

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN): (a) Yes.

(b) Due to heavy operational/maintenance costs over the Darjeeling Himalayan section, fares have been kept at a higher slab.

(c) No.

Contractor-Operated Halt Stations on the North-East Frontier Railway

46. SHRIMATI PRATIMA BOSE:
SHRI JAHARLAL BANERJEE:
SHRI PRASENJIT BARMAN:
SHRI AHMED HOSSAIN
MONDAL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of stations on the Northeast Frontier Railway have been converted into contractor-operated halt stations;

(b) if so, what are the names of these stations and what are the reasons for such conversion; and

(c) whether Government propose to revise their decision in view of the economic backwardness of the area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN): (a) No.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Gap between production and demand of Fertilizers

47. SHRI N. K. P. SALVE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite the sizeable increase in the contemplated production capacity of nitrogen and phosphatic fertilizers during the Sixth Five Year Plan period the gap between production and demand of fertilizers by the end of that Plan period is likely to be wider than at present;

(b) if so, what is the likely gap between production and demand at the end of the Sixth Five Year Plan and how it compares with the gap as at present; and

(c) what special additional efforts and schemes are proposed to be implemented to bridge this gap?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) and (b) The draft Sixth Plan has tentatively estimated that, in 1982-83, the demand for fertilizers would be 52.5 lakh tonnes of Nitrogen and 16 lakh tonnes of P205, and the production 41 lakh tonnes of Nitrogen and 11.25 lakh tonnes of P205. Firm projections of demand and production in 1982-83 would be available only after the Plan is finalised.

The estimated demand for and production of fertilizers during 1978-79 are as follows:—

	(Figures in lakh tonnes)	
	Demand/ Consumption	Pro- duction
Nitrogen	34.00	22.50
P205	10.50	7.50

The demand for fertilizers is dependent on a variety of factors like weather conditions cost-benefit ratio between the input and the output, the coverage of high yielding varieties, etc. It may, therefore, be difficult to quantify with a degree of certainty the likely gap between demand and indigenous production at the end of the Sixth Plan period.

(c) Concerted efforts are being made to augment indigenous fertilizer capacity by taking up a number of large sized projects for implementation during the Sixth Plan period with a view to narrowing the gap between demand and indigenous production of fertilizers to the maximum extent possible. The gap would be met through imports as at present.