

Increasing prices of Crude by Foreign Oil Companies

2041. SHRI BHOGENDRA JHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 3815 on the 10th December, 1974 regarding steps taken against foreign oil companies for increasing prices of oil and state;

(a) whether examination of the reason of increase in crude oil prices by foreign oil companies has since been completed; and

(b) if so, the broad outlines reaction about and Government's reaction thereon?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI C. P. MAJHI):

(a) and (b). The price increases sought by the oil companies were as a result of the measures taken by the Government of the oil producing countries who progressively increased the rates of royalty, tax and participation. The prices claimed by the foreign oil companies were lower than the then prevailing market prices at which the Government could arrange crude imports.

These increases claimed by the foreign oil companies have been seen by the Government in the light of the various decisions taken by OPEC countries. Subsequent to the OPEC decision taken at Vienna on 12th December 1974 the foreign oil companies are now charging prices comparable to the market prices for the different crudes.

The foreign oil companies were allowed to import crude oil within the foreign exchange ceiling allocated to them, but the prices quoted by the oil companies were not fully recognised for recovery through product pricing mechanism.

Conversion of Metre Gauge Lines into Broad Gauge Lines in Gujarat

2042. SHRI VEKARIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state the progress in regard to the conversion of railway line from Metre Gauge to Broad Gauge in Gujarat?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BUTA SINGH): Following works are in progress under consideration for conversion in the Gujarat State. Their present position has been indicated against them:—

(i) Virangam-Okha/Forbander— Work in progress upto-date progress 34 per cent.

(ii) Gandhidham-Bhuj — Survey reports under examination.

(iii) Delhi-Ahmedabad — Survey reports under examination.

Demand for exemption of Recurring Charges in Maintaining Manned Level Crossing at Vengara

2043. SHRI M. K. KRISHNAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any memorandum from the President, Madai Panchayat, Madai (Cannanore District of Kerala) dated the 8th December, 1974 demanding exemption of all kinds of recurring charges in maintaining a manned level crossing at Vengara; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BUTA SINGH): (a) Yes.

(b) 'C' class manned level crossing at km. 779/9-10 between Payangadi and Birmala stations on Cannanore-Mangalore Section of Southern Rail-