

Government. However, as a result of burden sharing by the upstream oil PSUs and compensation from the Government, the OMCs have not reported losses for any financial year so far.

Discovery of CBM gas reserves in Bihar

110. SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any Coal Bed Methane (CBM) gas reserve has been found in Bihar along Jharkhand border areas; and

(b) if so, the details of those areas and status of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH): (a) No Sir. So far no CBM block has been awarded in the State of Bihar.

(b) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

Oil exploration by private and foreign entities in the country

111. SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is heavily dependent on private and foreign entities for carrying out exploration of oil and natural gas in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) how many blocks were explored in the country in the last one decade; and

(d) how many of these oil and gas blocks are in private sector and how many in the public sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI R.P.N. SINGH): (a) to (d) Under the New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP), exploration blocks are awarded through International Competitive Bidding, where National/State Oil Companies as well as private and foreign companies can bid on equal terms and conditions. Given the large investment required in the effort to step up production and reserve accretion in the country, a need was felt to focus on a strategy designed to accelerate the pace of exploration by involving both public and private sector companies.