

should see that any future planning in energy production is so balanced that no region will suffer on this account. The National Grid is to recoup the deficiency of one region from the surplus that may be in the other region. In view of this may I know, whether the planning of the target of 2006 m.w. for 1976-77 takes into consideration the requirements of the country so far as power is concerned in 1976-77, 1977-78 and so on, taking into consideration long-term needs, or it is just an ad hoc target for 1976-77? May I know whether this 2006 MW will consist of energy from both thermal and hydro and also nuclear resources?

SHRI K. C. PANT: It will consist of thermal and hydro power. There are both hydro electric projects and thermal projects. No nuclear power station is going to be commissioned during 1976-77. What is stated by him is generally the approach of the Government. We provide such transfer of power from surplus to deficit areas. From the overall point of view there should be sufficiency for the whole country, this is our basic approach. So far as the target is concerned this is fixed on the basis of the progress of projects which are on-going. This cannot be fixed arbitrarily. This depends upon the progress made so far and what we can do is to expedite the progress to reach this target of 2006 MW.

Margin of Profit on the Sale of Goods by the Retailers

*202. **SHRI R. N. BARMAN:** Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to fix the margin of profit that a retailer should have on the sale of goods;

(b) whether the buyers do not get the benefit even when the whole-sale price comes down due to the non-fixation of this limit; and

(c) if so, what machinery is being evolved for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND COOPERATION (SHRI A. C. GEORGE): (a) to (c): So far the Government of India has not formulated any proposal to fix retailers margins except in respect of certain controlled commodities. However, the Government are aware that sometimes in respect of specific commodities the reduction in the wholesale price is not reflected in the retail prices and the retailers' margin is substantial. The Government, therefore, proposes to take up individually selected commodities and have this carefully considered. Some States have already initiated action in this regard. For instance, the Delhi Administration has constituted a Price Review Committee which has specified margins for selected essential commodities.

SHRI R. N. BARMAN: May I know what are those 'certain controlled commodities' in which retailers' profit has been fixed?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: In Delhi, in the case of pulses of all kinds, rice, beguni, and black gram the maximum difference between wholesale and retail prices has been decided at 10 per cent. In sugar, the wholesaler has been allowed a margin of profit of Rs. 3 per quintal only over and above the price arrived at by the addition of ex-mill price, cartage and terminal tax. The retailer has been allowed a margin of Rs. 2 per quintal in addition to the empty gunny bag. In edible oil and vanaspati the retailer has been allowed a margin of Re 1 per tin of 16 1/2 k.g. in addition to the empty container. The margin of profit of besan manufacturers has been fixed at Rs. 3 per quintal. The margin of profit of manufacturers of mustard oil and other edible oils except vanaspati ghee has been fixed at Rs. 1-25 per tin of 16 k.g. The semi-wholesalers of wheat, foodgrains and pulses have been allowed a margin of Rs. 2 per cent. The retailers who make purchases from them have been allowed a margin of eight per cent.

SHRI R. N. BARMAN: Which are the States that had taken steps and what is the mind of Government at present about selecting other commodities?

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: We have reported that some States have taken action after dialogue with the wholesalers, retailers and other distribution agencies. The Delhi Administration has taken some steps Maharashtra has taken some very effective steps. Gujarat also has gone much ahead in some importance respects. Like that it has gone on though the list is not up-to-date. There are a few States which have taken measures in this regard.

Regarding the basic approach, the ultimate intention of the whole exercise is to see that the consumer gets it at a reasonable price. So it is not only the manufacturing cost that is relevant, but the distribution expenses also count. There is naturally the system of wholesalers, in some cases there are sole selling agencies, then there is the question of the margin for the retailer. All these different tiers of the distribution network are here. I agree with the hon. member that the distribution cost has to be reduced and then only real relief will come to the consumer. We are going ahead with a plan for a few selected items of essential commodities of mass consumption.

SHRI M. RAM GOPAL REDDY: Price control is effective only in the cities and urban areas. In the villages, there is absolutely no price control. What is the scheme that the Minister proposes for selling articles at controlled prices in the villages?

MR. SPEAKER: This is not on the scheme. This is too large a question.

DR. RANEN SEN: In the paradoxical situation where there is abundance of goodgrains, mustard oil, groundnut oil and sugar and so on and prices are going up everyday since March, May I know whether to control prices Government have ever thought of taking over the distribution and doing it

through the public distribution system so far as essential commodities are concerned so that this disparity between the wholesale price, retail price and other paradoxical difficulties are got over?

MR. SPEAKER: That is a question of policy. Strictly this question relates to the scheme in operation. You are asking whether in view of the situation obtaining Government would take over the distribution. That is a different thing.

SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: The situation in the remote areas in respect of commodities the prices of which are not controlled is arbitrary and in total disregard of social needs, a retailers load up the distribution prices. This is a malaise and it becomes very difficult to check that up because in the district areas whenever the Collector wants to go and talk to them about it, the expenditure they talk of is something which is not capable of verification because it is 100 in one case, 200 in another and 700 in a third. You can never verify their profit and loss account. May I, therefore, know of the Minister what prevents the Ministry from expeditiously determining a certain margin with reference to the manufacturing cost which they can ascertain and insisting that within that cost the distribution must come about? Not to do so is to put a premium on an inefficient distribution system.

SHRI A. C. GEORGE: In reply to an earlier question, I have mentioned that in the whole exercise we are going through there are some three or four important different tiers, the production, procurement, and in some items allocation, transportation and distribution. It is only at the end of distribution that the consumer will feel whether relief is coming to him or whether harm is being done to him. The whole attempt is to see that the manufacturing, cost at one point is reduced, and apart from that, the distribution expenditure is minimised so

that certain levels which do not serve any social purposes are dispensed with. For example, in some cases, there is a sole selling agency which is just a nominal thing, it does not have any effective purpose, they just pass on the items on a certain profit margin. So we are trying to avoid the different tiers and reduce the different levels through which it passes and cut the different margins. The whole scheme is to see that the distribution cost is minimised and to that extent the consumer is given the maximum of relief.

Development of Tidal Power

*203 SHRI P GANGADEB: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether development of tidal power in the Gulfs of Cambay and Kutch can contribute forty per cent of the power generation in the country; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to harness the tidal power?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY (SHRI K. C. PANT): (a) and (b). Preliminary studies have revealed the theoretical potential of sizeable generation from the tides in the Gulfs of Cambay and Kutch. The techno-economic feasibility of generating power in this manner is yet to be established.

SHRI P. GANGADEB: In view of the overall power shortage in this country, I should like to know from the hon. Minister whether any follow-up studies have been made to find out the practical potential resources of tidal power generation and the cost involved vis-a-vis hydel, thermal and atomic power generation and if so what are the reasons for such slow progress in this regard?

SHRI K. C. PANT: First of all, I should like to say that there is no overall power shortage in the country today; the premise is something with

which I cannot agree. As regards the main question, the reason for the low priority accorded to tidal power generation is, firstly, the possibilities are confined to a few areas in the country and the impact would therefore be marginal and local; secondly, initial cost is very high and thirdly, this power is of a fluctuating nature and it depends upon the tide and the tidal range, how much power you can generate from it; there is fluctuation from perhaps zero to a certain generation level and that has to be considered.

As far as the general progress in this direction is concerned, we had a UNDP expert in this country who discussed this with the state government and the central government and after he had made his studies, he submitted a report and his report has been considered. He has suggested an approach to this problem: collection of data, mathematical modelling and so on. That is now being discussed with the state governments for further action.

SHRI P GANGADEB: I should like to know whether the equipment required for the tidal power generation can be fabricated in India and whether any technical collaboration is required for it and if so which are the countries from which we can have this technical collaboration and what has been our endeavour in this regard?

SHRI K. C. PANT: There is only one country in the world which has gone in for tidal power station and that is La Rance in France. That was set up years ago and it is generating power but the difficulties encountered in this kind of power generation can be gauged from the fact that even France has not gone for another second tidal power station; still that is the only one power station. Nowhere in the world has anybody else gone in for such a plant, to the best of my knowledge, on a commercial scale; no one has done so far. So far as fabrication of equipment is concerned, I do not think there is anything special in the equipment it