

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|-----|---------------------------|-----|---------------|-------|------|
| 21. | West Bengal | 333 | 341 | 3351 | 3300 |
| 22. | Himachal Pradesh | 77 | 77 | 3243 | 2426 |
| 23. | Puducherry | 6 | 2 | 98 | 98 |
| 24. | Punjab | 142 | 142 | 12800 | None |
| | | | (under NREGA) | | |
| 25. | Dadra and Nagar Haveli | 1 | 1 | 11 | 11 |

States/UTs who have not furnished information:— Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Manipur, Jammu and Kashmir and Gujarat, Panchayats are not formulated in Delhi, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland.

Rural Business Hubs in Andhra Pradesh

978. SHRI R.C. SINGH: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

- (a) the aims and objectives of Rural Business Hubs (RBHs);
- (b) the details of districts in which RBHs are implemented, with a particular reference to Andhra Pradesh;
- (c) whether some of the products in RBH are also exported; and
- (d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI C.P. JOSHI): (a) The aim and objective of the Rural Business Hubs scheme is to usher in prosperity to the rural areas of the country by providing technical support and marketing linkages to rural products/producers, to promote rural industrialization, to diversify rural enterprises and to augment non-farm rural employment. It also aims at providing economic and social development in the rural areas, the entire process being mediated/facilitated by the empowered PRIs.

(b) The RBH scheme works on 4-P (Public-Private-Panchayat-Partnership) and is applicable to all the BRGF districts (including those in Andhra Pradesh) and all the districts of the North Eastern Region.

(c) and (d) According to the information available, Beaded charger and coasters, cushion cover, duvet cover, lumber cushion, throws, pillow cover have been exported to USA and New Zealand by M/s. Alacrity Exports, Jaipur, Carpets were exported to USA and Greece by Jaipur Rugs Foundation, Jaipur.

Transparency and accountability in PRIs

979. SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

- (a) the present status of consideration within Government of the proposal to incentivise

State Government to effectively empower Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) as also to incentive Panchayats at all three level to be transparent and accountable in their transactions;

(b) whether in this regard, Government is processing the World Bank's offer to contribute up to one billion US dollars of International Development Association (IDA) funds to any scheme designed to incentivise devolution by States to the PRIs and promote transparency and accountability in their functioning; and

(c) if not, whether Government is contributing, or proposes to contribute, to such a scheme from their own resources?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI C.P. JOSHI): (a) to (c) Under the Panchayat Empowerment and Accountability Incentive Scheme (PEAIS), the States are incentivized to devolve powers to PRIs. This scheme is funded by the Central Government. There is no proposal at present to seek external funding for this scheme. Expansion of the scheme is subject to availability of funds.

Gas linkage of power companies

980. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that around 200 applications seeking gas linkage for about 250 million standard cubic meters a day by power companies are lying pending with the Ministry;

(b) if so, whether Government has formulated any guidelines for allocation of gas to the power companies and streamlining the process of recommending the cases to the Ministry; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) Various applications requesting gas allocations for new power plants requiring over 550 million standard cubic meters per day (mmscmd) of gas have been received.

(b) and (c) The Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) constituted to consider and decide issues relating to pricing and commercial utilization of gas under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) has decided that, subject to the availability of gas, necessary allocations from KG D6 fields will be made to power projects in pipelines as and when they are ready to commence production.

Revision of APM price of natural gas

981. SHRI NAND KUMAR SAI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has revised the Administered Price Mechanism (APM) price of natural gas in the country;