

ment are aware from newspaper reports that winding up proceedings are pending before the High Court of Judicature Punjab and Haryana, Chandigarh, the details of which are not known.

(c) The question of taking any action against the directors and other officers will be considered by the Official Liquidator attached to the High Court, when the winding up is ordered by the High Court.

Delay in Drilling by American Companies in Kutch and W. Bengal

*133. SHRI PRASANNBHAI MEHTA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry informed the American companies to start oil drilling in the Kutch Region of Gujarat and in West Bengal;

(b) whether a contract between India and two American companies was signed earlier for 24 years from November 1, 1975 onwards but they could not implement the same; and

(c) if so, the reasons for delay in starting the drilling for oil?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA):

(a) to (c). Contracts were awarded in April 1974 to Carlsberg India Group of USA for offshore exploration of the continental shelf off the coast of West Bengal and a portion of Orissa and to Reading and Bates Group of USA for the offshore exploration of the continental shelf in the Kutch Basin. The contracts are for periods of 27 and 24 years respectively. The effective date of these contracts was 1st August, 1974. Under the contract, the Carlsberg Group had to complete seismic survey, relinquish all but 5000 square kilometres, drill two wells and spend a minimum of \$5 million in the Exploration Phase I comprising 3 years from the effective

date. Similarly, Reading and Bates Group had to complete seismic survey, relinquish all but 5000 sq. kilometres, drill one well and spend a minimum of \$2.5 million in Exploration Phase I comprising 3 years from the effective date. Both the contractors have fulfilled the obligations imposed on them by the contracts and have in fact spent \$ 17.99 million and \$ 11.83 million respectively. The Contractors have to intimate before the end of June, 1977 whether or not they elect to proceed with Exploration Phase II of two years commencing from 1-8-1977.

Survey for off-shore drilling in Arabian Sea

*134. SHRI SKARIAH THOMAS: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has since been conducted recently by Government for off-shore drilling in the Arabian Sea near Cochin; and

(b) if so, the broad outlines of the survey conducted?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI H. N. BAHUGUNA):

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Purchase made by the Ministry from Companies having interest of Erstwhile Prime Minister

*136. SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) value and details of purchases made/or/and value of purchases contemplated by his Ministry during 25-6-75 to 25-3-77 from companies in which the son/sons and other family members erstwhile Prime Minister