

order problems during the years 1970 and 1971 leading to serious dislocation to train services and heavy immobilisation of wagons on account of extensive thefts of wagon parts. The morale of the Railway staff was also seriously affected due to intimidation and assaults on them by unruly elements. With the improvement in law and order situation, the functioning of Andal yard is being normalised and consequently coal loading from this depot has also improved. This will be seen from the comparative daily average coal loading figures of Andal Depot shown below month by month during the years 1971 and 1972:—

Month	1971	1972
January . . .	1191	1130
February . . .	1116	1187
March . . .	1079	1187
April . . .	1142	1247
May . . .	1128	1203
June . . .	1055	1151

#### OIL EXPLORATION IN OFFSHORE AREAS

819. SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH:  
SHRI KALI MUKHERJEE:

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

(a) the success so far achieved in offshore oil drillings in the country;

(b) the total expenditure incurred so far and the foreign exchange involved in the operations; and

(c) the details of the offshore oil drilling schemes to be undertaken during 1972-73?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI H.R. GOKHALE) : (a) and (c) So far the Oil and Natural Gas Commission has drilled one offshore well using a fixed platform. This was in the shallow waters off Aliabet island in the Gulf of

Cambay, during 1970-71. Though oil was struck in this Well, the oil find was found to be not of commercial interest. The Commission is acquiring a self-propelled self-elevating, jack-up type of mobile platform from Japan for drilling in the deeper waters, which is expected to arrive in India by the end of this year. With this mobile platform, the Commission has planned to start drilling, beginning early in 1973, on the 'Bombay High' structure and adjacent structures located in the deep waters in the Arabian sea adjoining the Gulf of Cambay. Various other preparatory steps are also in progress in this regard.

(b) Upto the end of June, 1972, the aggregate expenditure on offshore operations mentioned, above, has been of the order of Rs. 1277.90 lakhs with a foreign exchange component of Rs. 961.61 lakhs. It includes expenditure of Rs. 887.86 lakhs all in foreign exchange, towards the instalments paid for the mobile off-shore drilling platform, presently under construction in Japan.

#### DRILLING OPERATIONS IN WEST BENGAL

820. SHRI KALYAN ROY:  
SHRI KALI MUKHERJEE:

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

(a) whether Government propose to restart drilling operations in 24 Parganas and Midnapore, Districts of West Bengal which was stopped a few years ago; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW AND JUSTICE AND PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI H.R. GOKHALE): (a) and (b) The Oil & Natural Gas Commission is carrying out detailed seismic surveys in the southern and south eastern parts of West Bengal using sophisticated digital seismic recording systems in search of a favourable subsurface feature for possible oil & gas