

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to open a petrol/diesel pump on this stretch of Highway?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per the Express Highway Rules, no retail outlet can be opened on the Express Highway unless a parallel service road is available. Since there is no service road available in the Sion-Thane stretch, no retail outlets can be commissioned on this highway.

Loss of Rigs in ONGC

4853. MAJOR GENERAL BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDJURI, AVSM : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is frequent loss of drilling Rigs in Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC);

(b) if so, the number of such Rigs lost alongwith their cost during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the Government are aware that quite a few of these losses are fake;

(d) if so, the number of inquiries have been conducted, location-wise; and

(e) the findings of these enquiries and the action by the Government in this regard?

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

(b) During the last three years, only one ONGC owned rig E-1400-8 was damaged in a blow out fire in Assam in the year 1995-96. The net book value of the rig is Rs. 19.59 lakhs.

One contract rig Hitdrill of M/s Hitech was destroyed in a blow out in East Godavari district in Feb., 1997.

(c) to (e) An enquiry was conducted by Dy. Director of Mines Safety, Digboi and ONGC and suitable action was taken against three erring officers in the E-1400-8 blow out.

In the M/s Hitech case an enquiry was conducted by Maj. Gen. SCN Jatar (Retd.). Based on the report action is in hand against three officers of ONGC.

Reduction of Security Forces in Kashmir

4854. SHRI RAMKRISHNA BABA PATIL : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government are reducing security forces in Kashmir;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether situation in the valley has been so normal to reduce the security forces;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) to (e) Central Security Forces are made available to the State Government to assist them in maintaining public order and tackling militancy. The levels of deployment depend upon overall security scenario in the country and the availability of Central Security Forces. Accordingly, Central Security Forces are being made available to the Government of Jammu and Kashmir keeping in view the availability of these forces and the prevailing security situation which is reviewed from time to time. Within J&K the Unified Headquarters keep reviewing the deployment which has to be dynamic keeping in view the changing situations.

[Translation]

Smuggling in Bihar

4855. SHRI PRABHASH CHANDRA TIWARI : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government are aware that smuggling of opium-hamp, gold and silver in Bihar due to nexus of local police officers has been detected; and

(b) if so, the measures taken to curb it?

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

Scandal in Traffic Signals

4856. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA :
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :
DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether a scandal involving crores of rupees in the traffic signals of the capital has been detected by an expert committee set up by the police authorities recently;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the expert committee has submitted its report;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) if not, the time by which the said report is likely to be submitted; and

(f) the action proposed to be taken by the Union Government against those involved in the scandal?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) to (f) A three member Committee of police officers found on random check that the maintenance contractor of traffic signals/blinkers had committed some irregularities; these included non-laying of cables and discrepancies in the length of the cables. Thereupon another Committee was constituted to check and physically verify each pending and future claim of the contractor; so that no over-payment is allowed. Delhi Police have informed that necessary deductions have been made before making payments to the contractor. Moreover, a show cause notice has also been issued to the contractor about the said irregularities. However, Delhi Police have been asked to examine, *inter alia*, whether there was any lapse on the part of police officials who had been assigned the responsibility for supervising the work.

Illegal Activities

4857. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of persons have been taken into custody, interrogated and arrested in Gujarat, Delhi, Punjab, Maharashtra and Jammu and Kashmir in connection with illegal arms and ammunition, illegal activities and espionage during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Union Government in this regard?

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

information regarding number of persons taken into custody, interrogated and arrested in Gujarat, Delhi, Punjab, Maharashtra and Jammu & Kashmir in connection with illegal arms and ammunition is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House. The number of persons arrested for spying during the last three years is as under:—

Year	No. of Cases	Persons arrested
1995	01	06
1996	02	01
1997	09	40

(c) Law & Order being State subject, the State Governments take appropriate steps towards crime detection and prevention.

Stalls/Shops in Red Fort

4858. SHRI VIJAY SINGH SOY : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some area in Red Fort, Delhi have been allotted to run shops for commercial use;

(b) if so, the details thereof *inter-alia* agreements regarding lease, rent, maintenance etc. thereof;

(c) whether any encroachments have been made by the said shop owners there; and

(d) if so, the detail of action taken/being taken to check any kind of encroachment by the shop owners?

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

(b) There are 37 shops in Red Fort under the management of the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) which were transferred to it by the erstwhile Notified Area Committee when MCD was formed on 7.4.1958. The MCD is collecting rent/licence fee from all the shopkeepers.

(c) and (d) No case of encroachment has come to the notice of MCD. However, some shopkeepers have made some additions/alterations inside the shops. The MCD takes prompt action as and when any encroachment comes to its notice.