

list for LPG connections in each District of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra is as follows:

Akola	13,541
Amravati	21,423
Wardha	4,100
Bhandara	5,200
Nagpur	51,199
Ghandrapur	14,500
Buldhana	3,000
Yavatmal	7,100

(b) and (c) Release of new LPG connections is being done under a phase enrolment programme which includes opening of new bottling plants, appointment of new LPG dealers, procurement of adequate equipments etc.

Withdrawal by M/s. Chevron from Drilling Saurashtra Sea region

294. SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact the only foreign company M/s. Chevron which was drilling in Saurashtra Sea region has decided to withdraw without any success;

(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether it is a fact that monopoly houses Tatas, Modi, etc. have made arrangements with foreign collaborators for the acquisition of oil field equipment for oil exploration and that Government have given green signal to them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM (SHRI AWAL KISHORE SHARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Chevron drilled three wells as per the contract in the initial three years and all of them were dry. Based on the information gathered from the wells, it did not consider worthwhile to opt for further exploration.

(c) Several proposals have been received, including some from MRTP companies, for setting up joint ventures with foreign drilling companies so that they can offer contrast drilling services. This is proposed to be done to indigenise oil field services.

Shortage of soda ash

295. SHRI SURAJ PRASAD:

SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of glass manufacturing units in the country are being closed down due to the shortage of soda ash;

(b) if so, what is the extent of shortage of soda ash during the last three years;

(c) what measures are being taken to increase the production; and

(d) what is the quantum of soda ash proposed to be imported during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS AND INDUSTRY AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL): (a) No glass manufacturing units has so far been reported closed due to the shortage of soda Ash. However, some complaints have been received by the Government from glass manufacturing units regarding curtailment in the production of glass due to shortage of Soda Ash in the country.

(b) to (d) While production of Soda Ash in the country has shown a rising trend on an annual basis, some imports, which are allowed under Open General Licence to actual users, have also taken place. The figures