

services and extend the services to cover control of RTI/STI. Major initiatives for improvement in quality of services like replacement of the system of setting contraceptives targets set from above and monitoring based on sample surveys are already in place. During the current year impetus has been provided to operationalisation of Specific Schemes under the RCH for which proposals are required to be submitted by the State Governments for funding.

[*Translation*]

Length of India's Borders

1578. SHRI VIJAY GOEL: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the total length of India's borders in square kilometers; and

(b) if so, the details of places from where the foreign nationals infiltrate into the country?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) The approximate length of India's border with other countries is 15,106.70 kilometers.

(b) In view of the porous nature of the International border, it is not possible to indicate the place through which infiltration of foreign nationals take place.

[*English*]

Terrorist Activities in Kutch, Gujarat

1579. SHRI P.S. GADHAVI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the terrorist activities are being activated from across the border in Kutch district of Gujarat;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures taken by the Union Government to check such activities?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) to (c) There are some inputs to indicate that after fencing on Punjab and Rajasthan borders, the attention of Pak agencies has shifted towards the Gujarat border especially the creeks and the coastal areas and they are making efforts to activate smugglers and carriers at Badin & Diplo opposite Bhuj. To overcome the problem,

BSF troops are on alert so as to check any infiltration or any other anti-India activities. BSF has taken the following steps in this regard:—

- (i) Deployment of more troops, sanctioned by Govt. under the expansion plan, and thereby reducing inter BOP gaps for better border management and vigilance;
- (ii) Out Posts, patrolling and naka duties have been intensified;
- (iii) Intensifying patrolling on the border/creek area on vehicles, horse, camel and boats;
- (iv) Construction and manning of more numbers of OP Towers;
- (v) Use of modern gadgets and Night Vision Devices to check infiltration;
- (vi) Proposed construction/erection of border securing fencing, flood light and border road in the stretch of Rann area adjoining Barmer distt. in Rajasthan for better domination and effective check or crossing by miscreants, smugglers and militants;
- (vii) Upgradation of Intelligence net work.
- (viii) Conduct of frequent co-ordination meeting with locals.

Off-shore and On-shore Drilling

1580. SHRI PRASAD BABURAO TANPURE:
SHRI S.S. OWAISI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of countries where Indian Oil Companies are on the job at present;

(b) the number of work orders received by these companies during the last three years, country-wise;

(c) whether a high level delegation visited Russia recently to pick up equity in Russian Oil companies;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith the outcome of the visit and the investment in foreign exchange likely to be made therein;

(e) whether any areas have been identified for off shore and on shore drilling of oil; and

(f) if so, the details and location thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) ONGC Videsh Ltd., with British Petroleum and State Oil is executing a Production Sharing Contract in Vietnam. In addition, ONGC has entered into 2 drilling service contracts in Bangladesh and one drilling service contract in Oman. OIL has signed a farm-out agreement with M/s. TOTAL of France for 20% participating interest in an exploration project in Oman Block-4.

(c) to (f) Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas had visited Russia recently. During the visit, the following was discussed:—

- (i) Participation by Indian Exploration and production companies in Russia and third countries;
- (ii) Participation by Indian companies in the equity holding of Russian Oil Companies; and
- (iii) Participation by Russian companies in India's E&P Sector. Details of proposals are under discussion between the Indian and Russian Companies.

Conference of Chief Secretaries

1581. SHRI PRAMOTHES MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a conference of Chief Secretaries held recently to review on the price rise of essential commodities;

(b) if so, the details of other points discussed and outcome thereof;

(c) whether any directives have been issued to States to contain the prices; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) to (d) A meeting of the Chief Secretaries of all States/Union Territories was convened by the Cabinet Secretary on 7.11.98 at New Delhi to review the price situation of essential commodities in the country. The meeting discussed various aspects of the price rise and reached certain conclusions. A summary of conclusions arrived at the meeting is given in attached statement.

Statement

Meeting of Chief Secretaries of States/Union Territories taken by the Cabinet Secretary on 7.11.1998 at New Delhi

In pursuance of a decision taken recently by the Prime Minister in a meeting with the Group of Ministers, the Cabinet Secretary today held a meeting with the Chief Secretaries of State Governments and Union Territories to review the situation arising out of the recent increase in the prices of some essential commodities. The meeting took note of the abnormal increase in prices and discussed measures, both short term and otherwise to bring down prices and to avoid a recurrence of the problem. After a detailed review of the situation, the meeting reached the following conclusions:—

- (i) In the light of the damage caused to seedings for the late kharif crop of onions, it was felt that the ban on their export, which currently is valid till the 30th November, 1998, may be extended till the 31st January, 1999.
- (ii) Restrictions on the movement of essential commodities including informal restrictions need to be lifted in the interest of their free flow throughout the country.
- (iii) Stringent action should be taken against hoarders and blackmarketeers under the provisions of the Essential Commodities Act and the Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act. It was noted that necessary powers in this regard already stand delegated to the State Governments and Union Territories and they should invoke these powers whenever warranted.