

(c) and (d) At present the estimated cost of solar power generation is about Rs. 13 to Rs 15 per unit, which is high in comparison to power available from other sources.

The cost of solar energy systems have been reducing, however, it may take some more time for solar energy systems to become competitive to other sources of energy.

(e) The Government has been supporting research and development to reduce the cost of solar power through (i) improvements in the performance of existing solar devices (ii) reduction in the consumption of materials (iii) development of new materials and devices; (iv) development of grid interactive electronic systems etc. In addition, setting up of a solar thermal power generation and test facility is being supported.

The research efforts are aimed at reducing the cost of solar power to make them competitive to grid power in next 8-10 years.

Ethanol Blended Petrol

†949.SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had planned during the past few years to sell ethanol blended petrol, to increase the availability of petrol in the country and to keep its price in check;

(b) if so, when this plan was formulated and the percentage of ethanol that was to be mixed with petrol and under this plan, and when the decision in this regard was taken;

(c) whether the said plan has been executed in the country; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, by when this plan is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) to (d) Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas vide its Notification dated 20th September, 2006 has directed the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) to sell 5% Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) subject to commercial viability in the entire country except North-Eastern States, Jammu & Kashmir, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshdweep with effect from 1st November, 2006.

At present 5% EBP programme is being implemented in 16 States and 3 UTs out of 20 States and 4 UTs identified for implementing the programme. Issues like availability of ethanol, State Excise procedures and taxation policy adopted by State Governments are coming in the way of smooth implementation of the programme nationwide.

Market share of OMCs and PSOCs

†950.SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

SHRI SHIVANAND TIWARI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

(a) whether it is a fact that BPCL, an oil marketing company, has decided to pay 70 per cent dividend to its shareholders out of the profit earned in the financial year 2007-08 and whether Indian Oil Corporation also earned a net profit to the tune of Rs.2,599.40 crore during the said period;

(b) if not, the details in this regard;

(c) whether while both these companies earned profit during the said period, the other oil companies suffered losses; and

(d) if so, the estimate of losses suffered by each oil companies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) to (d) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) has paid 40 per cent dividend to its shareholders out of the Rs. 1,580.56 crore net profit earned by the company during the financial year 2007-08. During the same period, the other public sector oil marketing companies, viz. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL), Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), GAIL India Ltd. and Oil India Limited (OIL) have earned net profit of Rs.6,962,58 Crore, Rs.1,134.88 crore, Rs.20,221 crore, 2,601 crore and Rs.1,789 crore respectively.

Jathropa Blended Diesel

†951. SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had decided in 2003 to mix Jatropha oil in diesel with a view to increase the availability of diesel and to reduce its prices;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the above decision was not implemented upto the beginning of the year 2009; and

(d) if so, the details in this regard and by when the decision is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) to (d) No Sir. The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas has announced a Bio-diesel Purchase Policy, in October, 2005 to encourage production of Bio-diesel in the country, which became effective from 1.1.2006. Under this scheme Oil Marketing Companies will purchase Bio-diesel for blending with High Speed Diesel (HSD) to the extent of 5% at identified purchase centres across the country. OMCs would buy Bio-diesel at a uniform landed price, which is to be reviewed every six months. At present the purchase price of Bio-diesel is at Rs. 26.50 per litre.

The Policy has identified 20 Purchase Centres of the public sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) all over the country. The OMCs would purchase Bio-diesel meeting the standards

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi