

metallurgy work. A sum of about Rs.22.55 crore has so far been spent towards survey and exploration work since 1982-83. This expenditure includes expenditure towards chartering of ships for survey and exploration.

[English]

Development in North Eastern Region

1456. DR. CHINTA MOHAN:
SHRI BIRSINGH MAHATO:
SHRI NAWALK KISHORE RAI:
SHRI CHITTA BASU:

Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the gap in development between North Eastern States and the rest of the country is widening;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the North Eastern Council's performance in respect of developmental activities has fallen short of expectation; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to revamp the NEC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI GIRIDHAR GOMANGO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) North Eastern Council has contributed significantly to the development of North Eastern Region.

(d) The role and composition of North Eastern Council is under review and no decision has been taken so far.

Overcharging by Kendriya Bhandar

1457. SHRI AMAR ROYPRADHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of complaints have been received by the General Manager/ Chairman, Kendriya Bhandar, from consumers in respect of overcharging by the staff of their branches:

(b) if so, the number of such complaints received w.e.f. January 1, 1993 till date:

(c) whether any complaint has also been received in respect of sale of items on much more rates than the rates being got published in newspapers:

(d) if so, the number of such complaints received w.e.f. May 1, 1993 till date; and

(e) the action taken on each of such complaints?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL PUBLIC GRIEVENCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) and (b). Nine complaints regarding overcharging by stores of Kendriya Bhandar have been received since Jan. 1, 1993.

(c) and (d). Four complaints were received since May, 1993 about sale of items at rates higher than the rates published in the newspapers by stores of Kendriya Bhandar.

(e) All the complaints were investigated and overcharging was established on three items. The complainants who were overcharged have been offered refund from the stores concerned besides initiating action against the staff involved in overcharging.

The prices published in the newspapers every week are in respect of the new stocks and the prevailing stocks continue to be sold at the existing/ sticker prices. This has been made clear by a notice displayed in all the stores.

Cleaning of Hussain Sagar Lake at Hyderabad

1458. SHRI DATTATRAYA BANDARU: Will the Minister of URBAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hussain Sagar lake at Hyderabad is polluted due to release of industrial effluents from the adjoining industrial areas of twin cities;

(b) if so, whether the Government propose to cleanse the Hussain Sagar lake;

(c) if so, whether the Australian Government has offered financial assistance for this project; and

(d) if so, the time by the which the work is likely to be commenced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI P.K. THUNGON): (a) and (b). Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d). Australian Government has offered assistance for the project, but no time frame has been made.

Phosphatic Fertilizers to Farmers

1459. SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether arrangements have been made by the Government to ensure

adequate availability of phosphatic nitrogenous and potassic fertilizers to the farmers;

(b) if so, whether the Government have also taken any steps to see that the benefits of the fertilizer subsidy reach the small and medium farmers; and

(c) if so, the details thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) Nitrogenous fertilizers are under price and movement control. Government of India allocates these fertilizers to different States/Union Territories under Essential Commodity Act and monitors their availability. All phosphatic and potassic fertilizers have been freed from price and movement control with effect from 25.8.1992. However, Government is keeping an overall watch on their availability.

(b) and (c). The nitrogenous fertilizers are under Retention Pricing-cum-subsidy Scheme. These fertilizers are available to all farmers including small and medium at subsidised rates.

Even though phosphatic and potassic fertilizers are no more under Retention Pricing-cum-subsidy Scheme, a concession of Rs.1000/- per tonne on sales of Muriate of Potash and indigenous Di-Ammonium phosphatic during 1993-94 has been provided. A corresponding concession on sales of complex fertilisers, proportionate to phosphate and potash content and a concession of Rs 340/- per tonne on sales of single Super phosphate have also been allowed. All categories of farmers including small and medium stand to benefit by this scheme. The progress of implementation of the scheme is being monitored regularly. Every effort is being made to ensure adequate and timely availability of fertilizers.