

Bifurcation of Sholapur Division

*290. SHRI S. R. REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Sholapur Division has been bifurcated into two units, one up to Gulbarga going to the Central Railway and the other to the South Central Railway;

(b) what are the considerations that led Government to take such a decision; and

(c) whether it is a fact that because of this bifurcation the State of Karnataka has come to be served by three different Zonal Railways, whereas the neighbouring state of Maharashtra is served by only one Zonal Railway?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) The erstwhile Sholapur Division of South Central Railway has been merged with Central Railway in its entirety except for the Shahabad/Wadi-Raichur section which has been retained on the South Central Railway.

(b) Administrative and operational requirements have led to the retention of the above section on South Central Railway.

(c) It is a fact that the State of Karnataka will now be served by three Zonal Railways, viz., Central, Southern and South Central as against two viz., Southern and South Central previously, but the State of Maharashtra is served not by one but by four Zonal Railways as hitherto viz., Central, South Central, South Eastern and Western.

Oil Exploration in Sagar and Jhansi Divisions

*300. SHRI LAXMI NARAIN NAYAK: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state the

names of the places selected for oil exploration and whether Sagar Division and Jhansi Division of Bundelkhand are also included therein and if so, the names of the places therein?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA): Apart from off-shore exploration, ONGC has planned to continue exploratory surveys (Geological, seismic and gravity-magnetic) in the various prospective areas in the States of Gujarat, J&K, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Tripura, Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan.

Locations for exploratory drilling are released by the ONGC according to the priorities drawn up on the basis of data collected by geological and other surveys. Currently apart from continuing exploratory drilling in the known hydrocarbon bearing areas in Gujarat, Assam, Tripura and off-shore areas, exploratory drilling at some new places such as Jwalamukhi, Ramshahar and Diamond Harbour is also being conducted by the ONGC. Exploratory drilling at Puranpur and Parewa in Uttar Pradesh and at Narsapur in Andhra Pradesh will also be taken up shortly.

At present the ONGC does not envisage exploratory drilling in Sagar Division or Jhansi Division because the geological surveys carried out by the ONGC in this area in the past do not justify any exploration work.

Requisites for Divisional H.Q.

*301. SHRI RAJ SHEKHAR KOLUR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the requisites for establishing Divisional Headquarters at a particular place;

(b) whether Bangalore city fulfils these conditions; and