

SHRI N. G. RANGA: Sir, the hon. Minister at one stage said that he was not contemplating any possibility of there being a general election for another several years....

SHRI SHANTI BHUSHAN: No, no.

AN HON. MEMBER: For next five years, there will be no election at all.

SHRI N. G. RANGA: I would like to tell my hon. friend that any moment the Prime Minister is capable of asking for a general election. Therefore, it is the duty of the Government to be alert and to take an early decision with regard to this matter. Now, I would like to know whether in the light of all the opinions that have been expressed here and also earlier by all political parties in favour of electoral reforms including the one of lowering of the age of the voters and also proportional representation....

MR. CHAIRMAN: These are all suggestions.

SHRI N. G. RANGA:...Would my hon. friend be good enough to revise his views at least now and see that as early as possible serious consideration is given to this matter both by him as well as the Cabinet?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Will you kindly tell him that they will not last for 11 years?

SHRI SHANTI BHUSHAN: I do not claim to be a fortune-teller as some other hon. Members of the South might claim themselves to be. I can only go by the constitutional provisions which prescribe a particular tenure for a particular Assembly or a House of the Parliament and so on. So, I gave my answer only on this basis. But I may assure the hon. Members that the Government would consider this matter and finalise it as early as possible.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will now give an opportunity to Mr. Madhavan.

SHRI K. K. MADHAVAN: Sir, now that I have heard from Mr. Bhupesh Gupta that they have made a proposal in favour of the proportional representation, may I know whether the Government have considered that the idea of proportional representation is fundamentally opposed to the principles of reservation in favour of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes?

SHRI SHANTI BHUSHAN: Sir, as I said earlier, all these matters which were referred to by hon. Shri Bhupesh Gupta are still being studied by the Government. The Government has yet to take a view on those matters.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next Question.

Oil exploration in the Andamans Sea

*124. **SHRI NAGESHWAR**

PRASAD SHAHI:†

SHRI LAL BUAIA:

SHRI JAGAN NATH

BHARDWAJ:

SHRI SANAT KUMAR

RAHA:

SHRI SYED NIZAM-UD-DIN:

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

(a) whether Government have undertaken any survey to locate oil in the sea-bed around Andamans, particularly in the areas flanked by Burma and Indonesia; if so, with what results;

(b) whether Government propose to undertake drilling operations in this region; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof and by when the work is likely to start?

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri. Nageshwar Prasad Shahi.

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) Geophysical surveys have been undertaken in the entire Andaman & Nicobar shelf area including the shelf facing Burmese and Indonesian areas. The data collected have been partly processed and interpreted. On the basis of this part interpretation of data, a few structures for drilling have been mapped. Rest of the data is being processed.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. It is proposed to commence drilling during 1978 in one of the mapped structures.

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही : श्रीमन्, मैं आपके माध्यम से एक बात का संरक्षण चाहूंगा। मैं यह देख रहा हूँ कि जो माननीय मंत्री महोदय देशी भाषा में बोल सकते हैं वे हमारे देशी भाषाओं के सवाल का जवाब विदेशी भाषा में दे रहे हैं। माननीय ला मिनिस्टर ने अभी यही किया है और माननीय बहुगुणा जी भी यही कर रहे हैं...

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let us not enter into any unnecessary controversy. Let him put it in any language he wants; be it English or be it Hindi.

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही : मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहूंगा कि अभी तक की कोशिश के क्या फल निकले हैं और क्या इसमें और प्रगति लाने का प्रयास किया जायेगा ?

श्री हेमवती नन्दन बहुगुणा : मान्यवर, सेसिमिक और मैगनेटिक सर्वेज अंडमान निकोबार सेल्फ के 35000 स्क्वायर किलोमीटर क्षेत्र में जनवरी 77 से 9 मई 77 तक किया जा चुका है। इस सर्वे में 6345 लाइन किलोमीटर सेसिमिक सर्वे और 6013 लाइन किलोमीटर मैगनेटिक सर्वे कैरी-आउट किये गये हैं। इसके दाम 5,72,272 डालर हैं। इसके मुताबिक जो

स्थान नियुक्त किये गये हैं, उन्हीं स्थानों पर काम की शुरुआत की जा सकती है। वहां पर ड्रिलिंग इस वर्ष में होगा और मुझे आशा है कि यह कार्य मार्च महीने में शुरू हो जायेगा।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, second supplementary; in Hindi.

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही : मान्यवर, आपकी आज्ञा से मैं जानना चाहूंगा कि क्या मंत्री महोदय किसी निष्कर्ष पर पहुंचे हैं कि उस पूरे क्षेत्र में तेल की क्या संभावना है और ड्रिलिंग के लिये क्या वहां बड़े पैमाने पर जल्दी कार्यवाही की जायेगी ?

श्री हेमवती नन्दन बहुगुणा : मान्यवर, यह जो सर्वे होते हैं, जो सेसिमिक और माग्नेटिक किस्म के सर्वे होते हैं, इनको करने के बाद ही यह पता चलता है। भूतल की खोज भू-गर्भ शास्त्री करते हैं और कहते हैं कि संभावना है, सुराख करो, संभवतः यहां तेल निकल सकता है। तो सम्भावना है होल ड्रिलिंग के लिये मार्च महीने में जैसा कि मैंने कहा काम शुरू हो रहा है। उसके बाद ही पता चल सकेगा कि कोई सम्भावना है या नहीं है। मुझे आशा है कि यह काम मार्च महीने में ही शुरू हो जायेगा।

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही : मान्यवर, बड़े पैमाने पर या छोटे पैमाने पर ?

श्री हेमवती नन्दन बहुगुणा : छोटे बड़े में कोई अन्तर नहीं होता। एक बार सुराख कर देते हैं। हम वहां ही करेंगे जहां भू-गर्भ शास्त्री ने कहा है।

SHRI SYED NIZAM-UD-DIN: Sir, the hon Minister has just now said that the drilling will start this year. I would like to know the name of the company which has done the survey of these islands. I would also like to know the name of the company which is going to take up the drilling work.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Sir, the survey work was done by Messrs. Dressor Olympic of the United States of America. So far as the drilling is

concerned, it is proposed to be done by Messrs. OISA United States. Their ship Discoverer III is likely to start the work from about the 15th March. 1978.

श्री हर्षदेव मालवीय : मान्यवर, अभी हमारे मंत्री जी ने बताया कि जिन कम्पनियों ने वहां सर्वे वगैरह किया, वे अमरीकन कम्पनियां हैं। अभी अखबारों में समाचार आया है कि थाईलैंड के कुछ लोगों ने जा करके अण्डमान-निकोबार के किसी द्वीप पर कब्जा कर लिया। क्या इसके पीछे कोई षडयंत्र तो नहीं है, मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहूंगा। क्योंकि अमरीकनों ने यहां सर्वे किया और थाईलैंड में पूरे अमरीकन ही बैठे हैं। तो क्या वहां पर काफी नेल होने के कारण पहले से ही कोई चालबाजी चली जा रही है? थाईलैंड वालों ने आकर इस लैंड को आक्रुपाई कर दिया है। क्या सरकार इस बारे में सजग है या नहीं। यह बहुत ही संदेह की बात मालूम होती है। सदियों सदियों से थाईलैंड वाले अण्डमान में नहीं आये और आज जो आये हैं, उसका क्या कारण है ?

श्री हेमवती नन्दन बहुगुणा : मान्यवर, मुझे तो कोई जानकारी नहीं है लेकिन मैं इस बात को पूरी तरह से कह नहीं सकता। हमारे कार्य में न तो कोई असुविधा है और न जहां हमको काम करना है उस जगह पर किसी और का कब्जा है। 15 मार्च, 1978 बहुत दूर नहीं है। इस काम के शुरू होने के लिए जहाज जाने की तारीख भी निश्चित हो गई है। हमारी दृष्टि से किसी दूसरे देश की भारत के कांटीनेंटल शेल्फ के अन्दर ड्रिलिंग करने के लिए हैमियन नहीं है। हमारी अपनी शक्ति काफी है और हमें अपना काम खुद करना है।

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, here, the question relates to the Andamans. Now, we find that the ONGC under your charge is showing considerable favour to certain firms, especially, the foreign firms. For example, Brown & Root Company is there. A project has been given to them and one of the

Ministers was defending the offer of the project to them on the ground that they had given the minimum price and so on but no agreement has been entered into as yet. As a result of it, 2.75 million dollars have been drawn- ed because of some favours having been shown to this company and certain malpractices are there. Is it a fact that in order to placate them, some officials from Delhi and other places rushed to Bombay to get the customs and other things cleared for this blessed firm, Brown & Root in order that they could carry on? And yet, there is no agreement. Sir, we had an assurance that their tender will be reconsidered and gone into. Is it not a fact that their tender was incomplete and that the official position has been misused to favour them? Is it not a fact that all international practices with regard to tenders have been ignored in the case of this particular concern Brown & Root and DGS&D rules have been grossly violated? This is how things are being handled by the ONGC, quite apart from the fact of Mr. A. P. Verma, now with Indo-Burma Petroleum having gone from your Ministry. I should like to know what assurance we have, because when we write to the Minister, the Minister replies that an investigation will take place and he sends our letter to the same official, as in the case of Mr. A. P. Verma and others in Indo-Burma Petroleum, to report..

MR CHAIRMAN: Do you want a reply or you would like to go on?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Yes, I do

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: Sir, with great respect to the hon. Member, all the questions that he has raised, relate to Bombay and have nothing to do with exploration or drilling in the Andamans.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: The question is very relevant, because there are some in your Ministry...

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: I would be insulting myself if I were to say

that he could be irrelevant. I could never say that. Nevertheless, my submission is that so far as Brown & Root Company is concerned, I am willing to show the whole file to Shri Bhupesh Gupta if he is willing to see that, because all his information about any favour to Brown & Root is totally misplaced.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Is it false?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You are prepared to go there and see all the papers?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I will see the file.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, that has been agreed.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: It should be assured.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He will show the papers to you.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: I have invited him to come and see the file for himself.

SHRI U. R. KRISHNAN: Sir, I would like to know what are the countries from where we sought help for drilling operations so far and what is the amount spent so far, and whether we have to pay in foreign exchange or in rupee value.

SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA: This question is wider than this. We always float tenders and accept the offer of the minimum price.

पंजाब को कोयला ले जाने के लिये माल डिब्बों की कमी

* 125. श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि गर्तमुखों से कोयला ले जाने के लिए रेल माल डिब्बों के उपलब्ध न होने के कारण पंजाब में ईटों के कई भट्टे बंद हो गए हैं ; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो भविष्य में ऐसी स्थिति उत्पन्न न होने देने के लिये माल डिब्बों की उपलब्धता सुनिश्चित करने के लिए क्या कदम उठाए जा रहे हैं ?

†[Shortage of wagons for carrying coal to Punjab

*125. SHRI SUNDER SINGH BHANDARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several brick kilns in Punjab have been closed down owing to shortage of coal resulting from non-availability of railway wagons for lifting coal from pit heads; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to ensure availability of wagons with a view to averting such a situation in the future?]

रेल मंत्री (प्रो० मधु दण्डवते): (क) रेलों की ऐसी किसी स्थिति की जानकारी नहीं है। इसके विपरीत, अप्रैल, 1977 से जनवरी, 1978 तक के महीनों में पंजाब राज्य के लिए हर महीने औसतन 36 रैक आवंटित किये गये हैं जबकि अप्रैल, 1976 से जनवरी, 1977 तक के इन्हीं महीनों में औसतन केवल 23 रैक आवंटित किये गये थे।

(ख) प्रश्न नहीं उठता।

†[THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) Railways are not aware of any such situation. On the contrary, the average monthly allotment for Punjab State during the months April '77 to January '78 has been of the order of 36 rakes as compared to only 23 rakes during the corresponding months of April '76 to January '77.

(b) Does not arise.]

†[]English translation.