

- (iii) A National Data Respository has been developed and is under trial now. It is a platform which will help access the geo-scientific data easily and help in carving out new hydrocarbon blocks.
- (iv) 52 new blocks with in-principle clearances from various agencies have been carved out for offer under the next round of bidding.
- (v) Policies for Exploration and Production are being reviewed for incentivizing and accelerating E&P activities.
- (vi) A Policy for non-exclusive multi-client speculative survey for assessment of unexplored sedimentary basins is being implemented.
- (vii) A policy framework for relaxations, extensions and clarification at the development and production stage under the PSC regime to remove rigidities in timelines with a view to early monetization of hydrocarbon discoveries has been approved.
- viii) Revision in domestic gas price, with provision for premium for difficult areas (deep water, ultra deep water and High Pressure, High Temperature areas) has been approved.
- ix) Extension of 40% subsidy in North East Region to private companies operating in that region has been made.
- (x) Exploration for shale oil and gas by National Oil Companies has been taken up.

(c) The Petroleum Conservation Research Association (PCRA), under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, has been given the mandate to promote conservation of petroleum products in the major sectors of economy like transport, industry, households and agriculture through direct technical assistance, R &D educational and training programmes and mass awareness campaigns. PCRA's activities cover conservation of all energy sources, development, evaluation and commercialization of efficient equipment and additives, popularizing production of bio-fuels, environment protection etc.

PCRA has also initiated Star Labelling Programme for various equipments/appliances consuming petroleum products such as LPG domestic Gas stoves, Diesel Monoset pumps and Diesel Generator Sets.

#### **Deviation from Standard tendering procedure by ONGC**

713. SHRI RAM KUMAR KASHYAP : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) deviated from the standard

tendering procedure and hired a rig viz. Dhirubhai Deepwater KG-1 (DDKG-1) for Reliance Industries Ltd. without calling for competitive bids for period of four years on untenable grounds at an operating day rate of US dollars 495,000 for first 180 days and at US dollar from 181st day onwards; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and appropriate action taken or proposed to be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN) : (a) and (b) ONGC has informed that Rig DDKG-1 was hired on assignment basis as an outcome of shortage of rigs in the market for drilling ultra-deep water acreages, after obtaining approvals from Executive Committee, Executive Purchase Committee and ONGC Board.

ONGC has further informed that the decision of hiring of this Rig DDKG-1 was taken in the light of its availability and also on account of pressing need to ensure completion of Minimum Work Programme (MWP) of drilling exploratory wells in the NELP Deep Water blocks as per the respective Production Sharing Contract (PSC) of the blocks signed with the Government of India. Non-completion of MWP would have made ONGC liable to pay the cost of unfinished work programme/Liquidated damage as per the provisions of PSC.

ONGC has also stated that rig DDKG-1 was hired on assignment basis on such rates, terms and conditions that there was no loss to ONGC.

The alleged irregularity in hiring of the rig DDKG-1 as observed by C&AG is being examined by the Government and based on the outcome of the examination, appropriate action will be taken in the matter.

#### **Impact of restrictive shipping norms on PSU refineries**

714. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA :

SHRI A.U. SINGH DEO :

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Public Sector refineries lose out on crude oil deals and private refiners are capitalizing on attractive crude oil offers from major global firms because of restrictive Indian shipping norms that apply only to them;

(b) if so, the facts in this regard;

(c) whether present Indian shipping norms bar State-run companies from buying and shipping crude oil on Cost and Freight (CFE) basis;

(d) if so, the facts in this regard and the reasons therefor; and