

LOK SABHA DEBATES

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LOK SABHA

Tuesday, March 24, 1987/
Chaitra 3, 1909 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at
Eleven of the Clock.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Mr. Ramachandra Reddy.....

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE
(Rajapur) : Sir, many happy returns of the day.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Thank you, Sir. I wish the same for you also.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Use of Non-Commercial Fuels in Rural Areas

*365 SHRI K. RAMACHANDRA REDDY : Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state :

(a) the percentage of energy consisting of non-commercial fuels like fire-wood, cowdung and farm waste, consumed by rural population;

(b) whether continued use of these non-commercial sources of energy in rural areas has resulted in large scale environmental destruction; and

(c) if so, the steps taken to improve the situation ?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI VASANT SATHE) (a) to (c). A statement is given below.

Statement

(a) Various studies conducted for different sectors viz. domestic, agriculture etc. indicate that generally, in the rural areas, the share of non-commercial energy consumed is more than 80%.

(b) Environmental destruction is caused by a variety of factors most of which are not related to fuel. However, traditional methods of use of fuel are also contributing to environmental degradation.

(c) Steps taken in this regards include inter-alia development and extension of newer methods and technologies for using local renewable sources, such as fuel efficient smokeless chulhas, biogas plants, energy plantations, solar thermal and photovoltaic devices, wind power and gasifiers etc.

SHRI K. RAMACHANDRA REDDY: While answering part (a) of my question, the hon. Minister has admitted that non-commercial energy consumed in villages is more than 80 per cent and that is one of the reasons-using firewood as fuel for the deterioration of the environment. The environmental deterioration has to be stopped at any cost in villages because people are using non-commercial energy; they are using firewood as fuel for cooking, they depend on forests and forests are being destroyed. In order to solve this problem of deterioration of environment, will Government come forward and allot sufficient funds for starting of community bio-gas plants in villages? I want to know what is the amount that has been allotted for this purpose in this year.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : It is our policy that particularly in rural areas

we should have more and more use of non-conventional sources of energy such as bio-gas, bio-mass, solar, wind and even mini hydels. In fact, all forms of these natural sources of energy should be used so that we can supplement the need of fuel. In rural areas, as the hon. Members know, as far as domestic need is concerned, it is energy in the form of fuel that they need; and as far as agriculture is concerned, it is energy in the form of irrigation that they need. These are the two major basic needs. As far as depredation of forests, etc., is concerned, there is a misunderstanding. All Members who come from rural areas know that the major cause of deforestation has not been the need of fuel that is collected by the farmers and their children; they collect mostly the twigs and cow-dung is also used. The main cause of deforestation actually has been the urban needs; from forests, big trees like sal, teak, etc., are cut for urban needs. This is the main cause. Therefore, firstly, we are trying to ensure that bio-gas plants and bio-mass plants are set up which will meet the fuel needs, so that even those twigs, etc. are not required to be used. We have provided enough; I do not have the figure ready with me. The hon. Member has asked me how much we have provided for bio-gas programme. I will supply. We are giving adequate emphasis on that.

SHRI E. AYYAPU REDDY : Is there any enhancement in the allotment?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Yes, there is need for enhancement.

SHRI K. RAMACHANDRA REDDY : In our country there are places with high-velocity winds, and high-velocity winds can be used for generating wind-power so that dependence on other types of energy is reduced. Will the Government come forward to make use of high velocity winds in places like Anantapur and coastal Andhra for generating wind-power, so that this power can be utilised and if they have, what is the amount allotted this year and is there any increase over that which was allotted last year for this purpose?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : As far as wind energy is concerned we have already

set-up all around the country wherever sufficient wind velocity is available wind farms. Even on the Andhra coast there is this possibility and we are trying to utilise. As it is at Tuticorn we have already set-up and we will utilise this power as well.

DR. G. S. RAJHANS : A lot is being said about non-conventional sources of energy like biogas and biomass. I am afraid whether 1 per cent of the villagers understand this, will the hon. Minister let us know what he proposes to do to educate the people regarding these non-conventional sources of energy?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Actually it is unfair to the people in the villages to say that they do not know what these biogas plants and non-conventional sources of energy are.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : They do not know the English names only.

(Interruptions)

SHRI VASANT SATHE : The 'sudharak' chullahs and gobar gas plants are so popular that everyone knows the use and advantage of it. *(Interruptions)*

Let the facts speak for themselves. In 1981-82 from 1.26 lakh families using biogas plants today it has gone to 7.56 lakhs. Could this have happened if the rural areas has not taken it up? It is many time more. Unless this was popular it would not increase two-fold.

Now the question is only of resources. I have often said if you provide Rs. 100 crores for the entire national programme of non-conventional sources of energy and that is deducted what miracles can be there.

[Translation]

SHRI K. D. SULTANPURI : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, bio-gas and other non-conventional fuels cannot become successful in the hill areas which remain snow bound. For these areas wood or some other fuel has to be made available because they remain snow bound the year round.

Is the Government considering to make other sources available for them so that there is no need to fell trees and they are able to make use of bio-gas or some other alternative source of energy?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : In such areas, solar energy has been found to be useful and we are installing solar panels on a large scale so that we could meet their energy requirements.

[English]

SHRI V. SOBHANADREESWARA RAO : Sir, the Minister has rightly said that a substantial part of this forest material goes to the industry and in particular the paper industry. My information is that bagasse from sugar factories can be utilised as a feed stock for producing biogas which can be used for boiler purposes in the sugar factories while at the same time the fibre that will be left over can be used for paper plants. I would like to know whether research has been done in this regard? If so, to what stage that research has given the results? If not, let the Government take in on a big scale so that it will save our forests to some extent.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : It is known that biogas can be produced from bagasse and there are many plants both in the cooperative and other sectors where they are using bagass for producing energy not only for their own requirement but also if surplus energy is there they are putting it in the grid I am not sure; I do not have the facts; I will find out from our Industry Ministry whether the remaining portion of bagasse can be used for paper and whether enough research has been done for that purpose.

SHRI V. SOBHANADRESWARA RAO : The Minister has not rightly understood the question, Bagasse is now used in the boilers. If it is used for bio-gas generation, the bio-gas can be used for boilers and the fibres can be used for producing paper.

SHRI VASANT SATHE : Whether after using it for bio-gas generation, the

remaining part of bagasse can be used for paper-I am not aware of this technology and whether it has been perfected. I will try to get the information and pass it on to the hon. Member.

SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI : Will the hon. Minister be pleased to state the total amount of consumption of energy in the urban areas and the total amount of consumption of energy in the villages? What steps do the Government propose to take to see that energy is supplied to the rural as well as the urban areas proportionately?

SHRI VASANT SATHE : I had stated once in the House that today of the energy produced, eighty per cent is used in the urban areas and only twenty per cent is used in the rural areas. Today in the rural areas power is required mainly for irrigation purposes. The basic energy requirement in the urban areas or semi-urban areas is for industries. Nearly fifty-six per cent of the total power in the country is used by industry. That is why wherever there are industries, power goes there. Tomorrow if we industrialise our rural areas, naturally more power will go to that side. Eighty per cent of power is generated by the State Electricity Boards and the entire distribution is done by them. We can only help them. But as for as the agricultural needs are concerned, it is the policy of the Government to supply as much power as we can to the rural areas. Various State Governments including Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and West Bengal are also pursuing the same policy. If they are not, there is some failure somewhere.

Tidal Power Project in Gulf of Kutchh

*366. **SHRI RANJIT SINGH GAEKWAD :** Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether field investigation and data collection for setting up a tidal power project in Gulf of Kutchh has been completed;

(b) whether electrical engineering studies for the techno-economic feasibility