

which the hon. Member wanted is concerned that I am not in a position at this point of time to give. Once I have that information, I will pass on to him.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Prof. Kurien. He will ask a question pertaining to entire Kerala.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Sir, please do not confine it to Kerala. This is a very important question not only from the point of view of southern States but also from the point of view of the whole country.

Sir, first of all I would like to thank the hon. Minister for giving an unequivocal assurance that the Southern Gas Grid will become a reality by 1998. But I would like to ask him two or three specific questions.

Firstly, I want to know whether the Project Report has been prepared for the Southern Gas Grid;

Secondly, you said that the Project will be commissioned in 1998. When do you propose to start construction of the project? And thirdly, I want to know whether the pipeline will go up to Cochin. If not, according to the present scheme of things, what is the final point up to which the pipeline is proposed to reach?

I would like a categorical answer for these three questions

CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA: As I mentioned earlier, today, the southern Gas Grid is accepted in principle. The negotiations with Oman is going on. An MoU had been signed. I do not think, the Southern Gas Grid would have become a reality before the years 2007 at the earliest if we had banked only on our domestic consumption, the domestic availability, the excess from

the Western Offshore, the supplemental contribution from LNG etc., etc.

It is only after the Oman Gas Project has passed the stage of MoU and the pre-feasibility study for which at present negotiations are going on with Oman; they are at a crucial stage for the gas pricing formula. As I mentioned, State-wise, based on techno-economic consideration, the discussion will start now with all the southern States so that we come to know what is the requirement of these States, how much is the size of the southern gas pipeline, how much amount will flow through that; all these are techno/economic discussions which have yet to take place State-wise. That is the factual position.

[*Translation*]

Development Boards

126. S:IRIMATI PRATIBHA DEVISINGH PATIL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether some State Governments have submitted proposals for setting up of Development Boards in their States for approval of the Union Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof: and

(c) the time by which the approval is likely to be accorded?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P.M. SAYEED) : (a) and (b). The provision for setting up development Boards under Article 371 (2) applies only to the States of Maharashtra and Gujarat. Proposals have been received for:

- (i) Setting up Development Boards for Vidarbha, Marathwada and the rest of Maharashtra, from the Government of Maharashtra.
- (ii) Setting up a development Board for Kutch, from the Government of Gujarat.

(c) The proposals received from Government of Maharashtra have been approved.

The request of Government of Gujarat, is however, under consideration. As various legal, constitutional and political complexities are involved, it is not possible to indicate a definite time-frame for a final decision in this case.

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA DEVISINGH PATIL: I thank the Prime Minister and the Home Minister for taking a much awaited decision regarding Maharashtra. What is the thinking of the Government regarding this? Is the constitution of these Boards going to be under Article 371(2) under the Constitution as it is or will it be amended to give adequate role to play to the legislatures?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S.B. CHAVAN): This is as per Article 371(2).

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA DEVISINGH PATIL: How much time is the Government likely to take? How soon is the decision likely to be taken? What is going to be the nature of functions and powers - financial, administrative and otherwise - of these Boards?

The hon. Home Minister has the reputation of arriving at a decision after free and frank discussion. Therefore, will they call a meeting to discuss it with the State Government and the Members of Parliament before

coming to any concrete shape in respect of these Boards?

SHRI RAM NAIK : When the decision taken?

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: There seems to be some kind of misunderstanding. The Cabinet had taken a decision three days ago. I understand that the first question as it was replied and now the kind of reply that you have got, you would like to catch me on that point. The only point which is left in this is that now the Presidential Order will have to be issued; and thereafter all the details will have to be worked out by the Governor in consultation with the State Governments.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM NAIK : Mr. Speaker, Sir, with all these proposals which have been submitted to you by the Maharashtra Government, a proposal to set up a separate Board for Konkan has also been sent. Have you taken any decision in this regard? If no decision has been taken so far, then what are the reasons therefore?

[*English*]

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: Sir, it is a fact that Maharashtra Government had submitted a proposal for having a similar kind of Board for Konkan area, but that would have required an amendment in the Constitution. Even Maharashtra Government was also very keen that instead of waiting for the amendment of the Constitution, this Board should be immediately constituted. That is why rest of Maharashtra includes Konkan also.

[*Translations*]

SHRI RAM NAIK : The question was

whether you are going to do it in regard to Konkan or not? Please give a specific answer to this?

[English]

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: it is a matter for which Maharashtra Government itself has not pressed. If Maharashtra Government were to say that even at this stage they would like to have a saperate Board for Konkan area, might be that we will have to consider as to what needs to be done because according to my assesement Constitutional amendment requires a particular majority. We have to see whether we have that kind of a majority or not.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: We will support it.

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: All right, let me think over it.

SHRI ANANTRAO DESHMUKH : Sir, on earlier occasions proposals were submitted by Maharashtra Government to the Union Government, I stand corrected, but these proposals were turned down by the Union Government. Now it seems that this proposal has been approved. I would like to know from the hon. Minister in what way the present proposal differs from the earlier proposal made by the State Government.

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: Since you are asking this question, I am sorry I have to now reveal the facts. I have been persistently saying; and Article 371(2) says that if the Boards are constituted under this Article, both the representative Government and the legislature, loss their rights.

There was a difference of opinion whether they lose their rights or not. Now I have received a letter from the Maharashtra Government saying, though we are aware of the

fact that all the powers as the elected Government enjoys, we are deprived of the same but still we would like to have the Board'.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMVILAS PASWAN : Mr., Deputy Speaker, Sir, this demand for the setting up of Development Boards has arisen because development has not taken place at a faster speed in many areas of the country and hence, the demand for the setting up of Development Boards. I would urge upon the Home Minister that he must give a reply to that, though he can say that technically it is not covered under this question. From the development point of view, the demand for creation of smaller States is also there and there is a case of Maharashtra also. All the political parties have supported the demand of declaring Vidarbha a smaller State. Do the Government propose to consider this demand? I would like to know from the Government whether they(Interruption):... I do not want to get embroiled in party politics. The Hon'ble Home Minister dreams at night and talks about supporting the demand of formation of Jharkhand State in the morning. I would like to ask the Government whether they have any concept of forming smaller States and in case they have, whether they have taken any action in this regard? Is the Government chalking out any plans regarding reconstruction of the States?

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am sorry to say that when it comes to Jharkhand, Mr. Paswan gets provoked and says things like my dreaming at night and assuring him in the morning. I have come to know as to what kind of feelings he has at heart with regard to Jharkhand. This matter does not arjve from this question as it pertains to Vidarbha, Maharashtra and Gujarat.

The demand for Vidarbha State was being raised and Article 371 (2) has been especially inserted to satisfy that. It does not relate to smaller States at all. You should not think on these lines and if you demand the formation of Jharkhand as a separate State, then that will be looked into.

[English]

DR. B.G. JAWALI: In the approved list given in the Minister's reply I do not find the name of Kamataka State even though there is a Development Board in Kamataka. (*Interruptions*) There is a board in the northern part of Karnataka called Hyderabad-Karnataka Development Board. It has been functioning for the last four years. I would like to know from the hon. Minister about the legitimacy of that Board, whether it has been approved or whether it is functioning illegally, or what its status is.

SHRI S.B. CHAVAN: About the Board which has been set up in the ex-Hyderabad part of Kamataka, I do not know, Article 37(2) does not envisage any such kind of a Board in that area. I will have to find out under what section this Board has been functioning.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI BHAVANA CHIKHLIA: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, Hon'ble Home Minister whether has conceded that he has received a proposal with regard to setting up of a Development Board in Kutch in Gujarat... (*Interruptions*)... But is the Government aware that narcotics such as heroin are being smuggled in that area on large scale for long... (*Interruptions*)... I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister as to what is the time-bound programme of the Government to ensure the speeding up of the proposal of setting up of the Development Board in Kutch.

SHRI S. B. CHAVAN : It is not linked

with heroin etc... (*Interruptions*).

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE : You have approved the proposals of setting up of Development Boards in Vidarbha and Marathwada because these are parts of Maharashtra but why Gujarat is being discriminated against?

[English]

SHRI S. B. CHAVAN : The hon. Leader of the Opposition must be aware of the fact that for Kutch a Development Board was established in 1976. But in the very next year, at the request of the Gujarat Government it had to be rescinded. Now this is a fresh demand which I have received just a week back. So, we will have to properly examine all aspects of the question and I can assure you that there will be no differentiation so far as I am concerned between Maharashtra and Gujarat. I can give them an assurance that I will take the first opportunity to see that Kutch also gets this Board.

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA : In view of the backwardness of Orissa the Orissa State Assembly has passed a resolution twice during the Congress regime and once during the Janata regime that Orissa should be treated as a special category State. Though it was not considered at the Government of India level, the people of these three districts, Kalahandi, Koraput and Phulbani have been consistently demanding that there should be a Special Development Board. May I know from the hon. Home Minister whether the State government has at any time approached the home Ministry for setting up a Special Development Board for the people of Kalahandi, Phulbani and Koraput districts?

SHRIMRUTYUNJAYANAYAK: A backward State is going to be more backward. My constituency, Phulbani, is suffering from perpetual, chronic and natural calamities

and all that. That is why, Shri Jena has raised this particular question. I want a specific and a categorical answer from the hon. Minister whether he will be setting up Special Development Boards in my region.

DR. KRUPASINDHU BHOI : Under Article 371(2) of the Constitution, Special Status Development Board for Maharashtra and Gujarat had been given. That will not serve the purpose. I want to know from the Minister whether he is going to consider setting up the Western Orissa Development Board or not. The hon. Member, Shri Jena, wants to divide the western Orissa like his Chief Minister, Shri Biju Patnaik. According to provision of Article 164 of the Constitution, special status on the lines of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe and Backward Class for Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh are covered. In this context, I want to know whether the Minister is going to amend Article 371(2) of the Constitution for setting up Special Development Boards in these two States.

SHRI S. B. CHAVAN : The matters are absolutely clear. If the hon. Members would read Article 371(2) of the Constitution, they will understand that this is confined only to two States. And that is also because of peculiar and historical circumstances. Now, certain areas in their State, which are backward, are not covered under this Article 371. That is why, it will not be possible for me to give any reaction to the hon.

Members on this.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[*English*]

Oil Drilling

*124. SHRI ANNA JOSHI : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of NRI and multinational companies who have applied for permission for oil drilling in India;

(b) the details of the companies who have been granted permission during the last one year and the broad terms and conditions thereof; and

(c) the time by which these companies would start commercial production ?

The MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA) : (a) One group of NRIs and 30 foreign companies have applied for exploration for oil and gas in the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Rounds of bidding

(b) During 1993, contracts with the following companies have been signed :-

<i>Name of company/consortium</i>	<i>Name of Block</i>
Consortium of Hindustan Oil Exploration Company and Mafatlal Industries, both of India.	GN-ON-90/3 in Pranhita-Godavari (Gondwana) onshore basin.
Consortium comprising of M/s Albion International resources Inc. of U.S.A.; Complex Resources Limited of Australia; M/s Overseas Exploration Corporation of U.S.A. and Hindustan Oil Exploration Company of India.	KG-OS-90/1 in Krishna-Godavari Offshore basin.