

Tapping of solar energy

50. DR. R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that tapping of solar energy in the country is very dismal, inspite of huge potential of solar energy, which is very environment friendly;

(b) if so, the reasons for under achievement in this regard;

(c) whether Government has identified any grey areas which hamper the tapping of potential energy; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) Tapping of solar energy in the country is very small (2647 MW as on 31.05.2014) as compared to the available potential of 30-50 MW /sq. km of shadow free open area.

(b) This cannot be treated as under achievement because the exploitation of solar energy in a big way has started only four years ago with the launch of Jawaharlal Nehru National Solar Mission. Solar energy continues to be expensive and therefore requires heavy investments. Solar energy has intermittent nature thereby making it difficult to integrate in the grid.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir. Lack of public awareness, high cost of generation and limitations of existing power evacuation and transmission networks have been identified as main hindering factors in tapping of optimal solar energy potential across the country.

Acceleration of solar energy programme

51. SHRI D.P. TRIPATHI: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is planning to accelerate the solar energy programme in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the cost of maintenance of solar energy equipment is very high; and

(d) if so, what facilities Government is providing to lower the maintenance cost?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): (a) Yes, Sir.