

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

(b) According to information received from State Governments, the plant of Alkali and Chemicals Corporation of India at Rishra (West Bengal) was closed down from 26th June 1981 mainly because of non-availability of alcohol. There have also been reports that the capacity utilisation of alcohol based industries in deficit States like West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh is low mainly due to inadequate availability of alcohol.

(c) The current alcohol year 1980-81 (December—November) is a difficult year with the supply of alcohol and molasses considerably falling short of the demand. The Central Molasses Board had estimated that in the current alcohol year 1980-81, the availability of alcohol was likely to be 4200 lakh litres only as against a likely demand of 5716 lakh litres. The State Governments were requested to increase the production of Alcohol by:

(i) ensuring that all available molasses is utilised;

(ii) promoting the use of khand-sari molasses for alcohol production; and

(iii) ensuring creation (by sugar factories) of adequate and proper storage facilities for molasses. The Government are making efforts to see that the traditionally surplus States like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Maharashtra spare the maximum possible quantities of alcohol and molasses to deficit States like West Bengal. In order to improve the availability of alcohol, it has been decided to permit actual industrial users to import alcohol either directly or indirectly through their associations, on the basis of licences to be issued on a case to case basis.

#### **Pilot Plant to Produce Synthetic Oil from Coal**

362. SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether any pilot plant has been set up for producing synthetic oil from coal;

(b) if so, whether it is functioning satisfactorily;

(c) if so, whether a commercial plant would be put up at Raniganj; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN):** (a) and (b). The Central Fuel Research Institute, Dhanbad has set up a half tonne per day capacity laboratory pilot plant, for generating design data for the proposed 25-tonne capacity coal Hydrogenation Plant, which has been included in the 6th Five Year Plan Proposals of the Institute. A small quantity of diesel oil has been produced from the pilot plant.

(c) and (d). Government of West Bengal had earlier proposed setting up of plants for production of diesel oil and methanol from coal at Raniganj. However, Government of West Bengal have now modified their proposal and proposed to set up a  $\frac{1}{2}$  million tonne per year capacity coal to methanol plant in Raniganj Coalfields. This matter is now in the preliminary stage of feasibility study.

#### **Construction of Super Thermal Power Plant at Farakka**

363. SHRI NIREN GHOSH: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) has the construction of Super Thermal Plant at Farakka begun;

(b) if not, when will it begin; and

(c) what is the reason for delay?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN):** (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The question does not arise.