

GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir. 209/210, 211/212 Talcher-Puri Passengers and 221/222 Bhubaneswar-Talcher Fast Passenger are already running.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Neither feasible due to operational and resource constraints nor commercially justified.

**Drilling Operations by ONGC in New Areas**

1299. SHRI A. ASOKARAJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) the new areas in Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh shallow wa-

ters off the Gujarat coast and the Jaisalmer basin in Rajasthan where the Oil and Natural Gas Commission has extended its drilling operations;

(b) whether the steps have been taken for exploring the Palk Strait off Tamil Nadu coast which according to U.S.S.R. experts has great potential for oil exploration;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) Drilling operations in new areas have already been undertaken in the Shallow waters off Gujarat Coast and Shahgarh area in Jaisalmer Basin. The following new areas have been identified for exploratory/parametric drilling:

Madhya Pradesh	—	Tamia
		Dewari
		Jabera and Anhani
Maharashtra	—	Umarthi
		Padampur
Andhra Pradesh	—	Nagaram
		Ashwaraopet and Pranhita
		Godavari graben
Gujarat	—	Gulf of Cambay
Rajasthan	—	Miajlar sub basin.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) So far 13 exploratory wells on 7 prospects have been drilled in Palk straits of

which PH-9 prospect is found to be oil bearing. Oil indications were also obtained in PH-11. 10 more locations have been released for exploratory drilling.

(d) Does not arise.

### **Flaring of Natural Gas at Bombay High**

1300. SHRI A. ASOKARAJ:  
SHRI Y.S. RAJA SEKHAR  
REDDY:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether large quantity of natural gas from Bombay High is being burnt for want of a viable distribution system; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken to formulate a proper distribution system in order to ensure that this national wealth is not wasted?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY): (a) Presently about 14 million cubic metres per day of natural gas is being flared in the Western Offshore area, on account of lack of adequate compression and transportation facilities.

(b) Additional facilities are proposed to be set up for compression and transportation of the excess gas produced so that it can be brought onshore and supplied to consumers. At present the Heera-Uran Pipeline is being installed to link the Heera fields to the onshore terminal at Uran and it is expected to be commissioned during 1990-91. In addition, other pipelines and allied facilities are also being planned.

### **Terms of Railway Contracts**

1301. SHRI A. ASOKARAJ: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had set up a high power committee to take a fresh look at the general conditions of railway contract system;

(b) if so, whether the committee has submitted its recommendations;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) A committee of 3 Senior Administrative Grade Officers has been constituted in January, 1990.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d). Do not arise.

### **Soviet Offer for IL-96 Planes to Indian Airlines**

1302. SHRI JANARDHANA  
POOJARY:  
SHRI P.M. SAYEED:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Soviet Union has offered IL-96 aircraft to India for use by the Indian Airlines;

(b) whether Soviet Union has also offered to produce it jointly with India;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reaction of Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ARIF MOHAMMAD KHAN): (a) to (d). The Soviet Union has made an offer for sale of IL-96 aircraft to India for use by Air India. As regards, production of this aircraft jointly, a joint working group of the Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd. has been constituted to explore the possibilities of co-production.