

MR. SPEAKER : No problem. You can give notice.

ONGC's Assistance to China

*345. SHRI SHIVENDRA BAHADUR SINGH : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM be pleased to state :

(a) whether China has approached Oil & Natural Gas Commission to assist them in various projects in China ; and

(b) if so, the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM (SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA) :

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

SHRI SHIVENDRA BAHADUR SINGH : I would insist upon the hon. Minister to again verify whether the Chinese Government has approached ONGC or not, because it has appeared in the press. I would also like to know in case they are approached, what will be the reaction of the Government ?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : It had appeared only in the 'National Herald'. That is why, the Minister had not taken it seriously.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA : I take every paper seriously and the 'National Herald' much more seriously.

Whatever reply I have given I stand by that. The question which has been put by my friend is that whether China has approached ONGC to assist them in various projects in China. I say that there is no specific proposal which has been made by China to India. Of course, there has been some sort of interaction between ONGC and China for the last few years and there have been certain exchange of delegations also.

But that does not mean that there is a proposal on the part of the Chinese Government to the ONGC for assistance in the various projects.

SHRI N. VENKATA RATNAM : Sir, I will put the question in a rather reverse way. Did our country approach any

other country to help ONGC and, if so, what are the countries and what are the promises made by those countries ?

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA : Many countries have approached us in the exploration and survey.....(Interruption)

SHRI N. VENKATA RATNAM : My question is what are the countries whom we have approached to help ONGC.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA : That does not arise out of this question. I require a separate notice for that.

SHRI N. VENKATA RATNAM : Is China included in those countries ?

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : He is allowed to reverse the question, Sir.

SHRI G. G. SWELL : Sir, I am happy that the Minister has cleared a little bit of confusion which appeared in the national Press. On the face of what he has said, the very question appears to be unlikely. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he is in a position to confirm or deny these figures that in 1979, China produced 106 million tonnes of crude oil which placed China amongst the first ten oil producers in the world. The report is that today they are producing something in the region of 300 million tonnes and are heading towards 450 million tonnes which would place them amongst the first five oil producers in the world. So, I would like to know whether some American geologists have estimated that China will soon overtake the Soviet Union in the field of oil technology. Most of this oil is, of course, on-shore and the Chinese have almost opened the doors wide to multinationals to explore oil in their off-shore areas which are rich in hydro-carbon. On the face of it, do you consider it ever likely that China will approach us or we will approach China ?

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA : So far as the question of the production that China is having, I do not have the exact figures. But to the best of my knowledge and information, China is making great strides towards the production of oil. I do not know whether it would be able to outbeat Russia in the matter of oil. I

have no information, so, I would not be able to say authoritatively on that. We do not have any authoritative information with regard to production to other countries. Whatever little we get from the newspapers.....(*Interruption*).

SHRI G.G. SWELL : You should have more information than I have.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA : That is true but I too do not have the access to the other countries' oil production programme and all such things.....(*Interruption*).

MR. SPEAKER : Get some help from Mr. Swell.

SHRI NAWAL KISHORE SHARMA : Sometimes whatever we know through the papers, that is the information which is available with us. So far as the other part of his question is concerned, I do not think that requires any answer.

Micro-Wave Telecommunication System

*346. SHRI HUSSAIN DALWAI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the steps Government propose to take to improve the present telecommunication system in the country ;

(b) whether Government propose to replace micro-wave system for communication in place of existing under-ground cable system ; and

(c) if so, the time by which the network of communication based on micro-wave will be commenced in rural areas ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA) : (a) The present telecommunications system is under continuous development and improvement through installation of Micro-wave, Ultra high frequency, Coaxial and Optical Fibre Systems for long distance communication between major cities and by Multi-Access Rural Radio System and Integrated Digital Networks in secondary areas.

(b) and (c) : Microwave systems are not a replacement for cable systems but are complimentary back up to the existing underground cable system. Microwave

systems are not planned for rural communications. However, MARR systems in VHF band and U.H.F. systems have been planned and these are expected to cover the rural area substantially during the 7th Plan period.

SHRI HUSSAIN DALWAI : In metropolitan cities like Bombay, Calcutta and Madras faults in the communication are very frequent and the failure of the telecommunication system every time gives rise to traffic problem. So, I would like to know whether in order to avoid these present traffic problems there is any proposal to do away with the present underground cable system in the metropolitan cities ?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : The cable system in the metropolitan cities cannot be totally replaced. Of course, we are trying to replace the cables which are old and damaged. We are also introducing, wherever it is feasible, micro-wave system in the cities by putting them on tall buildings and at other places. But we have no such proposal at present and it is not possible also as has been suggested by the hon. Member.

SHRI HUSSAIN DALWAI : Is the micro-wave system cheaper than the underground cables ?

SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA : They serve two different purposes. The micro-wave system is used where there is line on site and where there is no obstruction and where cables can be laid anywhere. So, it is on a certain geographical consideration. When the topography can permit it, it is only then that the micro-wave system can be used. But I can assure the hon. Member that in the metropolitan cities particularly, the cable system which is out-moded or which has outlived its useful life, we are trying to gradually replace it. This is one of our important programmes in the Seventh Plan.

SHRI BHANU PRATAP SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I congratulate the Government for adopting the latest technology in the field of tele-communication during the Sixth Five-Year Plan. Our multi-purpose satellite INSAT-1B is well equipped with 8,000 useful channels for tele-commu-