

The Government of India has approved continuation of RGGVY under Twelfth Five Year Plan, in which all remaining villages and habitations having population more than 100 including tea gardens are eligible to be covered for electrification.

Health of power transmission system in the country

1388. SHRI AMBETH RAJAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that inefficient transmission system is hampering the transfer of power from surplus areas to deficit areas in the country; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by Government to strengthen the National Power Grid?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) The surplus power from the States can be transferred to a power deficit State through the Inter-State Transmission System (ISTS) from the source of supply depending upon the Available Transfer Capacity (ATC) between the points of supply and point of drawal.

Generally, there is no constraint in inter-State transmission of power within the NEW Grid (comprising of Northern, Western, Eastern and North-Eastern Regions). However, at times, transmission capacity from NEW grid to Southern Regional (SR) grid is constrained due to limited capacity of the existing transmission system.

To strengthen the National Power Grid, Inter-regional links have been planned which would interconnect the five regional grids *i.e.* Northern Region (NR), Western Region (WR), Southern Region (SR), Eastern Region (ER) and North-Eastern Region (NER). Presently, the total transmission capacity of such inter-regional links is 31,850 MW (As on October, 2013) which would increase to 65,550 MW by the end of Twelfth Plan *i.e.* 2016-17.

Opening of medical college by NTPC at Sundergarh in Odisha

1389. SHRI RAMA CHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) has decided to start a hospital and medical college at Sundargarh in Odisha;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether the medical college could take admission of its first batch of students; and

(c) whether it is a fact that a mega power project of NTPC which was

supposed to start in Odisha is being shifted to some other State for the non co-operation of the State Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) and (b) Based on the request of Government of Odisha, NTPC has agreed in principle to set up a Hospital and Medical College at Sundargarh as part of Peripheral Activities under Rehabilitation & Resettlement Plan of Darlipalli Project, Distt. Sundargarh, for which Memorandum of Understanding with Government of Odisha will be signed shortly.

(c) No, Sir.

Electricity trade in SAARC nations

1390. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is preparing a roadmap for setting up an electricity grid to connect South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) nations;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what other initiatives are being taken by Government to promote cross-country electricity trade in the South Asian region;

(d) whether Government is taking any initiatives to promote collaboration with the neighbouring countries for the development of renewable energy sources; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. During the XV SAARC Summit held at Colombo from August 02-03, 2008, the Leaders of the SAARC Member States stressed the need to develop the regional hydro potential, grid connectivity and gas pipelines. The Working Group on Energy in its meeting held in Thimpu, Bhutan in 2009 rephrased this proposal as "Regional Inter-Governmental Framework Agreement" to Develop Power Generation from Hydro and other Thermal Energy Sources through regional Grid Connectivity and Pipelines.

Subsequently, the Government of India circulated a Draft Framework Agreement among the Member States which was then considered in a Workshop held in Udaipur on January 19, 2011. The Working Group on Energy, in its Seventh Meeting held in Sri Lanka in March 2013, mandated the SAARC Secretariat to give a legal