

Indira Awas Yojana

*16. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to grant loan from HUDCO to the States for construction of houses under Indira Awas Yojana and other Rural Development Schemes/Programmes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KINJARAPPU YERRANNAIDU) : (a) to (c). The assistance is provided under Indira Awas Yojana for construction of a house to the rural poor on 100% grant-in-aid basis. There is no proposal to provide loan from HUDCO to the States for implementation of IAY. However, presently HUDCO has a rural housing programme under which the State Governments do get loans from HUDCO through their housing development agencies.

Power Tariff

*17. SHRI NITISH KUMAR :
SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Power tariff in India 10 times that abroad" appeared in the 'Economic Times' dated October 14, 1996;

(b) if so, whether the average power tariff at national level in the country is much higher than that in many other countries; and

(c) the power tariff in Norway, Sweden, America, France, Brazil and England separately and its comparison with its tariff in India?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c). The power tariff in Norway, Sweden, USA, France and U.K. applicable to Industrial and Domestic consumers, and its comparison to that with India is given in the enclosed Statement. The average power tariff for industrial consumers in India is higher than those in above countries other than U.K. However, the power tariff for domestic consumers in India is much lower than those in the above countries.

STATEMENT

		Paise/Kwh As on 1995-1st Qtr.	
1	Country	Industrial	Domestic
1	2	3	4
1.	Norway	118	256
2.	Sweden	133	319

1	2	3	4
3.	USA	155	271
4.	France	185	490
5.	Brazil	NA	NA
6.	UK	228	406
7.	India (94-95)	221	91

NA - Not Available

Source - "Energy Process & Taxes IST 1995" IEA

Exploration of Gas

*18 SHRI CHITTA BASU : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have since examined the Kinston Committee's report on the exploration of Gas and Oil in West Bengal basin;

(b) if so, the conclusion drawn from the report; and

(c) whether any action plan has since been worked out on the basis of the Kinston report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The major conclusions of Mr. John Kinston's report on Bengal Basin area are :

(i) Additional 2D and 3D seismic data acquisition in some areas, which are already planned to be acquired during 1996-97.

(ii) Review and re-interpretation of existing data.

(iii) Further exploratory drilling may be taken up only after firming up very convincing closures and attributes for highest quality prospects. In any case no-drilling is recommended for three years.

(c) Yes, Sir.

Assam Gas Cracker Project

*19. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRA REDDY :
DR. M. JAGANNATH :

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to State

(a) the site chosen for the Assam Gas Cracker project and action so far taken to acquire and develop the area of the project after assessing environmental impact; and

(b) the assistance proposed to be given in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) 347 acres of land at Tengakhat, Dibrugarh has been handed over to the project. A further 903 acres is being

quired. Environmental impact study will be initiated after completing land acquisition formalities.

(b) A capital subsidy of Rs. 377 crores has been sanctioned for the project. A concessional gas price of Rs. 600/thousand cu.mtrs. has been fixed for a period of fifteen years.

Economic Package

*20. SHRI BADAL CHOUDHURY :

SHRI BAJU BAN RIYAN :

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

(a) whether Prime Minister has announced an economic package for the North Eastern States during his recent visit to the region;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise and scheme-wise;

(c) whether the declared amount is in addition to the annual plan allocation for the concerned States;

(d) if not, whether the policy of deduction at source by the Union Government for various dues of the State Governments while releasing fund shall be relaxed for the North Eastern States to implement the 'package'; and

(e) the details of other announcements made by the Prime Minister during his above visit?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) to (e). The statement of the Prime Minister issued in 27th October, 1996 at Guwahati containing the details of various initiatives for development of the North Eastern Region including important projects for different North Eastern States which Government have decided to take up, is given in the enclosed Statement. Different parts of the package would be implemented by suitable allocations from Central Ministries as well as provisions under State Plan and additional allocations as found necessary. It is also envisaged to set up a High Level Commission to examine the gaps in important sectors whose recommendations would be considered by the Planning Commission to formulate specific programmes and funding arrangements for development of North Eastern Region.

STATEMENT

My first visit to the seven States of the North East has come to an end. To me, this has been a very moving experience. The warmth of the people here will bring me back. I came to the area to know the people, their aspirations, their problems, how they feel and what they think. I came with an open mind. I am going back

with pleasant memories and with a firm resolve to work with the people to mark a new beginning in the development of this region. Wherever I went, the people from different sections of the society came and met me in large numbers. They were friendly and frank in expressing their views, their desires, their apprehensions and their hopes. The warmth which they extend throughout my visit has really overwhelmed me.

I am fully convinced that the problems can be resolved if all of us work together and look ahead jointly towards a better future. I am thankful to the people for showing so much love and affection for me during the visit.

I have also met at each Capital, a cross-section, of people, like leaders of political parties, chiefs of Autonomous District Councils, representatives of Non-Governmental organisations, students unions, women's associations, church leaders and the press; in addition to Ministers, State Government officials of Security forces, to get a first hand account of the conditions in these States.

The north-eastern region is endowed with abundant natural resources. In fact, Assam was in the forefront of the economic development of the country 100-150 years ago. It was a pioneering State and enterprising entrepreneurs invested in the development of tea plantations, oil, coal mining, forestry, Railways, and inland waterways. However, in the recent years investors have shunned these areas, because some of these States turned inward-looking, while others have been afflicted by militancy and terrorism. This has set in a vicious circle of terrorism, discouraging investments and economic development, leading to growing unemployment, which in turn provided recruits to militancy. Today, there are no major industries or other economic activities, which can absorb the educated unemployed. The only avenue for employment in almost all these States is Government service. However, Government service cannot absorb too many people. Also, too many people in Government service only breed inefficiency. The only way out of unemployment or militancy is massive all round economic development, leading to prosperity.

One of the important factors impinging on the identity of the people of the north eastern States is the question of foreigners. I have reviewed this issue in some details during my discussions with All Assam Student's Union and also several others. It was represented that the laws existing for the detection of foreigners such as IMDT (Act), 1983 as amended have not proved to be effective. We would take steps to repeal the ineffective laws, and strengthen the legal and administrative measures for dealing with foreigners in consultation with the States. Further, the policing of the border including fencing at appropriate places would be strengthened.