

Seismic Survey

827. SHRI UTTAMSINGH PAWAR : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have entered into an agreement with PGS Ocean Bottom Seismic, a Norwegian Company for a dimensional Ocean bottom cable technique seismic survey over Mumbai High;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the project is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) and (b) ONGC has awarded a contract to M/s. PGS OBS, Norway on 20.6.1997 for 3D acquisition, processing and interpretation work in the Mumbai High at a value of US\$ 49.73 million.

(c) The project is to be completed by 31.10.98.

Conditions of National Highways in Punjab

828. SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH BADAL : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the poor condition of the National Highways passing through Faridkot district of Punjab particularly Dabwali-Malout section due to the water logging and lack of repair; and

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government to retrieve the situation by providing immediate assistance for the repair, expansion and maintenance of these roads?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b) The Government is aware of settlement of certain stretches of National Highways between Dabwali to Malout & Bhatinda to Malout. The causes of settlement are being investigated for taking suitable permanent remedial measures. Regular maintenance is being done and the NHs are being kept in traffic worthy conditions within available resources.

[*Translation*]

Policy on Gas Utility

829. DR. ARVIND SHARMA :
SHRI NARENDRA BUDANIA :

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

(a) whether the Government propose to formulate a policy on gas utility; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA) : (a) The Govt. already has a policy on gas utilisation.

(b) The present policy provides for allocation of gas according to imputed economic value of natural gas use subject to preference for the power and fertiliser sectors. It also provides for the extraction of higher value components like C2/C3 and LPG from natural gas wherever possible.

[*English*]

Problems faced by Sportsmen

830. SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether sportsmen faced severe problems during the entire period of the National Games, held in Bangalore in the first week of June;

(b) if so, the details of their problems and the persons responsible for it;

(c) whether any action has been taken against the responsible persons;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI R. DHANUSHKODI ATHITHAN) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

Foreign Assistance for Tourist Spots

831. DR. Y.S. RAJASEKHARA REDDY : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the names of tourist spots in Andhra Pradesh which avail of foreign assistance in development of these spots;

(b) the criteria in providing foreign assistance to these tourist spots; and

(c) the names of tourist spots, State-wise which enjoy foreign assistance in development of tourist spot?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA) : (a) No foreign assistance has been provided through Deptt. of Tourism, Government of India.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Overseas Economic Co-operation Fund, Japan has extended soft loan assistance for infrastructure development along identified Buddhist circuit in U.P. & Bihar and Conservation and Tourism Development Project, Ajanta & Ellora in Maharashtra.

The places covered in U.P. include Sarnath, Kushinagar, Piprahwa and Sravasti and the places covered in Bihar are Bodhgaya, Nalanda, Rajgir and Vaishali.

The World Tourism Organisation and United Nations Development Programme have extended assistance for developing a Strategy for Environmentally Sustainable Tourism in Andamans.

Direct Flights between Mangalore and some Middle-East Countries

832. SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has taken a decision to operate direct flight between Mangalore and some of the countries in the Middle-East; and

(b) since when the flight operations will commence?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) and (b) Measures are being taken to set up Customs and Immigration facilities at Mangalore Airport for direct international services to Middle-East countries. No definite time frame can be indicated at this stage for commencement of actual operations.

By-pass at Namakkal, Tamil Nadu

833. SHRI K. KANDASAMY : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to lay a Bypass Road at Namakkal Municipal Town with the coordination of Tamil Nadu Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the estimated expenditure envisaged for the work;

(d) whether any land/engineering survey was made in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The construction of Namakkal Bypass could not be taken up due to budgetary constraints of this Ministry. However, it is being taken up on B.O.T. (Build, Operate and Transfer) basis.

(c) to (e) The land acquisition for this purpose is in advanced stage of completion.

Plight of an Athlete

834. SHRI THOMAS HANSDA : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware about the plight of a Junior National Champion of Bihar who won the Gold Medal at the Junior National Athletic Championship held at Tamil Nadu in December, 1996;

(b) if so, whether the stipend being given to him for the past six months has been stopped;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Union Government propose to take steps for his proper diet and financial help who is being coached for the forthcoming Junior Asian Athletic Championship; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI R. DHANUSHKODI ATHITHAN) : (a) to (e) The required information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Opening of Gas Agency

835. DR. SAHEBRAO SUKRAM BAGUL : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal for opening of gas agency in Tribal area, Dhulia district of Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?