

1964 stated that oil and gas fields might be found in the area near Calcutta. Geoscientific studies of the Bengal basin have been carried out and continue to be carried out in close co-operation with experts from the Soviet Union. Currently team of 4 Soviet experts along with Indian Scientists in the Institute of Petroleum Exploration of ONGC at Dehra Dun is working exclusively on detailed prospect evaluation and exploration programme in the West Bengal basin.

Robbery on the Kashi Vishwanath Express

*23. SHRI NABIN CHANDRA BURAGOHA'N: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the night of 8th October, 1977, a daring robbery took place in the Kashi-Vishwanath Express when three out of the four robbers fled away with considerable belongings of passengers and the fourth one was caught by a woman passenger;

(b) if so, what remedial measures Government have taken to tighten security arrangements on the said train and also on other trains;

(c) whether Government propose to give some reward to the woman passenger for her courageous action; and

(d) what action has been taken against the concerned Coach Attendant who showed lack of vigilance and initiative?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SHEO NARAIN): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

(a) A theft took place in a 3-tire Coach No. 5207 of Train No. 157 Up. Kashi Vishwanath Express between Bareilly and Moradabad on the night of 8th October, 1977 in which two suitcases stated to contain property

worth Rs. 13,000 were reported stolen. One accused named Krishna, son of Sagree, resident of Tirunelveli (Tamil Nadu) was apprehended by a passenger Dr. (Mrs.) T. Jayashree with the help of other co-passengers in the coach.

(b) Government Railway Police of the State Governments who are responsible to maintain law and order are taking all possible steps within their means to prevent incidence of theft/robberies etc. on trains on the Railways.

(c) No recommendation for the grant of reward to Dr. (Mrs.) T. Jayashree, who apprehended the criminal has been made. However, a letter of thanks has been sent by Northern Railway Administration to the lady passenger who had apprehended the culprit.

(d) Coach Attendants are not provided on 2nd Class Sleeper Coaches. Shri R. B. Lal was the Conductor TTE manning the 3-tier coach in question. Necessary action against him will be considered on the basis of the Police report.

Report of Tarkunde Committee on electoral reforms

*24. SHRI HARSH DEO
MALAVIYA:
SHRI SANAT KUMAR
RAHA;
SHRI LAKSHMANA
MAHAPATRO:
SHRI JAGJIT SINGH
ANAND:

Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received the report of the Tarkunde Committee on electoral reforms;

(b) whether the Committee has recommended that the qualifying age for voting be reduced from 21 years to 18 years; and

(c) what are the other recommendations made by the Committee and what is Government's decision thereon?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI SHANTI BHUSHAN): (a) Government has seen the report of the Tar-kunde Committee on Electoral Re-forms.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The report contains many re-commendations. The recommenda-tions relate to subjects like misuse of official authority and machinery for election purposes, corrupt practices, broadcasting and television facilities to political parties, money power in elections, adoption of proportional re-presentation need for quick disposal of election disputes etc.

The recommendations contained in the report are under consideration along with the other proposals for amending the election law.

Take over of Oil India and Assam Oil Company

*25. SHRI YOGENDRA SHARMA:
SHRI BIR CHANDRA DEB
BURMAN:
SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA:

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

(a) whether any agreement has been reached with the Burmah Oil Company for the take-over of the Oil India Ltd. and the Assam Oil Company; and

(b) if not, what is the present stage of negotiations and by when an agreement is likely to be concluded?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) and (b) Negotiations for the take over of BOC's interest in Oil India Limited and of Assam Oil Company are in progress. These are expected to be completed shortly.

Construction of 10,000 K. Ms. of New Railway Lines

*26. SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a plan for constructing 10,000 Kms. of new railway lines is under Government's active considera-tion; and

(b) if so, what are the important features of the Plan?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) and (b) The plan for construction of new railway lines will form part of the Rolling Plan of the Indian Railways which has not yet been finalised.

Recommendations of the Hathi Committee

*27. SHRI BIR CHANDRA DEB
BURMAN:
SHRI VENIGALLA SATYA-
NARAYANA:
SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA:
SHRI JAGJIT SINGH
ANAND:

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

(a) whether Government have taken a final decision on the recommenda-tions of the Hathi Committee on the Drug Industry; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): (a) and (b) Government have been having extensive consultations on the recom-mendations of the Hathi Committee on Drugs Industry. Final decision on these recommendations is likely to be taken soon.