

crore has been made for the NRDWP in 2013-14. Up to 67% of the NRDWP funds allocated to States can be utilized for tackling water quality problems in rural areas of the country.

Opening of Ashok Paper Mill

4450. SHRI KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of the proposal for opening of the Ashok Paper Mill in Jogigopa, Assam; and

(b) whether the said Paper Mill will start functioning as a production unit in near future?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) Hindustan Paper Corporation (HPC) commissioned Techno Economic Study of Ashok Paper Mill, Assam (APM) through renowned consultants, M/s. Sandwell India Consulting Engineers Private Limited, Mumbai and based on the same, a Greenfield Project of 2,00,000 tonnes/annum capacity for manufacture of writing-printing paper with an envisaged investment of Rs. 2476 crore was formulated. In this regard, efforts have been made to obtain various statutory clearances, firm up availability of land, raw materials, finances etc. to expedite re-opening of the Mill.

Battery run auto-rickshaws

4451. SHRIMATI VASANTHI STANLEY: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry is going to introduce Quadricycles in metro cities;

(b) whether the Ministry will come forward to insist use of battery run auto-rickshaws in all the metro cities; and

(c) the details of steps taken by the Ministry to encourage solar power-operated vehicles?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) No Sir.

(b) No Sir.

(c) No such proposal for encouraging solar power operated vehicles is underway by this Ministry.

Technological advancement of PSUs

4452. SHRI HUSAIN DALWAI: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether rapid changes of technologies and open international trade environment have posed challenges for our manufacturing sector especially Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs);

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of measures taken by Government to make the country's Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) technologically advanced and competitive to face competition in world trade?

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Unleashed by open international trade environment, rapid changes of technologies and domestic liberalization policies exposed our manufacturing sector especially PSUs to challenges in terms of competitive pricing, increasing factor productivity, investing in R&D, capacity building of their human resources and embracing transparency and disclosure norms applicable globally. Government responded by providing an enabling environment so that the manufacturing sector and the public sector could reposition itself to meet the new challenges. A slew of reforms in corporate governance, target setting and evaluation, incentives for improving performance were ushered in. Board for Reconstruction of Public Sector Enterprises (BRPSE) was set up in 2004 to diagnose early signs of sickness among PSUs and suggest measures to prevent sickness, revive and rehabilitate such PSUs so that these can compete better. A new National Manufacturing Policy was announced in 2011 to further bolster the performance of this sector.

Fall in sale of electric vehicles

4453. SHRI A. ELAVARASAN: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the sale of electric four-wheelers and two-wheelers have