				
MSEB	2.40	0.61	1.38	0.89
TEC	3.50	0.82	0.94	1.40
HPCL	0.10	0.04	0.05	—
BPCL	0.10	0.04	—	—

SHRI D. B. PATIL: Sir, there are many contradictions in the reply. I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to those contradictions. It has been stated that with the increase in offtake by RCF, Thal and DFPCL, Taloja, availability of surplus associated gas for supply to fall-back users has come down. If we see the statement, the maximum requirement of RCF Trombay, which is a regular user, was

1.80 million cubic metres per day. But the supply in June was only one million cubic metres per day. For RCF Thal, the requirement is 3 million cubic metres whereas the supply is only 2.19 million cubic metres per day. In so far as MSEB is concerned, which is a fall-back user, the demand is 2.40 million cubic metres per day and the supply is only 0.89 million cubic metres per day. Here, it is apparent that even though it

is stated that because of the demands of the regular user have increased, the supply to the fall-back users has been cut down, from the statement it is clear that supply to the regular users is also not quite sufficient. Then, how is it that it has been stated that supply to the regular users is O. K. ? I would like to know from the Hon'ble Minister what is the total production of gas in these particular three months and what quantity was made available to Maharashtra ?

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA :

Sir, apparently there is no contradiction in the statement. Whatever has been said is that there are two types of institutions and industries which are getting this gas. The first type is, those who are getting the gas on regular basis. They are RCF Trombay, RCF Thal and DFPCL Talaja. The second type is, those who are getting on fall-back basis. They are MSEB, TEC, HPCL and BPCL. The ONGC is committed to supply on regular basis to these three units which I have mentioned earlier, viz., RCF, Trombay, RCF, Thal and Deepak Fertilizers according to their requirements. The important point is 'according to their requirements'. Whatever is left, that is being supplied to these fall-back new industries and it is done according to the priority basis.

SHRI D. B. PATIL : So far as the Maharashtra State Electricity Board is concerned, the Minister has stated that if there is something remaining there, the Maharashtra State Electricity Board which is a fall-back user is supplied the gas. The Government of Maharashtra has all the while been demanding that so far as the Maharashtra State Electricity Board is concerned, the supply should be on the basis of firm commitments. So far as this particular demand is concerned, I would like to bring to the notice of the hon Minister that formerly the gas at ONGC, Uran was being burnt because there was no proper machinery and proper usage there. Lakhs of rupees worth of gas was being burnt. Then the gas turbine at Uran has made a particular investment there and with that investment came the gas pipeline

from ONGC installation at Uran to the MSEB turbine section which was constructed by the ONGC only after the MSEB deposited the cost of the pipeline. As a result of that the gas which would have been otherwise flared could be used in the last three years. Before this investment was made by the MSEB on behalf of ONGC and the pipeline was laid, the gas was being burnt and because of this investment the gas came to be used . . .

MR. SPEAKER : Please hurry up.

SHRI D. B. PATIL : An investment of nearly Rs. 200 crores has been made. Taking into consideration all these factors, will the Union Government make a firm commitment for the supply of gas to the Uran plant?

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA:

It is true that the Bombay High gas is being flared. But it is not because that we do not want to supply gas to the Maharashtra State Electricity Board but it is because of the fact that there is no capacity at Uran and compression facilities have yet to be established at the Bombay High. As soon as the compression facilities are established and a pipeline is constructed to take this gas to Hazira and supply to KRIBHCO which is likely to materialise by the end of November, 1985 the flaring of gas will be reduced to the minimum.

With regard to the commitment for the supply of gas to Maharashtra, the commitment is only on fall-back basis. We would certainly be supplying gas to the Maharashtra State Electricity Board and we had a meeting with the Minister of Power on 5.7.85. After this meeting, it has been decided that the Maharashtra State Electricity Board would be given priority for the fall-back gas available with us.

SHRI D. B. PATIL : Out of the total production what is the percentage that is going to Maharashtra?

SHRI MURLI DEORA : The liquid natural gas has two main uses. One is for feedstock and is used for fertiliser

manufacture and the other is for fuel which is needed for power generation by the Tatas and the Electricity Board.

I would like to ask the Minister. The State Electricity Board and the Tatas have already installed power generators and if you do not give the gas to them, what will happen to them? The second point is that in the city of Bombay where the textile mills are using oil-fired devices, it was agreed by ONGC earlier to give gas for domestic fuel of Bombay city. Now, if this gas is given for domestic use in the city of Bombay the pollution will whither away. I would like to know whether that commitment of ONGC for the liquid gas supply for domestic use in Bombay will stand?

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA: With regard to the commitment and the question of supply of gas to Tatas and Maharashtra State Electricity Board, as I have stated earlier the commitment is to the extent of gas available after meeting the requirements of the priority sector, namely, the fertiliser units. Whatever gas is available on fall-back basis that is being supplied to the State Electricity Board and the Tata Electricity Company and that commitment of ours still holds good. With regard to the supply of gas to Bombay city, if the hon. Member means the LPG then that is being supplied on the quantum which is made available to us.

SHRI MURLI DEORA: Sir, I am not talking of the cylinder gas supply. I am talking of the domestic pipe gas and that too especially for textile mills.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA: That question has not been considered as yet.

Increase in sick industrial units

***208. SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA :**
SHRI K. RAMAMURTHY :

Will the Minister of **INDUSTRY AND COMPANY AFFAIRS** be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of sick industrial units is increa-

sing year after year and if so, what is the number of such industrial units in the country as on 31st March, 1985 and the number of such units in Orissa; and

(b) the action being taken to revive the existing sick units?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND INDUSTRY AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL) : (a) and (b). A statement is given below.

Statement

(a) and (b). Data on sick industrial units are collected by the Reserve Bank of India as per the definition of sickness adopted by it. The number of sick units for the period 1981-June 1984 is indicated below :

<i>Year ending</i>	<i>No. of sick units</i>
December, 1981	26,758
December, 1982	60,173
December, 1983	80,110
June, 1984	83,597

The sharp increase in the year ending 1982 is due to the fact that the State Bank of India has included Small Scale Units in protested bills/recalled accounts in its list of sick units, which were not included in the data furnished earlier. Although the number of sick industrial units has been increasing from year to year, in real terms, the incidence of sickness expressed as percentage of loans to outstanding credit has been constant around 8% over last three years.

There were only 4 large sick units in the State of Orissa as on 30th June, 1984 and 2,135 sick small scale units as on December, 1983. The data in respect of small scale units for the period ending 30th June, 1984 are not available with the Reserve Bank of India.

Government have issued certain policy guidelines for guidance of Central Ministries, State Governments and