

and Summary of Understanding (SoU) has been signed with M/s Halliburton to cooperate on enhancement of production by improving the recovery in Kalol field in Ahmedabad Asset. These agreements are non-binding and non-committed to either party.

Losses due to delay in award of Ratna and R series fields

1565. SHRI K. R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the 16 years delay in award of Ratna and R series fields caused loss of ₹ 20,000 crores to the exchequer;

(b) whether it is also a fact that non-maintenance of oil producing fields by ONGC and subsequent plundering and looting from the sites at Ratna and R series fields is a sheer failure of ONGC in looking after the nation's property; and

(c) whether Government is considering to probe the whole affair in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARAMENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (c) The Ratna and R-Series fields are medium-sized fields, located in the Western Offshore on the South West of Mumbai. These fields were discovered and developed partially by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC). In the wake of a policy decision during 1992, Government approved award of contract in respect of Ratna and R-Series fields (discovered fields of ONGC) to a consortium of M/s. Essar Oil Limited and M/s Premier Oil Pacific UK Ltd. However, Production Sharing Contract (PSC) for the fields could not be finalized. The Government on 10th March, 2016 has reverted these fields to ONGC for development and production. The Comptroller and Auditor General of India (C&AG) in the Audit report no. 43 to 2015 has *inter alia* observed that keeping discovered hydrocarbon fields idle without assigning the production rights had led to deferment of domestic production of Crude Oil and Natural Gas from the field from October 2005 to March 2015 to the tune of ₹ 26,200 crore. The ONGC Board in its meeting held on 23rd February, 2017 has approved the development of R-Series Fields with a capital cost of ₹ 4,104.63 crore and implementation of the development plan has started.

Scrap-based steel plants in the country

1566. SHRI DILIP KUMAR TIRKEY: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is planning to set up scrap-based steel plants in the country;