

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF IRRIGATION AND POWER (SHRI SIDDHESHWAR PRASAD): (a) and (b). No such proposal is under consideration of the Government of India, nor has any such proposal been received so far from the State Government.

Petrol Filling Stations of Foreign Oil Companies and Indian Oil Corporation and their Profits

3289. SHRI PRIYA RAJAN DAS MUNSHI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state :

(a) the number of Petrol Filling Station of ESSO and other two foreign oil companies functioning in India against the total number of Petrol Filling Stations of the Indian Oil Corporation and Oil India Limited; and

(b) whether any report is available with Government about the gross profit of ESSO and other two foreign oil companies in comparison to Indian Oil Corporation and Oil India Limited?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PEROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI SHAH NAWAZ KHAN): (a) The number of retail outlets (Petrol/HSD filling station) as on 1st January, 1973 is as under:—

Esso Eastern Inc.	1920
Burmah-Siell Oil Storage & Distributing Company of India Ltd.	3478
Caltex (India) Ltd.	1372
Assam Oil Co. Ltd.	155
Indian Oil Corporation	3274

†Oil India Ltd., is not a marketing company.

(b) Profit before tax for the year 1972 is as under:—

	Rs./Lakhs.
Esso Eastern Inc.	961.78
Burmah Shell Oil Storage and Distributing Company of India Ltd.	724.20
Caltex (India) Ltd.	189.34
Assam Oil Co. Ltd.	126.70
Indian Oil Corporation Ltd., (for 1972-73) (Marketing Division)	3736.65

Shortage of Kerosene oil and its Black Marketing

3290. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DAS MUNSHI:
SHRI BIBHUTI MISHRA:

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

(a) the reasons of shortage of kerosene oil or scarcity of it in some parts of the country and particularly to eastern region during the month of August, September and October, 1973;

(b) whether Government are aware that kerosene oil was available on those days in blackmarket; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to arrest the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN): (a) Railways loco staff strikes, floods & breaches causing disruptions in communication and the strike at Barauni Refinery caused shortages of kerosene oil in some parts of the country during this period. Adequate inventories of kerosene oil however exist at present to meet the country's requirement in full.

(b) and (c). State Govts. have been empowered to handle cases of black-marketing etc. under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955.

Negotiations with foreign countries for off-shore oil Exploration

3291. SHRI R. P. DAS:
SHRI RAGHUNANDAN LAL BHATIA:

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

(a) whether any negotiations are going on with foreign countries for off-shore drilling;

- (b) the main features thereof; and
- (c) whether any agreement has been arrived at?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN): (a) Negotiations are in progress with a selected number of foreign parties who have given proposals for collaboration in off-shore oil exploration in our Continental Shelf as already intimated to the Lok Sabha in reply to Unstarred Question No. 314 answered on 13-11-1973.

(b) It is not in public interest to disclose the details of these negotiations.

(c) No, Sir.

Services of shed Khalasis terminated in Adra Division (South Eastern Railway during Agitation of Loco Staff

3292. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether services of some Shed Khalasis were terminated in Adra Division of the South Eastern Railway simply because their fathers had joined the agitation of the Loco Running Staff;

(b) if so, whether (i) any notices were issued to the employees concerned about the termination and (ii) such terminations were supported by the rules in force;

(c) whether all of them have been taken back on duty; and

(d) whether they have been paid their wages for the period they were illegally kept out of their jobs?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI): (a) to (d). Such temporary shed khalasis as join or abet others who proceed on illegal work stoppages are liable to be dis-

charged from service and their continuance in service after the strike depends on a review. There was only one case where the son, a temporary. Khalasi, was helping the employees on illegal strike including his own father. He was however, taken back to service on review after the strike was over. In the case of substitutes/causal workers the principle applied is "no work no pay".

Selling of Assets by Foreign Oil Companies

3293. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether foreign oil companies are selling their assets in India;

(b) if so, the amounts realised by them by sale thereof;

(c) whether those amounts have been expatriated; and

(d) the action Government are taking to stop this drainage of foreign exchange?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN): (a) to (d). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Expert Committee on prices of Petroleum Products

3294. SHRIMATI BIBHA GHOSH GOSWAMI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether an expert committee set up by Government is looking into the price policy for petroleum products; and

(b) if so, when the Committee is likely to submit its report?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI SHAHNAWAZ KHAN): (a) and (b). It has been de-