

As regards the exact number, I have already told the House that as far as our information goes only one woman has died, two children are missing and eight persons were injured and given first-aid.

श्री भगतीनारायण पांडेय : हमारी तरफ की सीमा में जो पुल के बिनाई के उन में खराबी होने के कारण यह दुर्घटना हुई ।

SHRI BIPINPAL DAS: I do not know whether the hon. Member has seen any suspension bridge. If he had seen, perhaps, he would not have asked this question. Now he has asked one question. That is about the augmenting of the capacity of the bridge. Since the accident took place, we had been in touch with the Nepal Government to see that the capacity of the bridge is strengthened.

श्री भगतराय मनहर (जजगीर) में मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूँ कि ऐसी दो देशों की सीमाओं में बहने वाली नदियों पर बने पुलों के सम्बन्ध में उन के रखरखाव का क्या प्राविधान है ? दूसरे यह कि महावाली नदी पर बने हुए इस पुल की बब मरम्मत हुई थी ? क्या यह भी पता लगाया गया कि इस दुर्घटना के पीछे किसी बिदेसी या शरारती तत्वों का तो हाथ नहीं है क्यों कि अजब वरु सिक्किम के प्रश्न को ले कर हमारे और नेपाल के बीच अच्छे सम्बन्ध नहीं है ।

और अन्तिम बात में यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि दुर्घटनाग्रस्त भारतीयों की चिकित्सा धारि के बारे में शासन ने क्या व्यवस्था की है ?

SHRI BIPINPAL DAS: About maintenance of the bridge or bridges of this type, I have already explained. Now the question is that because the accident took place, certainly both the Governments will see to it that it does not take place again. He has made a remark about the trained

relations between India and Nepal. Our relations with them are fairly good. Certainly our relation with Nepal has nothing to do with this accident.

13 12 hrs.

STATEMENT RE: ONGC'S OFF-SHORE DRILLING PLATFORM, SAGAR SAMRAT

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I visited the Sagar Samrat on the 27th of November, 1974, and I consider it my duty to report to Parliament the good work that is being done in the Bombay High of shore operations.

As the Hon'ble Members are aware, the first well drilled by Sagar Samrat in February this year in the Bombay High structure, led to a discovery of oil which was described as "significant" at that time. The second well was spudded on 7th October and drilled to the main horizon. The preliminary tests confirmed the results obtained from the first well. The conventional production test was carried out from the 18th to the 23rd of November and it showed a good flow of oil. Oil has been found in the limestone layers of the Bombay High Structure. It is a new feature of oil exploration in India that oil has been found for the first time in limestone. We have so far got oil in India in sand stone layers only in the onshore areas. The limestone pay zones have been prolific producers of oil in the Middle East. It was therefore decided to carry out an acidization test since acidization is one of the established techniques for well-stimulation in limestone reservoirs. The acidization tests were commenced on 25th November and were continued till the 30th. The tests confirmed the earlier hypothesis that acidization would substantially

[Sri K D. Malaviya]

increase the productivity. Until some further wells are drilled, I would not like to hazard a guess about the potential of Bombay High, but I have no hesitation in saying it is our biggest discovery so far, and should lead us well towards self-sufficiency. The yield of oil from our offshore wells is several times more than that of our best onshore wells.

I feel confident that production from this well could be anything between 1500 barrels to 2500 barrels a day. Although the quantity cannot be specified just now because several more trials will be required for stabilised testing, we do not wish to use up precious time on this occasion to finalise the conclusions regarding stabilised testing Sagar Samrat is already jacked down and is immediately being moved to the next site.

But then the development of an offshore discovery and production from an offshore field are much more arduous, time-consuming and expensive as compared to similar operations onshore. To accelerate the tempo of exploration of the Bombay High Structure, Government have authorised the ONGCC to hire a drilling vessel to begin with, and simultaneously to acquire two more drillships, thus increasing its offshore drilling fleet to three. After the tests at the present well are completed, Sagar Samrat would be shifted about 15 kms. West of the present location—it has already moved. The proposed location lies on the extreme flank of the Bombay High Structure. The fourth well would be drilled at a location about 50 kms. south of the present well. The wells at these two locations would help delineate the structure and it is at that stage that a reasonably correct estimate of the production potential of the Bombay High Structure can be made.

During the monsoon of 1975, Sagar Samrat is proposed to be jacked up at a suitable location and operated through the monsoon period. That

will give our ONGC experts and technicians, who are already doing a fine job, greater confidence and also enable them to acquire experience of monsoon working.

While the complete delineation of the Bombay High structure and the full development of the field may take some years, ONGC has been asked to examine the feasibility of setting up the first stage of production pending completion of full development. ONGC is looking into the different technical aspects of this proposition and it is likely that the first stage production could be established by mid-1976, or even a little earlier, so as to yield about one million tonnes of oil per annum.

Our offshore areas can no longer be called unproven. Right from the Kutch Basin to the Bengal Basin as well as in the offshore areas around the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, there are good prospects of petroleum reserves and I can visualise a situation in which our continental shelf areas vibrate with activity. Time is of the essence and we have to discover oil reserves and develop production as quickly as possible. No effort should be considered too great for this. While we must develop our own capabilities for fabrication and erection of production platforms, construction of pipelines and other sub-sea structures, we will also go ahead fast by hiring the best available engineering and consultancy services world-wide. The ONGC would also need to be strengthened for its greatly enhanced responsibilities, and I shall very soon place before Parliament the steps that I propose to take for reorganising and restructuring the Oil and Natural Gas Commission.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: After some time, we get some good news. Let us hope things are as good as visualised.