

**SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE:** If the answer is 'Yes', I want a clarification from him. The question of taking action against the management does not arise..... (*interruptions*).

**MR. SPEAKER:** No, no. Mr. Ravi.

**SHRI VAYALAR RAVI:** Certain fertiliser units continue to be sick for the last many years. The hon'ble Minister is aware of the FACT as well as the Cochin Plant and naturally the production has not improved so far. But the price of fertiliser will increase. The farmers will be affected by this increase in price. Again this increase in fertiliser price will further increase the agricultural produce. Ultimately the consumers will be affected. It is a chain reaction. I would like to know from the hon. Minister what concrete steps are taken to improve the production of these factories—FACT as well as Cochin Plant—not only in regard to machinery but managerial also.

**SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA:** I am happy to see that Cochin Plant has started looking up and many defects have been removed. Technical defects have been identified and removed and Cochin Plant has started looking up and we expect it to be performing much better than it was before. So far as the Udyog Mandal is concerned FACT is concerned, we have a problem in this age of the plants in FACT. The plant has aged and it will require renovation, expansion and diversification and all those points are under consideration.

#### **Contracts for Off-Shore Drilling**

\*28. **SHRI SARAT KAR:**

**SHRI AINTHU SAHOO:**

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Oil India or ONGC have sought clearance from Government for awarding contracts for drilling work in its 12,000 square km.

offshore concession off the Orissa coast and 68 km. area on-shore in Mahanadi Basin;

(b) if so, whether the company has concluded negotiations for drilling contracts with foreign firms and has left the final selection of the party to Government; and

(c) if so, whether its plan is also to set up own data processing facilities at Paradeep in Orissa for its on-shore concession and if so, the details thereof?

**THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA):** (a) Oil India Limited has been awarded concession for oil exploration in Mahanadi Delta over an area of 6800 sq. kilometres on-shore and 12,000 sq. kilometres off-shore. The company proposes to carry out exploratory drilling in the off-shore area.

(b) Oil India Limited has received a number of offers from drilling contractors/firms which are in the process of being evaluated.

(c) The company proposes to set up its data processing facility at Dulaijan in Assam.

**SHRI SARAT KAR:** While thanking the Government that it has been decided to explore the off-shore and on-shore area of Orissa coast, I would point out that the answer given by the hon. Minister is not specific. The question was specific. Part (b) of the question states: "if so, whether the company has concluded negotiations for drilling contracts with foreign firms and has left the final selection of the party to Government?" I would like to know whether the finalised evaluation is at the end of the Ministry or at the end of the company so that the drilling work can start earlier.

**SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA:** I have already replied that they have received a number of contracts for drilling work. They are being processed and they are being evaluated by the company. They will process them and come to Government for finalisation.

**SHRI SARAT KAR:** Whether there is a time-bound programme before the company so that the work could start immediately. You have already answered that Data Processing Unit will be in Assam. It will be a far off place from Orissa. It is not convenient for them to do the data processing from such a long distance. Whether the Minister can propose that it can be set up in Orissa?

**SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA:** So far as the first part is concerned, not a day will be lost in doing the thing and the oil India are doing it, as far as we can say, very efficiently. There will not be a day lost in completing the evaluation. So far as the Government is concerned, we will take the earliest possible decision in the matter. So far as the question of locating the data processing units is concerned, it is for Oil India to decide and they decided to do it in Assam. I do not want to withdraw it so far as their area of operation is concerned, that is, Assam.

**DR. SUBRAMANIAM SWAMY:** The Minister, Mr. Bahuguna, is very clever. I would like to know whether this contract is part of a general plan to make India self-sufficient in oil. I would also like to know what is the basis for selecting this particular contract; whether the Minister is aware that Indian Ocean is a vast reservoir of oil; whether he has a long range plan for drilling oil and making India self-sufficient in oil.

**SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA:** Though the question is a wide one, but it is admitted that there are lot of areas in the Indian Ocean where oil is expected to be available. Mahanadi off-

shore is one such area and we expect oil there unless luck decides it otherwise.

**श्री भारत सिंह चौहान :** क्या शासन को यह जानकारी है कि 20 साल से मध्य प्रदेश में नबंदा की घाटी में पेट्रोल का एक बहुत बड़ा स्रोत उपलब्ध है। वहाँ के स्थानीय लोग लगातार इस बात का प्रयत्न करते रहे कि उस स्रोत का नाप लिया जाय। क्या शासन इस सम्बन्ध में प्रो० एन० जी० सी० को कोई आदेश देगा कि इस स्रोत का भी लाभ उठाया जाय। यह स्रोत भूकलेश्वर से नबंदा की घाटी तक सैकड़ों मील में फैला हुआ है, लेकिन अभी तक इस का लाभ नहीं उठाया गया। आज जिस तरह से भ्राक-कोर और समुद्र में तेल के लिए प्रयत्न किया जा रहा है उसी तरह से यदि मध्य प्रदेश के इस स्रोत का उपयोग किया जाय, तो इस से बहुत लाभ हो सकता है।

**श्री हेमवती नन्धन बहुगुणा :** मान्यवर, प्रश्न तो मूल प्रश्न से सम्बन्धित नहीं हैं, लेकिन मध्य प्रदेश में कहीं भी तेल मिलेगा, तो जरूर जायेंगे, लेकिन ऐसी कोई आशा नहीं है।

#### Criteria for Railway Electrification

\*29. **SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN:** Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the criteria generally followed for taking up schemes of electrification on Railways; and

(b) the schemes of electrification proposed to be taken up in the Sixth Plan and their estimated cost?

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN):** (a) Electrification requires large initial investment and is justified economically on sections carrying high densities of traffic which cannot be managed with steam traction and where electric traction is cheaper than dieselisation.

(b) New electrification programme during the Sixth Plan has not yet been finalised.

**SHRI O. V. ALAGESAN:** It pertains to the southern region. If this is the criterion; if it is honestly followed,