

Soda Ash Price

1447. SHRI AMARPROSAD CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he had stated at the meeting of the Indian Chemical Manufacturers' Association held on the 3rd February, 1982 that Government were concerned about allowing a reasonable price rise to the manufacturers of Soda Ash; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI R. C. RATH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The relevant paragraphs dealing with soda ash, from the speech, are quoted hereunder:

"As regard Soda Ash, the indigenous production is of the order of 6 lakh tonnes as against the demand of about 7 lakh tonnes. There have also been some cut back, on production by some of the manufacturers on the ground of lack of demand and accumulated stocks. However, it is heartening to note that the production during the last quarter of 1982 has picked up. In the case of Soda Ash also the total quantum of import duties comes to more than 100 per cent. There is no proposal at the present to revise the duties or to restrict imports, particularly considering the existing demand and indigenous production. Apart from manufacturers of glass and sodium silicate, soda ash is an item of mass consumption. It is used by dhobies and in house-holds in washing material. The price charged by the indigenous manufacturers is also a relevant factor. In view of these, Government would like to have a cautious approach in regard to revision of duties and restriction of imports. They would not like shortages to occur, as had happened in the year 1978.

Government are equally concerned about allowing a reasonable price to the indigenous producers of soda ash. The

Bureau of Industrial Costs and Prices (BICP) have gone into the matter and have submitted their report to Government. I assure you that Government will take a decision in the matter as early as possible."

Low Price of Soda Ash imported by S.T.C.

1448. SHRI AMARPROSAD CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have reduced the price of Soda Ash imported by STC to Rs. 1800/- per tonne ex-Kandla in July, 1982;

(b) what are the reasons for sticking to the price of Rs. 2250/- per tonne ex-Kandla for over 1-14 years even when there were no buyers at that price;

(c) what will be the net realisation per tonne at the reduced price of Rs. 1800/- per tonne after computing godown rent, interest, insurance and other administrative expenses; and

(d) what will be the total loss in the deal upto June, 1983?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI R. C. RATH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The price of Rs. 2250/- per tonne of soda ash ex-godown Kandla was fixed after taking into account a number of factors on actual basis like the landed cost, transport, godown charges, etc. Efforts were therefore made to dispose of the imported stock at that price.

(c) and (d) Prior to its import, soda ash was in short supply in 1978, 1979 and in the first half of 1980 and the open market price reached around Rs. 2600/- to Rs. 3000/- per tonne for the marginal consumers. With a view to augmenting the availability of soda ash in the market, the decision was taken to import soda ash through State Trading Corporation of India (STC). Immediately after the landing of imported consignments the open market price of soda ash started falling.

In consequence, all effectors to dispose of imported stock at the fixed price of Rs. 2250/- per tonne ex-Kandla godown did not materialise and it was, therefore, decided to sell the stock at Rs. 1800/- per tonne. This had helped the STC to dispose of most of the stocks except some damaged quantities and sweepings. The deficit arising out of the revised price, godown rent, insurance, interest on blocked capital etc. as on 31-3-1983 is approximately Rs. 97.0 lakhs.

Amendment of the "Deed, of Lease" granted to displaced persons from East Pakistan

1449. SHRI AMARPROSAD CHAKRABORTY: Will the Minister of LABOUR AND REHABILITATION be pleased (o state:

(a) whether Government have received and considered a representation from the Government of West Bengal for amendment of the "Deed of lease" granted to the displaced persons from the then East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) now settled in West Bengal;

(b) whether it is a fact that in the Ministry of Rehabilitation Letter No. 28 (4)[73]R. E. dated 17th May, 1974 there are clauses 'E' and 'G' which are detrimental to the interest of those displaced persons and as such deletion of these clauses were requested by the Government of West Bengal; and

(c) if so, what action has been taken by the Central Government in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI DHARMA VIR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) No, Sir. Para 1 of the letter quoted contains clauses (i) to (ix) of which clause (iv) contains sub-clause (a) to (e). Sub-clause (e) contains a general provision whereby the State Government may impose such other terms and conditions as are considered necessary|desirable.

(c) Does not arise.

Very high frequency radio communication sets

1450. SHRI DHULESHWAR MEENA: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that very high frequency (VHF) radio communication sets imported for Asiad and non-aligned meet remain unutilised by DESU; if so, what are the reasons therefor;

(b) what is the number of such sets and the cost involved in their import; and

(c) what steps are being taken to utilize these radio communication sets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH): (a) VHF were imported by D. E. S. U. for providing back-up communication facility between various Sub-stations etc. as a part of normal requirement of its system operation and control. The procurement of the equipment was not exclusively meant for the LX Asian Games and the 7th Non-Aligned Summit Meet though the procurement was expedited in view of these two events. These Sets are in the process of installation. Nineteen sets have already been installed and commissioned.

(b) 40 VHF sets were imported by D. E. S. U. at CIF value of Rs. 10,01,280.50 plus custom duty Rs. 5,00,640.25.

(c) The remaining sets are in the process of being installed.

Encouragement to Hydro Electric power stations

1451. SHRI VLTHALRAO MADHAV-RAO JADHAV: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the dwindling coal reserves, Government propose to encourage the installation of hydro electric power stations in the country; and

(b) if so, what are the details, in this regard?