

So far as the last question is concerned, if the hon. Member comes forward with a proposal we have hardly anything to do with it. Anybody who wants to put up a ten tonne plant is welcome, he can do so. He does not even need a licence for it.

PROF. DILIP CHAKRAVARTY: So many Ministries are involved in this. I do not expect everything from him.

PETITION RE. TEHRI DAM PROJECT IN U.P.

डा० रामजी सिंह (भागलपुर) अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं उत्तर प्रदेश की टहरी बांध परियोजना के संबंध में, टहरी बांध विरोधी संघर्ष समिति के प्रधान श्री बीरेन्द्र दत्त सकलानी तथा अन्य आठ हजार व्यक्तियों द्वारा हस्ताक्षरित याचिका प्रस्तुत करता हूँ।

12.47 hrs.

STATEMENT RE. REPORT OF EXPERT COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF MATHURA REFINERY

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): Mr. Speaker, Sir, A petroleum refinery with a capacity of 6 million tonnes per annum is being set up by the Indian Oil Corporation at Mathura in Uttar Pradesh to meet the growing demands for petroleum products in the north-west region. The refinery is expected to be completed by December, 1979 and commissioned in April, 1980. Apprehensions have been expressed in certain quarters about the possible pollution hazards resulting from this refinery. In particular, fears have been expressed about the effect of gaseous effluents on the Taj Mahal and other historical monuments in and around Agra.

The House is aware that Government had constituted a Committee in July, 1974 under the Chairmanship of Dr. S. Varadarajan, Chairman, Indian

Petrochemicals Corporation Limited, to advise the project authorities on the measures to be taken for keeping the pollution effects to the minimum. Representatives of the Ministry of Petroleum, National Environmental Engineering Research Institute, Nagpur, Office of the Environmental Planning and Coordination of the Department of Science and Technology, Indian Institute of Petroleum, India Meteorological Department, Indian Oil Corporation and Government of Uttar Pradesh were also included in the Committee. A representative of the Archaeological Survey of India joined the Committee in December, 1975. The Committee submitted an unanimous report in December, 1977 in which it has viewed the steps which are being taken by the project authorities for the prevention of pollution and has made a number of important recommendations on the additional measures to be taken to keep the pollution levels in the Agra region to the absolute minimum.

The report of the Committee is still under examination in consultation with the concerned Departments of Government. As soon as the views of Government on this matter are finalised I would place them before the House. Since this will take some more time I would seek the permission of the House to lay a copy of the report on the Table. [Placed in Library. See No. LT-2642-A/78].

I would request the Hon. Members to note that the Committee has not only studied the environmental impact of Mathura Refinery but has also identified the existing levels of pollution in the Agra region and has recommended steps to reduce them to the extent possible.

Since the translation of the report into Hindi will take some time, I regret I am not able to lay on the Table the Hindi version of the report simultaneously. I crave the indulgence of the House for this.