

(c) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (c) The Government through Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), is implementing Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme under which, OMCs sell ethanol blended petrol with percentage of ethanol up to 10 per cent, subject to the availability of ethanol.

For the ethanol supply year 2017-18, OMCs have allocated a quantity of 156.5 crore litres of ethanol under EBP Programme.

Auction of oil and gas blocks for exploration

3794. SHRI MANISH GUPTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for putting on auction, a large number of blocks for exploration in oil and gas at the beginning of this year, 2018;

(b) whether any block in West Bengal has been included in the blocks listed for auction;

(c) whether any foolproof regulations have been prescribed to avoid future complications under the Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP), if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether any Energy Regulator is being appointed to oversee the block awarding activity and when is this procedure likely to take place?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Government of India has approved the Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP) on 10.03.2016. With the operationalisation of Modalities of Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP), the first round of seeking Expression of Interests (EoIs) was opened on DGH Portal from 1st July, 2017 to 15th November, 2017. The investors had freedom to carve out the area/block out of the area available for exploration under OALP and submit their EoI online at the dedicated portal for the purpose. The prospective investors expressed their interest for 57 blocks and submitted EoIs. Based on EoIs received, 55 blocks have been carved out and put for bidding *w.e.f.* 19th January, 2018 through International Competitive Bidding. No investor had expressed their interest in the area of West Bengal, as a result no bid could be called for West Bengal.

(c) and (d) Earlier, under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) regime, various operational issues emerged while administering the contracts leading to many

disputes with the operators, which *inter alia* include cost recovery limit, intrusive management by the Management Committee, procurement issues, methodology adopted for calculation of investment multiple, no incentive for the operator to keep costs low, thus adversely affecting profit petroleum. Based on the experience of administering NELP and shortcomings observed in its implementation, the Government brought out the Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy (HELP). The new exploration policy provides for single license for exploration and exploitation of conventional as well as un-conventional hydrocarbon resources, flexibility to carve out exploration acreages, a Revenue Sharing model and marketing and pricing freedom for the Crude oil and Natural gas produced. Based on the bid evaluation by Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH), the Government awards the contracts.

FDI in oil and gas sector to meet demand

3795. SHRI MANISH GUPTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether oil and gas sector has received any FDI in the last three years, if so, the details thereof;

(b) by what extent will reliance on oil imports be reduced in the next three years, if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether India's Compounded Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) for oil is expected to expand rapidly by a large amount in the next few years, if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps proposed by Government to meet the ever-widening gap between supply and demand?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (d) Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflow under petroleum and natural gas sector during 2014-2017 has been around ₹ 8370 crore. The Government is taking measures to reduce the dependency on import in energy from oil and gas by 10% by the year 2021-22. The roadmap to reduce oil imports focuses on a five pronged strategy, which comprises, increasing domestic production of oil and gas, promoting energy efficiency and conservation measures, giving thrust on demand substitution, capitalizing untapped potential in biofuels and other alternate fuels/renewables and implementing measures for refinery process improvements. Government has taken several steps to enhance exploration and production of oil and gas in the country which include, *inter alia*, Hydrocarbon Exploration Licensing Policy (HELP) and Open Acreage Licensing Policy (OALP), Discovered Small Field Policy, gas