

- i. Lalitpur-Singrauli
- ii. Indore-Budhni
- iii. Tanakpur-Ghat Bageshwar
- iv. Ramnagar-Chaukhatiya
- v. Diphu-Karong-Imphal
- vi. Kumarghat-Agartala.

[English]

Oil Reserves in Bengal Basin

1280. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Bengal Basin was declared by the Oil and Natural Gas Commission as a very large reserve of petroleum;
- (b) if so, the steps taken to explore the region; and
- (c) the results of such exploration?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) No, Sir, Oil and Natural Gas Commission has never indicated any proven reserves for Bengal Basin. From geological considerations, however, the basin appears prospective.

(b) and (c). Having regard to the potentiality of the basin, exploration for hydrocarbons in West Bengal was started as early as 1949 by M/s. Standard Vacuum Oil Company (SVOC) in collaboration with the Government of India. Geological and Geophysical surveys were carried out by this Company. 10 wells were drilled which proved dry and the Company wound up its operation. Subsequently, Oil and Natural Gas Commission analysed the data and decided to pur-

sue exploration. Seismic surveys were continued by progressively inducting more sophisticated data acquisition system. This was followed by exploratory drilling. Till December, 1989, ONGC carried out seismic survey in onshore of 18996 LK and 12874 SLK. 31 Exploratory wells have been drilled by ONGC. However, no commercial success has been achieved. In offshore, exploratory work was started by M/s. Carlsberg Natomas in 1975-76. They conducted 5,600 line Kms of seismic surveys, followed by drilling of two wells, which proved dry. The exploratory work in offshore was followed by ONGC. Till the end of December, 1989, ONGC has carried out 8,632 Line Kms of seismic surveys and have drilled six wells. None of these proved hydrocarbon bearing.

Shuttle Train between Quilon and Punalur, Kerala

1281. SHRI SURESH KODIKKUNNIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is proposal to start a new shuttle service from Quilon to Punalur; and
- (b) if so, when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

- (b) Constraint of resources.

Railway Lines in Kerala

1282. SHRI SURESH KODIKKUNNIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether there is any proposal to conduct the survey for a new railway line from Chenganoor to Trivandrum via Punalur or Kotherakan;

(b) whether there is also any proposal for laying new railway lines connecting the important Pilgrim Centres like Sabarimala and Achencoil in Kerala; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir. There is no proposal at present, however, a Preliminary Engineering-cum-Traffic Survey for a new BG rail line between Kayankulam and Trivandrum via Kottarakara and Nedumangad was carried out in 1986-87. The project was not found to be financially viable.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Reservation Quota of Kollorkon and Punalur, Kerala

1283. SHRI SURESH KODIKKUNNIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to increase the existing quota of berths at Kollorkon and Punalur stations; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b). The following fresh quotas have been provided at Punalur and Kottarakara stations (there is no station as Kollorkon) with effect from 10.03.1990:—

<i>Station</i>	<i>Train No.</i>	<i>No. of Berths</i>
1	2	3
Punalur	2625 Trivandrum—New Delhi Express	2 II Class
Kottarakara	2625 Trivandrum—New Delhi Express	2 II Class
	1082 Kanniyakumari—Bombay V.T. Express	2 II Class
	2604 Trivandrum—Rajkot Weekly Express	2 II Class

Royalty to Assam Government on Crude Oil

1284. SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any demand from Assam Government for enhancement in the rate of royalty on production of crude oil;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any decision has been

taken in the matter; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d). Government of Assam has, inter-alia, demanded an increase in the rate of royalty on crude oil from Rs. 192/- to Rs. 405/- per tonne. The revision of royalty on crude oil is under review in consultation with the State Government. In the meanwhile, an