

**High cost of the nuclear power plant**

1863. SHRIMATI VASANTHI STANLEY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that constructing and operating nuclear power plants are much costlier than operating coal or combined cycle gas turbine;

(b) whether there is any special research, workshop organized to share the advanced technology of the developed countries in this regard; and

(c) whether the Ministry has also done research to bring down the running cost of the nuclear power plants?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) The capital cost of nuclear power plants is higher than that of thermal power plants using coal and gas. However, the tariffs of nuclear power are comparable to those of contemporary thermal power plants located in the area.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Striving to reduce the operating costs is an ongoing exercise.

**Thorium as safe and clear energy source**

1864. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether scientists have now started to experiment the power of other radioactive element, thorium as safe and clear energy source;

(b) if so, whether according to them, the thorium based small nuclear reactors can make world, free from its dependency on coal and natural gas;

(c) if so, the reaction of Government thereto and whether Government is contemplating to use it; and

(d) if so, the time as well as the manner it is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Thorium plays a pivotal role in Indian Nuclear power programme. In fact, right at the beginning, a 3-stage Indian nuclear power programme has been chalked out and use of Thorium as an energy source has been contemplated during the third stage. Right from the inception of Indian