

**RAJYA SABHA**

*Monday, the 21th April, 1964/the 7th  
Vaisakha 1886 (Saka).*

The House met at eleven of the clock, MR.  
CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

**MEMBERS SWORN**

Chaudhary A. Mohammad (Bihar).

**ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS****OIL IN WEST BENGAL**

•87. SHRI RAMPRASANNA RAY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the petroleum prospects in West Bengal have been revalued subsequent to the exploration activities of the Indo-Stanvac Petroleum Project which was wound up some years ago; and

(b) if so, whether any drilling for -oil is contemplated in the near future in West Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI HUMAYUN KABIR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The Oil and Natural Gas Commission has studied the data obtained by the Indo-Stanvac Petroleum Project, and has come to the conclusion that some further exploration work is necessary for fuller evaluation of petroleum prospects- in West Bengal.

SHRI RAMPRASANNA RAY: May I know precisely from, the hon. Minister if any decision has been taken to drill in West Bengal and, if so, when the drilling is expected to start?

SHRI HUMAYUN KABIR: Yes, Sir. It has been decided to undertake a deep well in the Port Canning Area and steps are in hand for having the rigs there and it is expected that drilling will start in November 1964.

205 RSD—1.

SHRI RAMPRASANNA RAY: Sir, some survey was going on for search of oil in the district of Mailda in West Bengal. May I know whether the hon. Minister has been told anything about the prospect of oil being found there?

SHRI HUMAYUN KABIR: I have no information about Malda so far.

SHRI RAMPRASANNA RAY: What about Purnea, Sir?

SHRI HUMAYUN KABIR: Some surveys are continuing in Purnea, Sir.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: May I know how long these Stanvac people have been exploring in West Bengal and how long will they continue to do so before they produce satisfactory results?

SHRI HUMAYUN KABIR: I am afraid my hon. friend did not follow the answer. The Stanvac Petroleum Project is over. It continued from 1953 up to 1960. It is the Oil and Natural Gas Commission which is now carrying on the work.

SHRI A. D. MANI: From the geological data so far collected, are there any hopeful signs that there might be prospects of oil in Bengal?

SHRI HUMAYUN KABIR: Sir, unless there were hopes, we would **not** undertake a fresh survey and undertake this expensive business of a deep well.

**OIL FOUND IN CALCUTTA REGION**

•88. SHRI BIREN ROY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any truth in the newspaper report about the find of 'oil' in the Calcutta region;

(b) whether drilling operations in this region have started; and