

[9 August, 2005]

RAJYA SABHA

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reason therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYER): (a) to (d) In terms of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules, 1959 (Rule-5), as amended from time to time, any land or mineral lying under the ocean within the territorial waters or continental shelf of India vests in the Union and licenses or leases for Petroleum operations are granted by the Central Government. Hence, all discoveries and consequent production from any offshore area, royalty accrues to the Central Government. In respect of production from onland areas, the State Government would be entitled to royalty. In the case of the recent gas finds in the offshore KG Basin, royalty under the Petroleum and Natural Gas rules would accrue to the Central Government.

Abandoned oilfields in Western Offshore

1687. SHRI CHITTABRATA MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the status of production in oil bearing structures in Ratna-R-Series in Western offshore;

(b) whether they are at present lying in abandoned condition in spite of the present global oil crisis;

(c) whether ONGC had discovered oil in this area and produced oil from 1983 to 1994; and

(d) if so, the reasons for not handing over the oilfields back to ONGC?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANISHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Pursuant to the Discovered Field Policy of the Government, Ratna-R-Series field was offered as one of the fields for development under the joint venture arrangement. The field was awarded to the consortium of Essar Oil Limited, Premier Oil and Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC), where private companies have 60% participating interest and ONGC 40%. The Production Sharing Contract (PSC) for the field could not be finalised till date as certain issues are still required to be decided by Government before a final decision on the finalisation of the PSC is taken.

(b) to (d) ONGC had discovered the Ratna-R-Series fields and had a Petroleum Mining Lease (PML) valid for 20 years *i.e.* from 11.2.1981 to 10.2.2001 for exploitation of oil and gas. In December, 2002, ONGC had applied for fresh grant of PML for another 20 years w.e.f. 11.2.2001. As mentioned above, a final decision on the PSC is yet to be arrived at.

Functioning of retail outlet in Bareilly

1688. SHRI DARA SINGH CHAUHAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1276 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 14th December, 2004 and state:

(a) whether the Letters of Intent (LOI) are regularly delayed in all such cases where complaints are received;

(b) the reasons for the delay in the issue of letter of intent to the allottees alongwith the outcome of the enquiry and the decision taken by the competent authority;

(c) the time-frame within which the retail outlet at Bareilly shall be made functional;

(d) the steps being taken to avoid such delays on account of frivolous complaints; and

(e) the action being taken against officials responsible for the delay?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI

SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Whenever a complaint is received against selection of any dealership, it is inquired into by the competent authority in the Oil Marketing Company (OMC) concerned, in line with the OMC's grievance redressal system. No complaint can be dismissed as frivolous at the outset without going into the merits of the complaint. Further, the time taken to complete an inquiry depends upon the nature of the complaint. Therefore, the issue of a Letter of Intent (LOI) may get delayed by varying periods of time, depending on the nature of the complaint, the time taken to complete the investigation into the complaint and the decision by the competent authority based on the investigation report.

(c) to (e) In the case of the retail outlet dealership of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) at Nawabganj, Bareilly, though the interview for the selection of the dealer for this outlet was held in July, 2004, the LOI