

[8th December, 2000] RAJYA SABHA

Investment Board (PIB). Investment appraisal of all these four urea projects was undertaken by the PIB in July 1999. A proposal for taking a final investment decision on the project was considered and deferred by the Government in June 2000. This proposal was formulated taking into account the observations of the PIB regarding the viability of the projects, desirability of encouraging use of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) as feedstock to reduce the incidence of subsidy and the need to stagger the implementation of the proposed projects due to limited demand supply gap forecasts, (b) No, Sir.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Ailing Pharma PSUs

2061. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned, "Ailing Pharma PSUs may get government lifeline," which appeared in Business Standard dated 15th November, 2000;

(b) whether support orders for the ailing PSUs are being given by the Ministry of Health, as reported; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (c) The news-item "Ailing Pharma PSUs may get Government lifeline" has not appeared in the Business Standard dated 15.11.2000.

Status of PNFC

2062. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the present state of sickness of PNFC;

(b) if so, whether Government have made any exercise to find out the reasons for the present state of affairs;

(c) whether there is any proposal with Government for restoration of subsidy on Ammonium Chloride Fertilizer; and

(d) whether Government are taking any action for subsidizing the price of Ammonia, by linking to the average subsidy being received by Urea?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) and (b) Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) has declared Punjab National Fertilizers and Chemicals Limited (PNFC), a company promoted by Punjab State Industrial Development Corporation (PSIDC), as a sick company and has recommended its winding up under Section 20(1) of the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provision) Act, 1985 due to unlikelihood of its becoming viable in future.

(c) There is no proposal at present for restoration of subsidy on ammonium chloride fertilizer.

(d) No, Sir.

Privatisation of NFL, Vijaipur

† 2063. SHRI VIKRAM VERMA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Vijaipur (M.P.) plant of NFL, is being privatised;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether benefits to employees of the unit life shift allowance, dust allowance, medical allowance, incentive production and incentive award have been stopped by framing new rules/regulations;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of the likely impact of privatisation on the employees and on their employment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a), (b) and (e) based on the recommendations of the Disinvestment Commission, Government have decided to disinvest 51% of its holding out of 97.65% in Natural Fertilizers Limited (NFL) in favour of strategic buyer alongwith the transfer of management control which is in accordance with the policy of bringing down Government equity in all non-strategic PSUs to 26% or less while fully protecting the interest of workers.

(c) and (d) Consequent upon implementation of the long term Wage Settlement between the management of NFL and its recognised Unions, certain facilities of the employees have been rationalised. As a result, perks and allowances have been given on basic pay of the employees in accordance with the Government guidelines.

† Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.