

News-item captioned "China Steals a March"

6017. SHRI HARINATHA MISRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "China steals a march" in the 'Economic Times' dated 8th March, 1982;

(b) whether India has been able to attract barely half-a-dozen companies of which only one company has been selected so far for exploration;

(c) whether meanwhile China has invited 40 companies to declare by the end of this month their intention of bidding for a specified number of blocks and the country is to take a final decision on these bids by the end of this year; and

(d) if the answers to (b) and (c) be in the affirmative, the reasons for India taking belated decisions as compared to China?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Government has no authentic information; however the information gathered from newspaper reports appear to indicate that China is still facing many hurdles which have to be cleared before exploration contracts with foreign oil companies are finalised.

(d) Does not arise.

800 Reports on energy development Shelved

6018. SHRI HARINATHA MISRA: Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Mr. N.A. Palkiwala, a leading Tax Expert, in his recent talk on the Union Budget in Bombay observed that procrastination has made the authorities shelve as many as 800 report on various aspects of energy development; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government to this observation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENERGY (SHRI VIKRAM MAHAJAN): (a) No such statement by Shri N. A. Palikawala has come to the notice of this Ministry.

(b) Does not arise.

Oil exploration Agreement with Chevron Overseas Corporation of California

6019. SHRI HARINATHA MISRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item under the caption "Oil exploration—deal with Chevron may be signed next week", as published in the 'Economic Times' dated the 8th March, 1982;

(b) if so, whether Chevron Overseas Corporation of California is to sign an oil exploration agreement with Government of India; if so, when and terms and conditions thereof; and

(c) whether some integrated oil companies which had hitherto been lukewarm to the Government's offer have now been attracted; if so, the names of these companies and the field of their exploration?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI P. SHIV SHANKAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) An agreement for exploration and exploitation of hydrocarbons for Saurashtra Offshore Block II has been signed with Chevron on 26th March, 1982. The salient features and terms of the contract are :

(i) Chevron will bear the entire exploration risk and if there is no commercial discovery, the entire cost will be borne by Chevron.

(ii) The maximum period allowed for exploration is five years in two phases—the first phase is of three years and the second optional phase is of two years.

(iii) Chevron will carry out in the