

(a) whether it is a fact that State Government of Maharashtra has approached the Union Government to lay the gas pipeline to carry Bombay High crude to North India by the Central Railway line route instead of the proposed Western Railway line;

(b) if so, Whether Government have considered all the aspects of the matter; and

(c) if so, the results thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM (SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA) : (a) Yes, Sir. Government of Maharashtra had suggested that the gas pipeline be taken along the Central Railway route, i. e., Surat, Bhusawal, Itarsi, Bhopal and then to Jagdishpur.

(b) and (c). This was considered by the Government and found to be more expensive than the alternative alignment of routing the pipeline through Madhya Pradesh to Rajasthan and Utter Pradesh.

Tenders for Onshore drilling Contracts

2238. SHRI MUKUL WASNIK : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Oil and Natural Gas Commission has recently invited tenders for the award of deep onshore drilling contracts;

(b) if so, the response thereto; and

(c) whether the bids have been finalised ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM (SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA) : (a) Yes Sir. The Oil and Natural Gas Commission has invited two tenders, one for the charter hire of four 6000 mts. drilling rigs and the second for the charter hire of two 3500 mts drilling rigs from Indian entrepreneurs.

(b) Quotation were received from 15 firms in the first tender and 13 firms in the second tender.

(c) No Sir.

S. T. D. facility to Buldana District in Maharashtra

2239. SHRI MUKUL WASNIK : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have decided to connect all the districts in the country by S. T. D. ;

(b) if so, whether Government are considering to provide S. T. D. facility to the far flung and backward areas on priority;

(c) if so, whether Buldana district in Maharashtra is included in such a scheme; and

(d) if so, the time by which this facility will materialise there ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. Linking all District Headquarters to respective State Capitals in the country is a plan priority.

(c) and (d). Yes, Sir. For Buldana district in Maharashtra the District Headquarter of Buldana is proposed to be linked to Bombay by STD during the 7th plan period.

Integrated Telecommunication Network Programme

2241. SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question NO. 1888 on 20th July, 1982 regarding Integrated Telecommunication Network Programme and state :

(a) the progress made so far as in the expansion and development of the integrated programme; and