

ticket which will be issued from next month. So, their hardships will have to be taken into consideration.

Then, I will elaborate further about the hardships of the Bombay commuters and supplement whatever Shri Ram Naik has said. But as far as the Railway Budget is concerned, I welcome it. I will also elaborate in what way the progress has been made and under what constraints the Railway Ministry is working as far as the whole of India is concerned. So, on both these points I will elaborate later on.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Sharad Dighe, you can continue later. We will take up this item after the Private Members' Business is completed.

15.32 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS

Twenty-Eighth Report

[*English*]

SHRI SURAJBHANU SOLANKI (Dhar): Sir, I beg to move:

"That this House do agree with the Twenty-Eighth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on 2nd March, 1994."

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That this House do agree with the Twenty-Eighth Report of the Committee on Private Members'

of Oil and Gas in eastern region

Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on 2nd March, 1994."

The motion was adopted.

15.33 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE: EXPLORATION OF OIL AND GAS IN EASTERN REGION—*Contd.*

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: For item No. 1 of today's Private Members' Business, the total time allotted is Two hours. Out of that, one hour and two minutes have already been consumed. The remaining time is 58 minutes. Shri Subroto Mukherjee was on his legs. He has already spoken for six minutes. He can continue his speech now.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SUBRATA . MUKHERJEE (Raiganj): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, there has already been a discussion at length on this issue. There is sufficient hydro-carbon available in West Bengal, particularly in Ichhapur, where 69 per cent of hydro carbon is laying mixed in earth, yet ONGC is not undertaking drilling work to the required extent in West Bengal. Several scientists opine that hydro carbon is in abundance in the basin of West Bengal. The sample of oil extracted from there was sent to Haldia Refinery for testing, where it was found of right quality but inspite of all that, the drilling work was left incomplete.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, similarly drilling of the Golf Green Well had to be

[Shri Subrata Mukherjee]

made upto the depth of 6800 metres but only drilling was done upto only 5800 metres. Likewise, metre drilling was done upto only 4950 in Bodra well number 11, South 24 pargana against the scheduled drilling upto 5500 metres. In the same way drilling was done upto only 5555 metres in the Diamond Harbar Well number 1 against the scheduled drilling upto 6500 metre. These things indicate that there is some deep conspiracy going on which is causing great harm to India. This view is also supported by the Ordinance issued by the hon. President on 25th January which provides that private agencies can also be involved for working in mines and in oil sector. This proves the fact that ONGC deliberately avoided full drilling as a part of a conspiracy so that this sector could be privatised. In this way, country's money is being wasted. There is no discussion on Rail Budget at this time but a perusal of the Rail Budget indicates that Railways are being pushed to privatisation. This is further supported by the fact that not even a single suggestion out of total 5 suggestions has been accepted. The Government of India is planning to privatise every sector of the country in this way. There can be nothing worse.

We, therefore, oppose it in the Parliament. Apart from this, I have already referred to many other things in my speech. I express my thanks for being given one more opportunity to express my views and with these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI DWARKA NATH DAS (Karimganj): Sir, North-East remained neglected since independence.

It is known to everybody that Assam is rich in several resources, as for example in oil resources and forest resources.

My point is, here, particularly in Southern Assam, it is said that it is floating on oil. But up to this day, drilling has been done in ten places. And out of these ten, six have already been abandoned, from two gas is coming and from the rest two, oil is coming out. We do not know why these six were abandoned. It generates power. We made a special request to the Government of India saying that electricity is generated from this. But do you know the present position of Southern Assam? At least out of 24 hours, 16 to 17 hours, there is load shedding. I do not know why. I do not know why the electricity cannot be generated. I have made several correspondences saying that electricity can be generated from this. But up to this day, nothing is said in this regard.

I know gas is a source of power. There are several demands from the gardens, specially from tea gardens to supply gas to them so that they can have the power to maintain their tea houses and factories and all those things. But up to this day, the Government of India has not given any reply to them whether they will supply gas to the tea gardens or not. Tea is another source of Assam which earns crores of rupees for the Indian Exchequer.

It is surprising that local people are not appointed in the ONGC office located at Barak Valley, in the Southern Assam. I fail to understand why the local people are not getting employment in the ONGC. I have received a letter from an employees' association of the ONGC saying that in the matter of promotions, in the services and in all these fields, ONGC does not follow the norms of the Government of India.

About Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, I feel, they are in a mi-

crosscopic minority in the ONGC because it is known to me that in advertisements, it is said that because candidates have no requisite qualification, they cannot be considered. It is a lame excuse. Because of this, the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes are deprived of jobs in ONGC particularly in Southern Assam

I can say that the Government is not making clean breast of everything regarding drilling in Southern Assam because they are playing something like hide and seek policy in regard to ONGC affairs.

So, I want the Government to make a clean breast of everything regarding the working of ONGC in North-East particularly in Southern Assam. In my place, at two or three places, drilling has been made, but ultimately they have abandoned it after spending crores and crores of rupees. I do not know why. First of all, it is drilled and then it is abandoned without getting any result. Why is it so?

In Southern Assam, particularly in Barakh Valley, there is sufficient source of oil and gas. I request the Government to look into the matter deeply and see that in Barakh Valley, which is in Southern Assam, this ONGC work is intensified.

You know very well that Assam is industrially thoroughly backward. In this House, the hon. Prime Minister announced that sufficient funds will be allocated for Assam to make it industrially advanced. In my place, there are two mills. One is Cachar Paper Mills. I think, within two or three years, it will be privatised. The second is Cachar Sugar Mill which remains closed for six or seven years. This is the condition of industry in Barakh Valley. So, in case of oil exploration, I urge upon the Government to

look at Southern Assam, particularly at Barakh Valley because I know that there is sufficient source of oil. That is why, this Government should see that oil is explored there.

I think the Government will look into the matter deeply and I hope that after this oil exploration at Barakh Valley, it will definitely increase the position of India in regard to oil supply.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir I rise to support the proposal moved by Shri Asim Balaji. Nobody can have any objection if adequate arrangement of survey, drilling, conservation and storage of natural oil and gas is made not only in eastern India, but also in other parts of the country. There was a time when there used to be acute shortage of oil in the country. So, keeping that in view, Oil and Natural Gas Commission was set up in our country. This Institutions, as a public undertaking, played a tremendous role in reconstruction of the country. The work of the Commission could have further been expanded if the Government had been sincere about that. Probably, foreign exchange worth millions of rupees which is wasted on the import of natural oil and gas, could have been saved. Our Government has formulated liberal economic policy for the country. The hon. Minister gave a reply in this august House only yesterday. When he was asked about the number of proposals received by the Government from private companies, non-resident Indians as also from foreign companies for undertaking the work of storage, conservation, drilling and conducting survey of oil, he replied that proposals of 10 non-resident Indians and 30 foreign companies have been re-

[Shri Mohan Singh]

[English]

ceived. What I have been able to make out of his reply is that the applications of only four foreign companies and two Indian companies have been found correct.

Contracts have been made with 6 companies only and that too for limited places like Gondwana, Godawari bed etc. No action has so far been taken either by the Department of Oil or by the Government of India in northern and eastern regions of the country where there are large reserves of oil. There is abundance of oil reserves in West Bengal, Orissa, North-East region and in Assam. Some survey was conducted in Bihar, but it was stated last year that the Government is not aware if oil-reserves are available there or not. However, according to the latest information, natural gas and oil is available near Some and Damodar rivers as also in Jharkhand area. The Government have not taken any initiative in this regard. Under the liberalisation policy, contracts have been entered into with Private companies, but no initiative in this regard has been taken by the Oil and Natural Gas Commission. The Government of India should not have any objection in involving private companies for this purpose.

With these words I would like to submit that the Government should undertake the work of survey and drilling in eastern region. The hon. Minister should give assurance in the House in this regard and should inform about the proposed schemes for Bihar and Bengal which would be completed in time bound programmes. I think this will suffice.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you very much for concluding your submission in the limited time.

You limited the time. In this way, many hon. Members can participate in this important debate. You can put in a capsule form the entire thing within the time limit. He has been able to put it very successfully. That is an ideal thing.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: (Barasat): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I also want to put my speech in a capsule form. As a matter of fact it is a very important Resolution and it also concerns the national interest. The Resolution has brought about three distinct points. The first point is that there is a cynical neglect of the exploration activities by the ONGC in West Bengal in particular and the northeastern region in general. The second point of the Resolution is, a demand is made for the acceleration of the exploration activities in these regions. The third point and the most important point is that, I think you will bear with me, an attempt has to be made for winning self-reliance in so far as the oil exploration is concerned. You can well understand the important issues which have been raised in this Resolution. I know that we have got the time constraint. I am always obedient to you and I shall not take much time. But please see that justice is done to this subject.

I want to draw your attention to the fact that there are huge prospects for bringing about self-reliance in the exploration work in the country. I have got certain figures to suggest the immensity of the potential. The report of the Government says that the total sedimentary basin is of the order of 1.72 million sq. kms. in India. Of these only 0.38 million sq. kms. lie in the offshore area. In huge areas there are possibilities of attaining self-sufficiency in oil for India.

Another thing which we should bear in mind is that a very small fraction of it has so far been exploited. The entire area has been divided into 26 dissymmetry basins. Out of these 26 basins, there has not been any exploratory work in five basins at all, and the remaining 21 basins have been grouped into four categories. West Bengal belongs to the Category 2 of that categorisation. Six basins falling in category 1 have been extensively explored which is the Bombay High region. As a matter of fact, Bombay High region has been over-exploited and you will allow me to say that it has been slaughtered. Already the production there has been halved because there has been overwork in Bombay High. Therefore the necessity arises to explore or to expand the exploratory work in order that we can replenish the oil lifting. If we do not, you will slaughter Bombay High and ultimately there will be no indigenous production in the country and you will finally sell away the interest of the country in order to import oil from outside. I will come to it in a few minutes time.

As a matter of fact, the decline in production has started. The indigenous production of oil is declining and a figure with me shows that the production of indigenous crude oil was 34 million tonnes in the year 1989-90. It came down to 27 million tonnes in 1992-93. As a matter of fact, the production is declining and the demand for petroleum products in the country is increasing very fastly. It will reach 79 million tonnes by the end of the Eighth Five Year Plan. You can understand this. There is an increasing demand and there is also a regular decline in the indigenous production. If you take into account the percentage of self-sufficiency, it is also coming down. Self-sufficiency level attained at 67.8 per cent in the year 1984-85 has declined to 42.9 per cent in

1992-93. So, we are importing more and the indigenous production is declining. You will be astonished to learn that the import bill for the year 1992-93 was Rs 17,000 crores which is bigger than the Defence Budget of 1992-93. We spend more on importing oil than we spend for the Defence of the entire country. I presume that the hon. Minister who knows the subject will bear with me. I say that in the year 1997 the total import bill will exceed Rs 20,000 crores. This is the oil scenario in our country.

I will simply come to the cynical neglect of exploratory work in West Bengal and in the North-Eastern Region. In West Bengal, I think, oil was stuck in Ichhapur-I which is a part of my hon. friend's constituency which is near my constituency. I know that more than 42 oil wells were dug in West Bengal region. Of course, I know that Rs 900 crores have so far been spent and I admit that there is no doubt about the fact that you spend a lot on it. But my allegation is that you have mis-spent it; you have also wrongly formulated the work, your action plan was not correct and it was not scientific. I am also tempted to believe that there is also some element of conspiracy.

16.00 hrs.

There are elements of conspiracies from the topmost level of the ONGC. I have got no time. But I have got documents to prove it. This document is available with the hon. Minister. We have written there all the details how these things are being done. The sample which was taken out of the Isphore-I was examined by the Haldia Refinery.

MR DEPUTY SPEAKER Please conclude

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I know the subject. *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are other hon. Members. They also want to contribute.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Do not do justice to me. But do justice to the subject.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are also junior Members. They have got certain points to make.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: All right. He should reply to it: Is it a fact that oil struck from Ishapore-1 well was examined by the Haldia Refinery, and they came to the conclusion that really oil was stuck there and it should be continued?

Unfortunately, what has happened is that that exploration was not continued. It was stopped for certain so-called reasons. As a matter of fact, oil experts know that that belongs to the oilgassing sand package.

In this region, there is an every possibility of finding wells. Even the CFC, a foreign multinational concerns, also examined certain aspects of the West Bengal wells. They also felt that there are possibilities of getting oil in this region. Some mention has been made about Bodra well, Diamond Harbour well and other wells. In all these cases, we have pointed out that the optimum level, that is the contract level, was low. But the target depth was not reached. Before reaching the target depth, the drilling was stopped. The reason, we suspect, is that that the ONGC did not want that in West Bengal region oil is struck. Once oil is struck in West Bengal, there will be tremendous and immense economic development.

Many multinational companies of the Western world did not want that India should ever become self-reliant in oil. If India becomes self-reliant in oil, there is going to be a different political scenario in the world.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, please conclude. Mr. Chitta Basu, this subject shall not to be closed by 4.31, including the reply by the hon. Minister.

(Interruptions)

SHRI CHITTA BASU: It is true that he has mentioned that only six companies have been given certain foreign contracts.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are other hon. Members.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: I have spoken for 10 minutes and not more than that. Anyway, I shall complete it.

This is the advertisement made by the oil companies for Government of India. They have given many concessions in order to invite the foreign private companies to invest in oil sector. This is the Government of India's—I would say—advertisement. This new advertisement has brought about a tremendous change in the condition. Now the Government says that seismic survey can be conducted without any Government's regulation. Earlier, the foreign companies were given the contract to conduct the seismic survey. But a condition was there. The data collected will be given to the Government of India for their views.

Now they say to continue the seismic survey. They take all the data but nothing is to be given to the Government. Even information is not to be given to the

Government of India. Sir, they are taking all information about our hidden wealth and our Government does not even know what is actually hidden under our earth. This is anti-national and I must say this with all the emphasis at my command. No State Government is going to claim any royalty for the wealth struck. Foreign companies are not expected to give any royalty to the State Government if oil is struck in their soil. Does this serve our national interest? I am asking the House. They are giving the concession to exploit as much as they can but there is no necessity of giving royalty to the State Government concerned.

The last and most important point is that instead of sharing the production, Government is going to enter into profit sharing system. Thereby, if oil is raised by the foreign company, we cannot claim a particular part of that oil raised. We may claim certain percentage of the profit and that too, the foreign companies will so maintain their books of accounts that expenditure will be more and profit will be less and India will lose its financial interest. In spite of giving so much concessions, only six companies have got their names registered in India, as Mr. Mohan Singh has said.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: My difficulty is that we have to close the subject by 4.31 PM including the reply of the Minister and Mr. Asim Bala's speech. There are four more Members to speak and they will be denied an opportunity to speak.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: A few days before, you may remember that the Minister of Petroleum has informed the House on this point. The purpose of the Resolution is to increase the exploratory activity in the eastern region. But what is

the Government's position? On 24.2.94, only a few days before, Government says that as per ONGC's Eighth Five Year Plan, reduction in the number of drilling rigs is planned for West Bengal.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Other Members will not get a chance to speak.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Sir, Bihar and West Bengal are parts of India. You cannot say that West Bengal is not a part of India. Suddenly, on 24th, he said that there is no plan for expansion of drilling activities in West Bengal and Sir, you shall not allow me to say so. This is not what I am saying. This is all what he has said on that day and you have become so impatient. Sir, I am sorry that I have to raise my voice and it is the occasion to raise my voice. This is not an occasion to submit weakly. You are selling the entire interest of the nation and you are not even protecting the national interest and you want me to be silent because you want to save a few minutes time. But I protest and the House should not accept this. This is private Members time and you cannot encroach upon it. Time can be very well extended. For Bihar friends, it is shocking that Gandak project has already been suspended and abolished and they have got the cheek to say it also that there is no plan for expanding the work in Bihar and that no drilling is planned in Bihar. What are we doing and what that gentleman is doing? He is more interested to bring back money from United States and defend his case in the US American court while selling the interest of India. Therefore, this is not merely an innocent Bill. I protest and I say that Parliament should rise to the occasion and should assert its right to say that this kind of anti-national concession should not be given to the multinational foreign companies just to get some way of foreign investment.

[Shri Chitta Basu]

Therefore, with all humility, I demand that the entire Exploration Policy should be revised so that the immense hidden wealth of oil underneath the country's soil is exploited properly and self-sufficiency in oil production is achieved and thereby our economic interests are fully preserved and protected and we can preserve, protect and strengthen the political sovereignty of our country. I reiterate that we cannot allow our country to be sold away to the multinationals just for a few drops of petrol!

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are four persons who are yet to participate in the debate. I would like to know whether it is possible for them to confine themselves to two minutes each. I say this because for every subject, we just cannot go on extending time. There are persons who have submitted their Bills and Resolutions long long back. Their subjects too should have time. All subjects are equally important. Therefore co-operation of hon. Member is necessary. It is just not possible to increase the time. I request you to put your points very briefly and precisely and not to take more than two to three minutes' time. There are some hon. Members who experience some sort of a starting trouble. I know that well. But I also know that there are some Members who can put forth their views in a very short time. I know Shri Tej Narainji can express all his points within minutes. Shri Tej Narain Singh please.

[Translation]

SHRI TEJ NARAYAN SINGH (Buxar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I stand to support the proposal of Shri Asim Bala ji. The Government is deliberately neglecting the vast oil reserves in the

North-East. If the Government gives up this attitude, I think, the Government will no longer need to import oil. During draught Oil is needed for running pump sets for irrigation. The Government is giving preference to imported goods over indigenous goods. There was a time when the Congress Party and its leader Mahatama Gandhi used to advocate the use of indigenous goods and boycott the imported goods. Now that very Congress Party advocates the use of imported goods discarding the use of indigenous goods.

It is the misfortune of the nation that imported goods are being preferred over indigenous goods. We have vast reserves of oil. The Government had handed over the task of exploiting the oil, to ONGC, but it is failed to deliver the goods. The Government should have pressurised ONGC to exploit the maximum oil at the earliest to meet the oil problem of the country. Oil reserves are now not confined to a single place. Champaran district in Bihar too has oil reserves, oil reserves already exist not only in the Eastern regions of Assam and Bengal but also in Champaran, leave aside the question of carrying out drilling operations no survey work has been undertaken there. There are immense reserves in Champaran. If the Government depends more upon the private companies, the country could not develop.

It is the misfortune of the nation that the President Promulgated on Ordinance on 25th January which allowed the private companies to locate the underground oil reserves. This work could have been done by the ONGC earlier. But it seems there was a conspiracy on the part of the Government, which did not allow ONGC to do so. Now the same work is being done by the private companies. Through this proposal I would like to state that

without oil India could not develop. It is due to oil that a small nation like Kuwait has a respectable position in the world, without seeking assistance from other countries. Therefore this Government should strive to exploit underground oil reserves to attain self-sufficiency. I think this would enable all round development of the nation. Therefore, through this proposal, I demand that Government should do this work at the earliest so that our country could develop.

With these words, I support this motion.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir today, the nation, which is self sufficient in oil, is supposed to be the most prosperous country in the world.

Unfortunately after independence the rulers of the nation did not paid so much attention to this side as it was desired. As a result thereof even after 47 years of independence our nation has not attained self-sufficiency in respect of oil and every year we have to spend millions and billions of rupees in the import of oil.

The proposal put forward by Shri Asim Bala ji has two-three parts. I think not only West Bengal even Rajasthan too has been ignored. In Nagore and Bikaner basin near Jaisalmer, in Thar district of Rajasthan best quality of oil reserves are available. According to the information obtained it has been found that the oil and natural gas reserves around Jaisalmer, is of good quality. But due attention has not been paid towards it and Rajasthan has been continuously neglected in the field of conducting survey for exploitation of oil and drilling marketing distribution or storage of oil by oil India limited, ONGC or any other agency.

In most of the States, oil refineries have been set up, but no oil refinery has been set up in Rajasthan till date. Oil pipe lines have been laid through Rajasthan to Mathura and Karnal or to some other place. I want to request that it is not a question of North, South or East or West. In a river basin or coastal area or Desert region in the country or in Assam or Bay of Bengal, oil can be found wherever natural gas or hydro-carbons have been found.

Self-sufficiency in oil is not possible by depending upon multi-nationals. There must be co-ordination among the foreign companies, oil India limited, ONGC, GAIL for location, surveys and exploitation of oil reserves, so that the nation becomes self-sufficient in oil and natural gas, no matter how much money is needed.

With regret I have to say that in 1992-93 our oil production fell short of the target by 10,66,000 tonnes. It was only 2,26,96,000 tonnes. For this the Government gives various excuses such as there was shortage of power, problem of storage or crisis in Bombay High; Production of oil from oil wells fell short of expectation. I think ONGC and others to whom the work of oil production was entrusted, should be held responsible. Had they given attention to these problems in time and located new oil wells, this situation would not have arisen.

Flaring of gas can be seen over a large area from several oil wells in Mehsana and Kalol, near Ahmedabad in Gujarat. Flaring of gas is its waste and it should be checked. While the demand for oil and gas is on the rise, we are recklessly wasting oil and natural gas. This is also a misuse of natural resources of the country. The crisis in oil and natural gas is due to the continuous shortfall in oil pro-

[Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat]

duction. We have failed in exploring the new oil resources. We have shortage of equipments for oil exploration. The consumption of petroleum products is on increase and we have to spend millions of foreign exchange, in dollars in importing the oil. Loss is incurring in foreign trade. International debts are increasing. In such a situation keeping in view the fact that oil is of primary importance for the nation, we should rise above regionalism and provincialism and give utmost priority to attain self-sufficiency in oil and natural gas.

Sir, through you, I would like to submit that if oil is found in the desert area of Sind on Pakistan side then I feel that in India also, a thorough survey should be undertaken in Jaisalmer region.....(*Interruptions*) Jodhpur, Barmer, Bikaner and Nagaur then we may find substantial quantity of oil in this region.....(*Interruptions*) What I want to submit is that be it Krishna-Godavari basins or Coastal area of Kerala or in Bengal or Bihar or Himachal Pradesh, work of oil exploration should be undertaken to find out the possibilities of getting oil in these areas.

Sir, through you, I would request the hon. Minister not to depend so much on foreign companies. If multi-National companies are allowed to operate in this country, that should be only upto a certain limit or as per our requirements and there should be overall control of the Government, the ONGC or the Oil India on their functioning so that they may not belie our hopes, thereby mar the future of this country.

Sir, with these words I want to submit that while on one hand we should not neglect any sector in the field of explo-

ration of oil and natural gas, on the other hand, we should achieve optimum self-reliance in this area.

[*English*]

DR. KARTIKESHWAR PATRA (Balasore): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am very grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I only want to submit a point that is very vital. It is because all the Members who spoke before me have expressed their anguish that our Government is not taking appropriate steps for exploration of oil in our country. There are several possibilities in several river basins and other places where oil can be explored. But I am sure, our popular Government is very much interested to develop the economy of our country. Our Government is not neglecting anything. Perhaps our Government is also not neglecting the economic reforms.

Our hon. Minister is a dynamic man. He should come forward with all possibilities of exploration of oil throughout the country. Wherever such possibilities are there, the Government should take all necessary steps sincerely. There is no doubt that our Government is trying to be self-dependent in these areas. In these areas, our country is facing a serious crisis. We are importing oil from outside. That is why the price of oil is being hiked day by day.

I would request the hon. Minister to bring forward various Reports before the House so that the hon. Members can come to know as to what action the Government is taking.

SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA (Silchar): Hon. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, as per the prognosticated report, the whole North-East, particularly, the Barak Valley,

is floating on oil. But it is seen that ONGC just starts drilling and after drilling a pit, they abandon it. This is the case in various places of the North-East. It is said that the oil or gas pipes do not come up to the length that they ought to.

Before going to that length, they abandon drilling. This is the case. In that way, money of the Government is being squandered.

Secondly, I will tell you something about the border of Bangladesh. It is said that Bangladesh is vigorously working for drilling of oil and natural gas. There are areas near Bangladesh in Indian territory. If immediate action is not taken by the Government of India for extraction of oil or natural gas, then this might be extracted by Bangladesh from the Indian territory. That is why, I request the hon. Minister to take immediate steps in this respect.

It is said that some rigs have been taken away from Barak Valley to other places. I want to know from the hon. Minister whether the Government is going to close down the drilling work in the Barak Valley of Assam in future.

Lastly, I want to say that gas has been found from Adamtilla and Banskandi; but this gas is not being used; this is being burnt when for gas turbine efforts are going on, and when the State Government already made contract with the DLF Company; when they approach the ONGC for giving them gas coming out of Adamtilla and Banskandi, it is said that the ONGC refused to give them gas. So, I request the hon. Minister for construction of gas turbine so that gas coming out of Adamtilla and Banskandi should be given to the DLF Company for gas turbine and to solve the problem of electricity scarcity

in the north-east area, particularly the Barak Valley.

[Translation]

SHRI KAMLA MISHRA MADHUKAR (Motihari): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank you for providing me an opportunity to speak on this issue. Through his motion, Dr. Asim Bala has emphatically drawn the attention of the Government towards this issue. If the Government adopts this motion, it will safeguard the sovereignty of the country, help us to achieve self-reliance in the field of oil and remove the existing regional imbalances. Since all the Members of the House are unanimous on it, the Government must pay proper attention to it. I think that the young hon'ble Minister who is also my friend will certainly take care of it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, to elaborate it, I would like to submit that in North Bihar entire area right from Farbisganj to Narkatiaganj be it Ganges basin or Gandak Basin, it has tremendous possibilities of oil. At a number of places, drilling work was undertaken but it was left midway. After all what is the intention behind it, is it that very intention which finds mention in this motion. Infact the Government does not want either to develop the backward areas or to make the country self reliant in respect of oil. In this connection, the hon. Member Shri Chitta Basu has made a remark that our Government is dependent on the World Bank and our foreign masters are determining the direction of our policies. To make the observations of that sort is not a good thing. I would, therefore, request the Government to adopt this motion and go ahead with the work of oil exploration in the potential areas. The Government should not try to avoid this issue, instead they should go ahead in this di-

[Shri Kamla Mishra Madhukar]

rection. Now the Government can not even come out with the plea of crunch of resources as the foreign companies are being invited to operate here. Therefore, this work should be taken up immediately but we require to be cautious in this regard. Even in China foreign companies were invited there but that Government keeps its overall control on them. Whereas in India, it is going out of control of the Government. The Government should give a categorical reply whether the Government proposes to conduct a survey to explore oil reserves in North Bihar region. Have they fixed some time schedule for this purpose? If so, what is time schedule for the same? In the Godavari basin in West Bengal and in some other areas of Assam where oil reserves have been confirmed, exploration work should be undertaken to ensure local development and to make the country self-reliant in the field of oil. I have been the Member of this House for the last two decades. There was a time when India was all set to export its oil. At that time, Soviet Union had told us that there were oil reserves in India and there was a need to explore them. Now they do not want us to be self-reliant and to ensure our development. Our hon. Minister should be vigilant and go in for such policies which may lead to national development and ensure development in untouched areas, therefore this motion should be accepted.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We extend the time for the Bill by half-an-hour.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Barh): Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I support the resolu-

tion moved by Dr. Asim Bala. He deserves my congratulations for putting pressure on the Government to explore the potential oil reserves in the Eastern sector. Hitherto the Government has been neglecting the Eastern sector in every respect. Just now a Congress M.P. from Eastern region was commending the Minister in the words that he is a dynamic Minister. The Minister was overwhelmed with joy on his remarks. Infact he is a dynamic Minister, there is no doubt in it... (Interruptions)...Today, the Chief Election Commissioner has made a statement that he has come to know about a Member who had spent nearly rupees 2 crore to win the election. There are a lot of points of dynamism. Does it have any relevance or not? You might have come to know during the zero hour as to what type of buses you are allowing to operate in Delhi...(Interruptions) and Red line buses are also operating there. (Interruptions)

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): I would like to clarify this because the hon. Member comes from Bihar and he does not know that the buses which ply in Delhi does not come under the Ministry of Transport. They come under the State Government.

Hon. Members have been raising issues like killer buses and all sorts of things. I have repeatedly made it clear that the Central Government has nothing to do with it. It was a policy decision which was implemented by the Delhi Administration. If the hon. Members had spoken they must have spoken very rightly, I am equally concerned with it. But what I want to clarify, since you have mentioned this to me, that the Transport Ministry does

not have anything to do with the Red line buses in Delhi

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR I did not mean their Ministry of Transport I have heard what they have been saying about the role of Shri Tytler in respect of the operation of Red line buses in Delhi, as I have been living in Delhi for quite some time That is why I had made a mention of it He is an intelligent fellow that is why he was giving his clarification Bihar and Eastern areas have also been neglected in the current Rail budget which was presented here a few days back In the field of oil and Natural Gas exploration that area has remained neglected

ONGC was working in Champaran, Darbhanga and other areas of Bihar It was a daily feature that Officers flew from Patna to the spot in helicopter However, all of a sudden work was stopped there In the last Lok Sabha the then Government had stated that work would not be stopped there in view of possibilities of oil and gas reserves there and that the unit is expected to be viable This was the Government's estimate However with the present Government assuming office suddenly that criteria under went a change and the work has been stopped there I allege that this Government has stopped this work out political vindictiveness Most of the Eastern States, are out of their control In this way this Government do not stand to gain anything in Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa Therefore, the Government is not inclined to explore and exploit possible large oil and gas reserves in the area

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I urge upon you to give strict instructions to the Government to remove this sort of imbal-

ances The hon Minister should make it clear on which grounds this project, which the previous Government considered viable has been dropped by this Government That is why I stated that you have been neglecting this area Now Shri Tytler will accuse me of speaking out of context but infact it is not so While presenting the Budget hon Minister of Finance stated that this Government is not a minority Government but it has mustered majority support now I would like to know whether his comment in any case was relevant in the context of Budget I want to know from Shri Tytler about it The role played by Shri Satish Sharma is known to all and sundry The hon Member from Bihar were wooed to defect and was inducted into the Cabinet but the same State from where he hails has been neglected in the matter of development While giving the charge of the Ministry of Fertilisers to him, this should also have been ensured, as to how his Ministry may benefit his home State So, Government should take a wider view Though defections are being praised, but the State from which he hails is not getting Justice We are not begging from you The reasons for imbalances in the Balance of Payments should also be looked into Most of the expenditure is being incurred on the import of Petroleum product

Secondly, I would like to submit that last time also debate was held on the heavy expenditure incurred on petroleum imports and the need to explore oil reserves in the country The Government can ponder over on acquiring technology and capital from abroad However, we must explore our own resources to end dependence on other countries. The reason for the present State of affairs is due to expenditure on oil imports The Government should try to reduce oil consumption within the country The Gov-

[Shri Nitish Kumar]

eminent servants are being sanctioned advances for purchasing vehicles. What is the need for sanctioning advances? In China even senior Officers commute on bicycles but we the Members travel by Matadors and spend Rs. 3 on it. If expenditure on petrol is too much then the fares can be increased. Both the Officers and the Ministers should also travel by the Matadors to save oil. However, present state of affairs is such that the Ministers travel alone in a car and in escorted by two-three cars in the name of security. What is the utility of all this? So much oil is being wasted in the name of security. Last time Shri George Fernandes mentioned that in the melee fatal accidental firing can take place as the security personnel carry sophisticated weapons and besides this heavy expenditure on oil is also there. The Government have hired DLY Taxies. Are these free of charge? Every life is precious in the country. So many vehicles are being deployed for the security of VIP's and a lot of wasteful expenditure on oil is being incurred.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit that the only way out for saving oil and conserving foreign exchange is that the officials should ride bicycles and Car Loan should not be sanctioned to them. It is not proper that officials many frequently use Government vehicles. This will check the environmental pollution could also be checked. Decline in oil imports will strengthen self-reliance and we will not have to depend on other countries on the World Bank for everything these days. The country can come out of this sort of situation and prevalent regional imbalances could also be removed. I urge the hon. Minister to do justice in this regard and explore the possibilities of oil in the Eastern States. Avail-

able gas reserves in this region could be used for development.

With these words I support the resolution moved by Dr. Asim Bala and conclude my speech.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, at the outset, I would like to thank Dr. Asim Bala and all the hon. Members who have participated in this discussion.

Dr. Asim Bala, while moving the Resolution, had raised several important points, which I would like to address. The hon. Member has expressed his concern at the fall in indigenous production of crude oil on the one hand while observing that the demand has been increasing. It is a fact that crude oil production, which was at 34 million metric tonnes in 1989-90 has in recent years been declining, touching a low of 26.95 million metric tonnes in 1992-93. Largely this was due to the fact that production from Bombay High fell owing to certain rectificatory measures, which we initiated to maintain reservoir balance and to prevent any damage to the health of the reservoir. As a part of the rectificatory measures, several high gas oil ratio wells had to be shut down. However, I would like to assure the House that these rectificatory measures have yielded positive results and from 1993-94 onwards production will be increasing.

For the year 1993-94 production will be 27 MMT and in each subsequent year, the production will increase by 5 MMT during the period of the Eighth Plan and is expected to reach 44.45 MMT in the year 1996-97.

of Oil

Dr. Asim Bala also referred to the discovery of Ichapur-1 and expressed his concern that ONGC instead of mobilising additional inputs in the form of new rigs and seismic prospecting have adopted a strategy of systematic withdrawal in West Bengal. He also suggested various options which the ONGC could have exercised for further work in Ichapur-1. I wish to reassure the Hon. Member that the Hydrocarbon indication at Ichapur-1 is being actively followed up by drilling Ichapur-II well. A decision was also taken to carry out 3D seismic survey in the area to further delineate the Thin-Pay Zone. The 3D survey is still being continued. However, when the Pay Zone was tested it produced non-economic quantity of condensate Hydrocarbon at the rate of 1 cu.m. per day only and gas at the rate of 1600-2000 Cu.M. per day. Further the pressure was low and also not on a sustained basis. CFP France in 1990 had concluded that Oligocene Low Stand Wedge is one of the last chances of finding Hydrocarbon in West Bengal. Dr. Asim Bala had referred to Golf Green-1 which he said had not been drilled to target depth. I wish to clarify that while there were chances of finding Hydrocarbon in Golf Green-1 area, the well drilled there suggests that this sequence does not hold any Hydrocarbons.

Such discrete sand bodies were also mapped in Krishnanagar-Ranaghat area, where hydrocarbon indication has been found in well Ichapur-1. Total-CFP Group had also agreed for exploration of older Paleocene sequence in this area but this sequence proved dry in Ichapur-1 well.

ONGC has already carried out a number of geochemical surveys in this area. Based on their results and drilling of Ichapur-1 ONGC has taken action for 3D

seismic survey in the area. To sum up the situation as far as Ichapur is concerned, I would like to say yes, we have found some indication of Hydrocarbons in this area and action for continuing 3D seismic survey is under way. This work will help to delineate the area and the actual prospects for further discovery.

Although adequate seismic and exploratory drilling work has been carried out by ONGC, the results so far have been discouraging in Bengal Basin. Despite this, ONGC is still continuing with further work in the area.

The targeted depth of Golf Green-1 well was 6000 m but drilling objectives were achieved at a depth of 5826 m as it penetrated 506 m of Eocene Limestone against the planned penetrations of 470 m. The 40 m thick sequence referred to earlier was tight limestone which was of no interest. This zone claimed as oil bearing was not so as per the drilling and log data. Testing of two intervals between 5785 and 5770.5 m indicated traces of oil and no commercial interest. This well entered into complication and has since been abandoned.

The hon. Member also referred to Bodra-2 well which was abandoned as well as Diamond Harbour-1 which was also abandoned. The hon. Member also mentioned that the flash point indicates that excellent content as in Ichapur-1 crude and it would entail lesser refining cost. I would like to clarify to the House the actual position with regard to this.

Well Bodra-2 was initially planned for 5500 m depth to test the prospects in Miocene sediments. However, at 4735 m itself the desired Miocene sediments were penetrated and hence the depth was revised to 4950 m. Incidentally, the two ob-

[Capt. Satish Kumar Sharma]

jectives tested were found to be water bearing with negligible dissolved gas and well had to be abandoned.

Diamond Harbour Well-1 was tested first by a deep Rig for ten months. Subsequently, it was again tested for a very prolonged period of over 2-¹/₂ years by a work Over Rig. All zones tested did not indicate any hydrocarbons and well was abandoned.

Ichapur-1 well yielded some condensate which normally has high API gravity. The gasoline content is also expected to be high due to which flash point was low.

As the productivity of the well was very poor (1 Cu. M. per day), therefore, adequate quantity of this condensate was not available to even consider any refining aspect.

The hon. Member also argued strongly about the possibilities of finding oil in West Bengal and stated that the Government had suddenly withdrawn all efforts in the State. This, however, is not borne out by facts.

ONGC has made all sincere efforts for exploration of hydrocarbons in West Bengal which is clearly evident from the very high expenditure of over Rs. 650 crores made in the area without any commercial success. Forty-five wells have been drilled and extensive seismic surveys have been carried out. During the Eighth Plan, ONGC has planned to carry out 6,590 Standard Line Kilometres (SLK) of seismic survey, 2D and 3D both, and drilling of five exploratory wells. A number of blocks have been offered for exploration in the State consistently in the

Fourth, Fifth and Sixth rounds of bidding. Again five blocks have been offered (two onshore and three offshore) under the Seventh round of bidding which closes on June 30, 1994.

The hon. Member finally referred to shortage of cooking gas and suggested that the gas available in Tripura could be brought through a pipeline to the West Bengal sector. In this regard, I would like to mention that the present production and sale of gas in Tripura is about 0.35 million cubic metres a day (MCMD) of non-associated gas. The envisaged demand of gas by the end of the Eighth Plan would be of the order of 1.8 MCMD against an anticipated production potential of about 2 MCMD. Thus, there is hardly any gas left for transporting from Tripura to neighbouring States.

ONGC would continue its planned activity in Bengal Basin during the Eighth Plan period. However, all over India, effort is being made to augment the pace of exploration and additional development of discovered fields in various Basins with the help of private Indian and foreign companies. In this context, a number of exploration blocks have been offered during various rounds of exploration bid-dings in Bengal Basin.

Let me give the figures once again. Two onshore blocks in West Bengal were offered in the Fourth Round of Exploration, two in the Fifth Round, six in the Sixth Round and five have been offered in the Seventh Round of bidding. We are hopeful that major exploration companies which have adequate technology and resources, would evince interest in the Seventh Round.

Shri Ramesh Chennithala, during his speech desired that exploration activi-

ties should be conducted in different parts of the country based on the Hydrocarbon potential He has stated that State should not be the criteria for this He has specifically mentioned that exploratory work is required in areas like Cochin, Cauvery Basin Krishna-Godavari basin, etc I would like to mention that the approach suggested by the hon Members is already being followed

ONGC is carrying out intensive exploration as well as development of discovered fields, both in Krishna-Godavari and Cauvery Basins in onshore as well as offshore parts

As far as the Kerala-Konkan coastal region is concerned, so far eight wells have been drilled (five by ONGC, two by Shell and one by BHP) None of these well indicated any hydrocarbons During the VIII Plan period 1992-97 about 14 000 Line Kilometres of 2D/3D seismic survey and drilling of six exploratory wells are envisaged in this region

Shri Sudhir Giri referred to the decision of the Government to offer exploration blocks to Indian and foreign companies The hon Member was of the view that Government is being forced to open its doors to foreign multinational companies This is not true

As mentioned earlier only to augment exploration activity and development of some small and medium sized fields in a very short span of time, bids have been invited from private foreign and Indian companies This will not only provide additional financial resources for faster activity in the country but will help to introduce state-of-art technologies in the country

The expected prognosticated hydrocarbon resources of the country are of the order of 21 billion tonnes So far only 2,100 million tonnes of recoverable reserves (oil + OEG) have been established in the country With the planned activity of ONGC and OIL during the VIII Plan, it is expected that over 350 million tonnes of additional recoverable reserves would be established

Kumari Mamta Banerjee pointed out that thirteen locations have been identified for exploration work in the eastern region She desired that a Task Force may be constituted for the eastern region to go into these matters I may mention that so far forty-five locations have in fact been drilled both onland and in the offshore areas of West Bengal Besides ONGC has been organising several discussions with experts to take further steps for exploration work in the Bengal Basin

Shri Subroto Mukherjee stated that three wells in his constituency namely Karandigi, Lahil and Raiganj have been abandoned I may clarify that these three wells have been drilled on older Gondwana prospect and proved dry They therefore had to be abandoned Kumari Mamata Banerjee also made valuable suggestions on the question of the expansion of the Haldia Refinery She was supported in this regard by Shri Subroto Mukherjee Both the hon Members desired that an expeditious decision may be taken for expansion of the Haldia Refinery

First of all I would like to briefly state the facts for the information of all the Members of this hon House Original expansion report for Haldia Refinery was given in June, 1981 Revised with some modifications it was re-submitted in

[Capt. Satish Kumar Sharma]

February, 1983. This envisaged land requirement of 225 acres for three MMTPA expansion from 2.5 to 5.5 MMTPA with Hydrocracker at an estimated cost of Rs. 573.54 crores at September, 1982 prices with a foreign exchange component of Rs. 103.61 crores. This proposal was not considered further since unit cost of expansion would be similar to new grass root refinery.

Possibility of expansion was again reviewed after 6-7 years. In this connection, (a) vacant land was found largely occupied with additional tankage and some other facilities, (b) economy of scale and considering product demand indicate that it would be more economical to set up a grass root refinery by 6 MMTPA. Expansion of Haldia by 6 MMTPA would be constrained by availability of water, power, rail services, etc. Besides, Haldia port also has constraints because of which development of alternate port was considered as an attractive alternative. EIL team also visited Haldia in October, 1990 to examine the feasibility by 3 MMTPA are found that this would be similar to the setting up of all the facilities at a new grass root level.

The Ministry had once again requested the Indian Oil Corporation in April, 1993 to re-examine the possibility of Haldia expansion. In response to this, the Indian Oil Corporation communicated in April, 1993 that there is no change in the position regarding expansion of Haldia Refinery as stated in their earlier letter of April, 1990. *As of today, there is no proposal from the Indian Oil Corporation for expansion of Haldia Refinery that is pending with the Government. Capacity of Haldia Refinery has already been increased from 2.5 MMTPA to 2.75 MMTPA by de-bottlenecking of existing facilities.*

Also, the lube oil block of the refinery has been expanded from a level of 136 thousand metric tonnes per year to 162 thousand metric tonnes per year. Further expansion of the lube oil block to 222 thousand metric tonnes per year is under implementation and scheduled to be completed by May, 1994.

I would also like to inform this hon. House that I recently had an occasion to discuss with the hon. Chief Minister of West Bengal, various matters pertaining to the oil and gas sector in West Bengal. Honourable Chief Minister mentioned that some international investors were keen to participate in a project for the expansion of the Haldia Refinery. I wish to inform that any project proposal which is technically feasible and economically viable would be welcome and my Ministry would certainly consider the same. We hope to respond as soon as the proposal is received. We also discussed in brief the exploration efforts already undertaken and also the measures required for improving the exploration activities. We are reviewing the quality of data already available and are also stepping up the 3-D Seismic Survey work in the Bengal Basin.

16.59 hrs.

[PROF. RITA VERMA *in the Chair*]

Sir, Shri Dwarakanath Das referred to certain issues pertaining to Assam like abandoning of six of the 10 wells drilled, the pending request for supply of gas to tea gardens, providing employment opportunities to the local youth including the *Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes*, etc. I wish to point out that youth are being employed in consonance with the Government's policy. In fact, in Oil India, all workers are from Assam. Also recruit-

529 *Resolu. Re: Exploration PHALGUNA 13, 1915 (SAKA) and Gas in eastern region* 530
of Oil

ment of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Castes youth is being done. There was, in fact, a special recruitment drive for filling up of backlog vacancies in ONGC recently.

As regards exploration in Cachar, 32 wells were drilled in the Seventh Plan period and 14 wells are planned during the Eighth Plan period. Four fields—two oil and two gas—have been discovered.

[Translation]

SHRI KAMLA MISHRA MADHUKAR (Motihari): Whole of the reply has been devoted to West Bengal. Machines deployed in North Bihar for oil exploration are being returned. Therefore, what is the guarantee that the exploration work will continue?

CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA: You shifted from East to West Bengal.

[English]

30,000 cubic metres of gas per day have been offered from two ONGC fields in Cachar for power generation. This proposal is under examination of the Power Ministry.

Sir, the hon. Member Shri Chitta Basu expressed an apprehension that private companies are being allowed to collect Seismic data without making the same available to the Government.

17.00 hrs.

This is incorrect. One copy of the data collected is invariably given to ONGC and Oil India.

As regards the offer of exploration blocks to private companies, I would like

to inform that while ONGC/OIL will continue to carry out exploration and production activities, efforts are being made to obtain private and outside investment to augment oil production.

As regards sharing of profits, the first right to purchase oil is with the Government after recovering cost oil. Profit oil is split in such a way that most of it comes to Government.

Shri Tej Narayan Singh spoke about drilling in Bihar. In this connection, I would like to point out that six wells were drilled in Bihar and 29,822 metres of surveys work conducted. Four wells in East and West Champaran have been drilled but without success.

Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat desired exploration efforts to be made in Rajasthan. We have already carried out extensive exploration work in Rajasthan through ONGC/OIL since 1966. ONGC has drilled 53 wells and OIL 20 wells. Total seismic survey of 11,500 standard line Kms by ONGC and 1,200 SLK by OIL has been completed. In addition, OIL has done 300 Sq. Kms. of 3-d Survey.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: RSEB has cleared the gas based power project to be set up in Ramgarh. However, the gas should be utilized in the power project of Jaisalmer too.

CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA: I have noted your suggestions.

[English]

Shri Kamla Mishra Madhukar and Shri Nitish Kumar have spoken about the

[Capt. Satish Kumar Sharma]

work done in Bihar and expressed their concern at what they felt was neglect of Bihar as far as exploration is concerned. The facts, however, are different.

ONGC has been continuing exploratory activities in Bihar since 1956. So far, ONGC has carried out 7138 LK/SLK of seismic surveys apart from Aeromagnetic and groundmagnetic and geological surveys and drilled six wells without any commercial success. ONGC is continuing its exploratory efforts during the Eighth Plan period in the State of Bihar and plans to conduct seismic surveys.

Four wells have been drilled in East and West Champaran without success.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR: How did you conclude that commercial success has not been achieved? Was it commercially used?

CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA: So far as oil business in Bihar, Bengal or any other part of the country is concerned, commercial success is not compulsory. Scientific work is to be carried out in those areas where oil is processed. Just as TUDI is there, then there is 3D or in other words three dimension. Every type of high quality seismic data is being collected there which helps in specifying and identifying the oil prospects and hydro prospects. Next phase can be of exploration and drilling. I am not going into the commercial success. Though substantial commercial success has not been achieved in West Bengal and Bihar but it has been achieved in Gujarat and Bombay High.

[English]

As far as finding oil is concerned, it is the most critical issue. Doing seismic work is the first stage and the most advanced seismic work done in today's oil world is called 3-D scientific data collection. That is what I intend to do more and more in areas like Bengal, specially border of Bengal, West Bengal and in those areas where on the other side we found oil.

In Rajasthan, we have the same situation and part of the area is in Pakistan now where we found some oil. Also in our Rajasthan, we have oil. We have found gas. There the most advanced 3-D data work will be done.

So far, ONGC has carried out 7138 LK/SLK of seismic surveys apart from Aeromagnetic and groundmagnetic and geological surveys and drilled six wells without any commercial success. ONGC is continuing its exploratory efforts during the Eighth Plan.

SHRI CHITTA BASU (Barasat): I would like to say that rig has been withdrawn from the Gandak Project in Bihar. Rig was sought to be transferred to Assam. I am saying this from my experience. I had a talk with the Chief Minister of Bihar.

CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA: Madam, I want to convey through you to Shri Chitta Basu that rig is not a fixed item. Rigs are moved from State to State. They do the job in one place and the drilling goes on in the other place. The seismic work goes on at other place.

(Interruptions)

533 *Resolu Re Exploration PHALGUNA 13, 1915 (SAKA)and Gas in eastern region* 534
of Oil
[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR One minute
Mr Minister please, the general apprehension there is that removing the rig machine from there means that the work has been stopped. If the Hon Minister gives an assurance that the work has not been stopped we would be satisfied.

CAPT SATISH KUMAR SHARMA
That is what I am submitting to you. We started the work in 1956 and now we have to include Bihar even in the Eighth Plan. The surveys proposed to be conducted would also be done through high cult technology. This 3D work would also be carried out in Bihar.

[English]

Four wells have been drilled in East and West Champaran but unfortunately without any success. OIL have also applied for a petroleum exploration licence in the State of Bihar covering 17500 square kilometres comprising of Paschim Champaran, Purbi Champaran, Gopalganj, Siwan, Sitamarhi, Muzaffarpur, Madhubani, Darbhanga and Saran districts. So far no licence has been issued by the Government of Bihar. So it is for your information that delay is on the part of your State Government. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI NITISH KUMAR Have you talked to the State Government?

CAPT SATISH KUMAR SHARMA
We have been pursuing with your State Government. I will pursue it further with your help. For me oil is more important in Bihar. The earlier it is found better it is for the country. So far no licence has been issued by the Government of Bihar and hence no exploratory activities have been undertaken by OIL.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR I shall definitely take it up.

CAPT SATISH KUMAR SHARMA
You get back to me you help me. ONGC have incurred an expenditure of Rs 70.56 crores on exploration activities in Bihar till 31.3.1993.

Sir I would once again like to thank all the hon Members for their valuable suggestions. Before I conclude would like to say that exploration in all parts of the country including West Bengal and the North East is being given the highest priority in my Ministry. Our effort is to find new oil for which we have drawn up a strategy for increasing the level of exploration by ONGC as well as OIL. In addition their efforts will be augmented by various private Indian and foreign companies who are participating in the bids for exploring blocks. I may assure this House that no part of the country will be neglected and West Bengal and North Eastern Region will continue to be a major area of work. In view of this I would request the hon Member to withdraw his statutory resolution. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI CHITTA BASU May I know from the hon Minister whether he can assure this House that there will be no further withdrawal of rigs from West Bengal and Bihar.

CAPT SATISH KUMAR SHARMA
I have given you my assurance. Madam, I would like to assure the hon Member Shri Chitta Basu and also other Members from North East Bihar and West Bengal in particular that my efforts are that in spite of limited success in these two States, my intention is not to bring down the level of activity there. And the most important activity in this area is exploration and exploration starts with seismic work and then

[Capt Satish Kumar Sharma]

exploration drilling I can assure the Members from both these States about it (*Interruptions*)

SHRI KABINDRA PURKAYASTHA I have the latest information with me ONGC is not ready to hand over the gas for turbine I would like to know whether the Minister will look into this matter

CAPT SATISH KUMAR SHARMA I will find out the position

MR CHAIRMAN As the House desires the time has been extended

DR ASIM BALA (Nabadwip) I am not satisfied with the answer given by the Minister There is a possibility of finding huge reserves of oil and gas in the Bengal basin The role of ONGC in drilling has been mystifying On many occasions since ONGC started its activities the efforts have always been on a single track direction They say that in spite of their best efforts no proof for exploring oil is found This is absolutely a distortion of facts

IN USA 500 wells are dug on an average per 10 000 sq kms for exploration purposes In Soviet Union, 60 wells are dug for exploration purpose In India they dug only 116 wells In the Bengal basin till now 22 wells have been dug in 10,000 sq kms area This fact spells out clearly the priority that ONGC is giving to exploration and proves the fact that it is giving a stepmotherly treatment to the Bengal basin

The Minister has not given any assurance regarding the employees working in some of these rigs In Assam, there are 13,000 employees, in Tripura, there are

1,250 employees and in Bengal, there are 1400 employees There is no assurance given by the Minister about those employees in the eventuality of those rigs being withdrawn

I would like to mention here about the oil which has been discovered in a well GS 15-1 in the South West of Ravva field in Krishna-Godavari offshore From the well they had extracted 2 450 barrels of oil and 77 000 cubic metres of gas per day during the testing period

Why it is a more significant discovery is because of the fact that this particular well falls in the bloc which was relinquished by AMOCO, a well-known multinational oil company of USA

After undertaking the drilling operations in some of the areas in West Bengal, especially in the Eastern region, those wells have been abandoned But the experience of South West of Ravva field in Krishna-Godavari basin proves the fact that oil has been extracted from those wells which have been relinquished by AMOCO, a multinational oil company of USA They left that area and after that such a huge amount of oil was found in that well

So, I request the Minister to continue their efforts for the exploration of oil in those abandoned wells, especially at Ichapur, Krishnagar and Ranaghat region I have mentioned about Bodra region The point is that they dug only 22 wells in an area of 10,000 sq kms It is a bare minimum when you compare it with USA where 500 wells are dug on an average in an area of 10,000 sq kms. Why should there be so much of disparity? Why cannot the Government survey the area and dig according to the international norms? So, I request the Minister to kindly look

into this whole Bengal basin. When you say Bengal basin, it does not pertain to Bengal only; it covers Orissa, Assam and Bihar also. All these areas are covered under the Bengal basin. Oil is flowing in this Bengal basin. So, I request the Minister to take suitable steps in this regard.

CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA:

Through you let me assure the hon. Member one thing. With regard to the points he has raised regarding additional efforts which need to be put in for exploration in West Bengal and Bihar in particular, the most important issue I feel personally facing the country is how we find new oil in the quickest possible time-frame. Oil production is going up starting in the coming year; in the next three years the production will go up, but the challenge before the country is that India will have to find new oil, so that India becomes self-sufficient in oil. My efforts are that I intend not only to make ONGC and Oil India find oil, but also the other companies which are coming in—not in the area of discovery oil programme, but I am talking about exploration—the international companies and the NRI companies which are coming into the country in the area of exploration also to find oil. Even if that is not enough, I intend to find other ways to do my best that in the next three year's time India will find oil. I can assure you that my efforts will be there in this direction. Specially in Bihar and West Bengal, in those areas you find that the survey work has not been done because it has saturated in some areas. We will try to make it only more saturated but also, as I mentioned earlier, the high technology 3D survey work will be done there.

DR. ASIM BALA: Before I withdraw my Resolution, I want to know one point. The Government is further inviting

offers from 46 blocs under the sixth round of bidding. I would like to know how many blocs in West Bengal are under bidding. I want an assurance from the Minister regarding employment. What will be the position of those who are already working there if you are shifting this rig from there?

CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA:

I can convey the Member's concern to the ONGC and request them to see that the people who are working should not be dislodged and alternate employment should be found for them.

DR. ASIM BALA: With the assurance of the Minister, I want to withdraw my Resolution.

I seek leave of the House to withdraw my Resolution.

The Resolution was, by leave, withdrawn.

17.14 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE:RESERVATION
IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS,
ETC. FOR OBC

[English]

SHRI K. RAMAMURTHEE TINDIVANAM (Tindivanam): I beg to move:

"That having regard to the fact that the persons belonging to other backward classes are socially and educationally backward, this House urges upon the Government to provide for reservation of twenty-seven per cent of seats in all educational institu-