

(b) As per India Hydrocarbon Vision-2025 the demand for natural gas in the year 2006-07 has been projected at 231 Million Standard Cubic Meters Per Day (MMSCMD) which will progressively grow to 391 MMSCMD in the year 2024-2025.

(c) Government have adopted a multipronged strategy for augmenting gas supplies. The major policy initiatives include:—(i) Intensification in exploration through New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) bidding rounds; (ii) Intensification in exploitation of Coal Bed Methane (CBM) resources; (iii) Encouraging imports of natural gas in the form of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG); (iv) Bilateral and multilateral initiatives for gas imports through transnational pipelines;

(d) and (e) Yes, Sir. The Government is considering setting up a Petroleum & Natural Gas Regulatory framework for *inter-alia* attracting investments and protecting consumer interests.

Supply of ATF by private firms

94. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to dismantle the monopoly of state-owned oil firms in the supply of aviation turbine fuel at Indian Airports;

(b) whether the increased competition with the entry of private players will bring down the ATF prices and if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have assessed the loss to be caused to the oil firms and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) The authorization to market transportation fuels, namely petrol, diesel and aviation turbine fuel (ATF) can be given to any company, subject to the company investing or proposing to invest Rs. 2000 crore in exploration and production (E&P), refining, pipelines or terminals. Reliance Industries Ltd. (RIL) has been given authorization to market ATF, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have long been in the business.

(b) It is expected that increased competition would lead to better consumer services, including more value for money.

(c) No formal study in this regard has been done but Public Sector OMCs are expected to hold their own in competitive market conditions.

Discussions on Iran-India Gas pipeline project

95. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that he discussed the long pending India-Iran gas pipeline project with the Prime Minister of Pakistan during his recent visit; and

(b) if so, what is the result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. During the visit to India by the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Shri Shaukat Aziz on November 24-25, 2004, the importance of availability and access to the energy resources in the region around South Asia was recognized and the issue of import of natural gas from Iran to India on-land via Pakistan was discussed. While the Minister's discussion with the Prime Minister of Pakistan was limited to a review of the general hydrocarbons situation in each country, and the issues of bilateral cooperation were touched upon. It is now proposed to hold bilateral discussion between the Petroleum Ministers of the two countries in pursuance of the agreement between the two Foreign Ministers in New Delhi on 6 September, 2004 and subsequent developments in this regard.

Deal for supply of gas from Myanmar

96. SHRI V. HANUMANTHARAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have concluded a deal with Myanmar for supply of gas to India;

(b) whether a pipeline is needed to bring this gas to India;

(c) whether Bangladesh has given transit rights for this pipeline;

(d) if so, the details of the entire deal including cost of pipelines, and other fiscal benefits to Bangladesh;

(e) whether this deal is worth in the long run to India; and

(f) if so, the gains from this pipeline?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Recently, a delegation visited Myanmar to participate in a trilateral summit of oil Ministers of Myanmar, Bangladesh and India to discuss cooperation in hydrocarbon sector with Myanmar and the import of natural gas from Myanmar through an onland pipeline via