

marketing companies have issued Letters of Intent for 42 petrol/diesel retail outlets in Andhra Pradesh. Of these, 36 retail outlets have been decided through the Oil Selection Board and six retail outlets have been allotted by the Government under discretionary powers on compassionate grounds.

[*Translation*]

**New Branch P.O. in Gujarat**

3734. SHRI MÁHESH KANODIA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state the number of new branch post offices sanctioned and actually opened in Gujarat during 1993-94?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): 15 branch post offices were sanctioned and opened in Gujarat during the year 1993-94.

[*English*]

**Production of Crude Oil and Natural Gas in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam**

3735. SHRI DWARAKA NATH DAS: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Oil India Limited (OIL) is taking to improve production of crude oil and natural gas in their fields in Arunachal Pradesh and Assam;

(b) the number of sick or abandoned wells in these areas;

(c) the funds earmarked by OIL for oil exploration activities in these areas;

(d) whether OIL has decided to engage

private parties for carrying out such operations in addition to their own efforts; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA): (a) Steps taken by Oil India Ltd. to improve production of crude oil include:

- (i) Prioritisation of drilling to more productive fields.
- (ii) Reduction in cycle-time of drilling.
- (iii) Continuous optimisation of gas lift performance.
- (iv) Stepping up pressure maintenance schemes, etc.

(b) As on 30.6.94, the OIL's number of sick wells and abandoned wells was 55 and 62 respectively, in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh.

(c) The amount earmarked for exploration by OIL in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh for the period 1994-95 to 1996-97 is about Rs. 297 crores.

(d) and (e). A few exploration blocks in and around OIL's concession areas in Assam and Arunachal Pradesh have been offered in the 5th, 6th, and 7th Rounds of bidding.

**Private Couriers**

3736. SHRI RAM NAIK: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to permit the private couriers to accept

and deliver "letters";

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether any deficiencies of the postal service have been identified; and

(d) if so, the steps taken/proposed to remove these deficiencies before permitting private couriers to accept and deliver "letters"?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No Sir.

(b) Does not arise, Sir.

(c) Some of the major deficiencies of the Postal Service at present are;

- (i) lack of technological inputs,
- (ii) comparatively low productivity due to lack of technology, and
- (iii) lack of customer orientation.

(d) Action is being taken to remove these deficiencies as far as possible to make the Postal Services an efficient instrument of Public Service.

[*Translation*]

#### **Petrol/Diesel Outlets in Madhya Pradesh**

3737. SHRI KHELAN RAM JANGDE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of retail outlets of petrol and diesel proposed to be opened in Madhya

Pradesh during 1994-95;

(b) whether the Government propose to provide more LPG agencies and retail outlets of petrol and diesel in the State; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA): (a) to (c). 102 retail outlet dealerships and 54 LPG distributorships have been included in the current Marketing Plans for Madhya Pradesh. Selection of dealers/distributors is underway through OSB (M.P.). It takes about 1-2 years for commissioning of the dealerships/distributorships after issue of advertisement. R.O. Marketing Plan beyond 1988-93 and LPG Marketing Plan beyond 1992-94 have not been finalised.

#### **Lime Stone in Madhya Pradesh**

3738. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated limestone resources in Madhya Pradesh; and

(b) the quantity of limestone exploited in the State during the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF MINES (SHRI BALRAM SINGH YADAV): (a) As on 1.4.1990, the total estimated limestone reserves in Madhya Pradesh are 9,449,985,000 tonnes.

(b) The total quantity of limestone exploited in Madhya Pradesh during the last three years is as follows: