

The above steps would not only improve the indigenous availability of Caustic Soda but in view of the waiver of customs duty, it would be possible to distribute the material at prices which would be roughly on par with the indigenous prices.

Progress of irrigation development

1234. SHRI GHOUSE MOHIUDDIN SHEIKH: Will the Minister of IRRIGATION be pleased to state the total area utilized for irrigation in the country by river and canal waters and the area that depends on rain waters?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION (SHRI KEDAR PANDE): As per the provisional land utilisation statistics available (1978-79), the gross sown area and irrigated area from all sources are 173.30 and 48.48 million hectares respectively. The gross area irrigated from surface water source only was 29.80 million hectares. The gross area that depends on rain waters is thus 124.82 million hectares.

Sanction of the Irrigation Project reports submitted by Madhya Pradesh Government

1235. SHRI LADLI MOHAN NIGAM: Will the Minister of IRRIGATION be pleased to state:

(a) the details of various irrigation Project reports submitted by the Madhya Pradesh Government to the Central Government for sanction during the years 1976 to 1979;

(b) the number and the details of the project reports cleared by the Central Government so far; and

(c) the number of project reports that are still pending with the Central Government for clearance and what are the reasons therefor; and by when they are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF IRRIGATION (SHRI KEDAR PANDE):

(a) Reports on fifty-five new irrigation projects were received between 1-1-1976 and 31-12-1979 from the Government of Madhya Pradesh for clearance (Vide statement enclosed).

(b) 36 projects have so far been cleared by the Central Government.

(c) 19 projects are yet to be cleared. The Status of these projects is indicated in the enclosed statement. [See Appendix CXIV, Annexure No. 101].

Projects are considered for clearance by Planning Commission only after the technical and economic feasibility of the Projects are satisfactorily established. The clearance of the projects, therefore, depends upon the details incorporated in the project report, response from the State Government in furnishing the replies to the Central Water Commission's comments and deputing the concerned officers for discussions of the outstanding points and providing clarifications wherever necessary.

Inclusion of the Pench Thermal Project in the next plan

1236. SHRI LADLI MOHAN NIGAM: Will the Minister of ENERGY AND COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the perspective plan for next 10 years prepared by the Central Electricity Authority the Pench Thermal Project is included;

(b) If so, whether keeping in view the shortage of power in Madhya Pradesh, the Central Government have given approval to the project to enable the Madhya Pradesh Government to prepare the necessary project report for this thermal power plant; and

(c) if not, by when clearance is expected to be given?