

While the locations under SC/ST category are to be developed by the Corporation under Corpus Fund Scheme, the location for FF and Open category have been advertised as 'A' site. Under Corpus Fund Scheme and 'A' site ROs land etc. is to be provided by the oil companies. Since the ROs at Ramji Ka Gol, Chandan, Surana and Junia were ready for commissioning, these were allowed to be operated by IOC on ad hoc basis as per Oil Industry policy.

On receipt of a complaint the ad-hoc dealerships at Ramji Ka Gol and Chandan were suspended. However, on investigation by the Corporation the complaint was found baseless and the operation of these two ROs were resumed again. Ad hoc dealers have also been appointed for Surana and Junia but the ad-hoc dealership commissioned for location Junia has since been continued. Presently only three retail outlets viz. Chandan, Ramji ka Gol and Surana are in operation on ad-hoc basis in Rajasthan.

Government has already finalised selection procedure for allotment of dealerships/distributorships. The selection of dealers is to be made, out of the applying candidate by DSB, Rajasthan.

[Translation]

Welfare of Beedi Workers

5907. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether the beedi workers had met the collector and commissioner of Jabalpur district on 13th October, 1997 for redressal of their grievances;

(b) whether the Government are also aware that the beedi workers are deprived of the benefits of the beedi workers welfare provident fund scheme, group insurance scheme and Housing scheme etc. due to collusion between the labour department and company owners; and

(c) if so, the steps being contemplated by the Government to provide these facilities to the beedi workers?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Government is implementing various welfare schemes in the fields of Health, Housing, Education and Recreation, under the Beedi Workers Welfare Fund including Provident Fund Scheme and Group Insurance Scheme through the Labour Welfare organisation, Jabalpur, with active participation of State Labour Department and dispensaries functioning under the Fund.

Reservation of Services for SC/ST

5908. SHRI MAHENDRAJEET SINGH MALAVIYA: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Rajasthan has made provision for 5 and 45% reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in districts falling under Scheduled Tribes-sub-Plan area of the State;

(b) if so, whether State Government has made provision for reservation for other backward classes in this area and if not, the action proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard;

(c) the proposal of the Government in regard to increase the reservation quota of Scheduled Castes in the area falling under Scheduled Tribe-sub-Plan; and

(d) the basis on which the reservation has been made by the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI) : (a) to (d) The information is being collected from the State Government of Rajasthan and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Oil Exploration in West Bengal

5909. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the ONGC is going slow in its exploratory work and the oil exploration work at Ichapur in West Bengal;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the amount spent for the said project so far;

(d) whether the exploratory exercise by the ONGC over the years in West Bengal have found out oil deposit which is operationally viable; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) A sum of Rs. 53.78 crores has been spent on exploratory drilling in respect of Ichapur area till March 31, 1998.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Recognition of Union Labour Centres

5910. SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state whether in the changed political scenario, the trade union labour centres of regional political parties will be recognised and included as members of Standing Labour Committee etc., in order to represent the regional aspirations of the working class?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIYA) : The criteria for a trade union to be recognised as Central Trade union at present is that the trade union should have a verified membership of 5 lakhs or more and spread over at least four states and four industries. In the case of regional trade unions, if they fulfill the above criteria they could become Central Trade Union Organisations.

Increase and Decrease in Area after Independence

5911. SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state area of the country at present and the year-wise details of the increase or decrease in it after independence till date?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Cheating with Tourists by Touts

5912. SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to a news-item captioned "Terrified tourist taken for a ride by touts" appearing in the 'Indian Express' dated February 24, 1998;

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the action taken by Delhi Police against the culprits; and

(d) the steps being taken by the Union Government to ensure that the tourists arriving at airports and railway stations are not cheated by unscrupulous touts, taxi drivers and travel agents, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Ms. Monica Traczic had lodged a complaint with Delhi Police that she had on her arrival hired a taxi from Airport of Connaught Place but the taxi driver took her to the office of a travel agent near Gole Market, New Delhi from where she was sent to some place in Lajpat Nagar, New Delhi where she

was confined for four days and money extracted from her.

(c) On the basis of the investigations conducted by Delhi Police, four persons allegedly involved in the case were arrested and charge-sheeted in the Court. One more person suspected to be involved is absconding and has not so far been arrested but Delhi Police have obtained non-bailable warrant against him from the Court.

(d) The measures taken to eliminate the touting menace include deployment of police personnel at vulnerable points especially during peak hours, constant vigil at the pre-paid taxi booths; and rigorous and checking of the taxis carrying the passengers to their destination. In addition, Delhi Police arrested 943 "touts" and impounded 428 vehicles during the current year upto the 15th July, 1998.

Suicidal Death

5913. SHRI TATHAGATA SATPATHY : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the progress made till now regarding the investigations of the circumstances leading to the so-called suicidal death of Joint Secretary of Mines, Late M.C. Mohapatra on September 27, 1997 by jumping from Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi;

(b) the time by which the investigation is likely to be completed;

(c) whether any charge sheet has been filed by CBI in this case; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) As per the information received from the CBI, they have so far examined 58 witnesses connected with the case and also got constituted a Board of Doctors to examine the postmortem report in detail. Besides, the material collected from the scene of occurrence has been sent to the Central Forensic Science Laboratory for opinion which has been partly received.

(b) It is difficult to lay a specific time-frame for completion of the investigation as it depends on several factors.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Policy of Protect Consumers

5914. DR. PRABHA THAKUR : Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) the steps taken by the Government to protect