

(a) whether it is a fact that fertilizer agencies charge much more than the MRP rates from the farmers in tribal areas; and

(b) if so, the measures proposed to be adopted to stop fertilizer agencies from exploiting the farmers especially in tribal areas?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT JENA): (a) No, Sir. No report of overcharging have been received by the Department of Fertilizers.

(b) The fertilizer companies have been asked by Department of Fertilizers to print the MRP as well as the amount of subsidy on each bag of fertilizer and companies do follow this. The State Governments have also been requested to ensure that the fertilizers are sold at the MRP printed on the bags. Any sale above the printed maximum retail price is punishable under the Essential Commodities Act. This Department has not received any complaint that a company has not printed MRP while selling their fertilizers.

Building of fertilizer capacity in Middle East

1367. SHRI SANJAY RAUT: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received any report/suggestion to consider to build new fertilizer capacity in the Middle East, where gas supplies are abundant and relatively inexpensive; and

(b) if so, Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SRIKANT JENA): (a) and (b) The various proposals are under discussion in Middle East for exploring the possibility of putting up Ammonia-Urea fertilizer plant in countries like Oman, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Qatar and Kuwait. The Government is continuously following-up the issue of availability of gas with the competent authorities in the respective nations. However, no country has till now, given confirmation about availability/supply of gas at affordable price.

Revival of closed fertilizer units

1368. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state: