

(b) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to open a petrol/diesel pump on this stretch of Highway?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) As per the Express Highway Rules, no retail outlet can be opened on the Express Highway unless a parallel service road is available. Since there is no service road available in the Sion-Thane stretch, no retail outlets can be commissioned on this highway.

#### **Loss of Rigs in ONGC**

4853. MAJOR GENERAL BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI, AVSM : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is frequent loss of drilling Rigs in Oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC);

(b) if so, the number of such Rigs lost alongwith their cost during each of the last three years;

(c) whether the Government are aware that quite a few of these losses are fake;

(d) if so, the number of inquiries have been conducted, location-wise; and

(e) the findings of these enquiries and the action by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR) : (a) No, Sir.

(b) During the last three years, only one ONGC owned rig E-1400-8 was damaged in a blow out fire in Assam in the year 1995-96. The net book value of the rig is Rs. 19.59 lakhs.

One contract rig Hitdrill of M/s Hitech was destroyed in a blow out in East Godavari district in Feb., 1997.

(c) to (e) An enquiry was conducted by Dy. Director of Mines Safety, Digboi and ONGC and suitable action was taken against three erring officers in the E-1400-8 blow out.

In the M/s Hitech case an enquiry was conducted by Maj. Gen. SCN Jatar (Retd.). Based on the report action is in hand against three officers of ONGC.

#### **Reduction of Security Forces in Kashmir**

4854. SHRI RAMKRISHNA BABA PATIL : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government are reducing security forces in Kashmir;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether situation in the valley has been so normal to reduce the security forces;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) to (e) Central Security Forces are made available to the State Government to assist them in maintaining public order and tackling militancy. The levels of deployment depend upon overall security scenario in the country and the availability of Central Security Forces. Accordingly, Central Security Forces are being made available to the Government of Jammu and Kashmir keeping in view the availability of these forces and the prevailing security situation which is reviewed from time to time. Within J&K the Unified Headquarters keep reviewing the deployment which has to be dynamic keeping in view the changing situations.

[Translation]

#### **Smuggling in Bihar**

4855. SHRI PRABHASH CHANDRA TIWARI : Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government are aware that smuggling of opium-hamp, gold and silver in Bihar due to nexus of local police officers has been detected; and

(b) if so, the measures taken to curb it?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI) : (a) to (b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

#### **Scandal in Traffic Signals**

4856. PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA :  
DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY :  
DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state :