

(b) Copies of the B.I.C.P.'s report are available in Parliament library. The Government are in constant dialogue with the industry in this regard.

Supersession of a District Judge

175. SHRI J.P. GOYAL : Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state :

(a) whether a senior District Judge has been superseded recently in the appointment of a Judge of the Delhi High Court despite the fact that his name was recommended by two successive Chief Justices of the High Court and approved by the Chief Justice of India; and

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI H. R. BHARDWAJ) : (a) and (b) There has been no supersession since appointment to the High Court is not in the line of promotion of State Judicial Service Officers, nor has any person a right to be considered for fresh appointment as a High Court Judge.

However, the matter of appointing the District and Sessions Judge, Delhi as a High Court Judge is engaging the attention of the Government in consultation with the concerned Constitutional authorities.

Acquisition of Helicopters for GAIL

176. SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH :

SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that about nine months ago, Gas Authority of

India had invited tenders for acquisition of two helicopters to supervise its pipe-laying operations;

(b) if so, what are the factors responsible for non-finalisation of the tender so far and by when the helicopters would be acquired;

(c) whether it is a fact that GAIL intend to scrap the bids for the above helicopters and making alternative arrangements for their acquisition; and

(d) if so, what is the justification for such a step?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI) : (a) The tender was floated for net leasing of helicopters and not for acquisition.

(b) to (d) Helicopter Corporation of India has since been formed for the purpose of hiring out helicopters to users in the country. GAIL have therefore proposed to consider leasing helicopters from the Helicopter Corporation of India now. The proposal is therefore still under consideration.

Delays in finalisation of HBJ Project

177. SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH :

SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that HBJ project has been delayed because of the late finalisation of the main turn-key contract

(b) if so, what is the new target date for completion of the project; and

(c) whether it is a fact that some delay is also being caused in several small works associated with the main contract, particularly acquisition of helicopters to supervise the pipe laying operations and, if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI) : (a) to (c) No, Sir. The original target date of completion will be adhered to.

Utilisation of hydro-electric potential

178. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA : Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that only 15 per cent of the total estimated hydro-electric potential of about 1,00,000 MW is utilised at present; if so, what is the reason for low utilisation of potential :

(b) whether the capital cost of a hydel and a thermal plant is more or less equal ;

(c) whether the life of hydel plant is around double and generation cost about 1/3rd or that of a thermal plant; and

(d) whether Government is reviewing the matter to encourage installation and expansion of hydel power plants in preference to other means of generation of power, wherever possible?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF POWER AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI SUSHILA ROHATGI) : (a) The total hydroelectric potential of the country has been assessed

at 85,544 MW at 60% load factor, out of which 12.04% has been developed and 5.77% is under development. The main reasons for limited exploitation of the hydel potential are extreme remoteness of most of the sites, long gestation period involved in development of infra-structural facilities like access roads, bridges etc., constraints due to environmental considerations, and inadequacy of funds.

(b) The capital cost of major/medium hydro-electric projects generally varies from Rs. 10,000 to 12,000 and that of the thermal stations is of the order of Rs. 10,000 to Rs. 11,000 per KW of installed capacity.

(c) The life of hydel plant is generally taken as 35 years and that of the thermal plant 25 years. The cost of energy generation of hydel project is generally of the order of 25 paise to 35 paise and that of the thermal plant is of the order of 45 paise to 65 paise per Kwh.

(d) Yes, Sir.

New rates for supply of natural gas to various industries

179. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether ONGC has proposed new rates for the supply of Natural Gas to various industries of Gujarat, Assam and other places in the country, if so, what are the details thereof;

(b) what are the prevalent rates of supply of gas to various parts of Gujarat and Assam :