

SECURITY DEPOSIT FOR COOKING GAS CYLINDERS

*664. SHRI M. K. MOHTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that cooking gas dealers charge a sum of Rs. 1001- as security deposit from the consumers for gas cylinders;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this security deposit is invested by the dealers in their business without paying any interest to the consumers on this amount; and

(c) if so, whether Government propose to ask dealers to deposit the amount in Post Office and retain the Pass Book of the consumer as security instead of cash and if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI D. K. BAROOAH): (a) and (b) A security deposit of Rs. 100 per cylinder and regulator actually supplied on loan is collected from each consumer by the distributor on behalf of the concerned oil company. This deposit is not retained by the distributor, but is passed on to the oil company concerned, as the cylinders and pressure regulators are actually loaned by the companies to the customers. The actual cost of cylinders and pressure regulators to be maintained by the oil companies is much in excess of Rs. 100 per consumer as the oil company has to provide for more than one cylinder per consumer to maintain adequate stocks at the refinery filling plants/godowns/in transit etc. The companies do not also charge any rental on the cylinders and pressure regulators loaned to the consumers. In view of this the Companies do not pay any interest on the security deposits to the consumers.

(c) In view of the above, there is no such proposal.

RATIONALISATION IN SINDRI FERTILIZER PLANT

*665. SHRI SURAJ PRASAD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that the Sindri Fertilizer Plant needs rationalisation; and

(b) if so, when it will be completed?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI D. K. BAROOAH): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

Several measures, both short term and long term have been or are being taken to improve the economics of working of this plant through increased production. Apart from repairs and renovations to different sections of this old plant, a scheme is already under implementation for manufacture of triple superphosphate at Sindri. This would eliminate dependence on natural gypsum the quality and supplies of which are presenting difficulty and also ensure regular supply of by-product gypsum for production of ammonium sulphate.

2. Since these measures cannot by themselves be expected to improve the economics of working of this plant beyond a certain point, a large scale expansion and modernisation is also contemplated. The scheme which would increase the capacity for production of Nitrogen from about 90,000 tonnes per annum to about 2,55,000 tonnes per annum would be based on heavy petroleum fractions as the feedstock in lieu of coke/coke oven gas being presently used as feedstock at Sindri. This scheme is estimated to cost about Rs. 96 crores.