

consumer of domestic LPG on being provided/obtaining Piped Natural Gas (PNG) connection is required to surrender his/her LPG connection within sixty days from the date of his/her obtaining PNG connection. The PNG provider shall discontinue the supply of PNG to an existing consumer of LPG who has not surrendered the LPG connection within the time limit of sixty days. OMCs are prohibited to provide LPG connection to a person who is in possession of a PNG connection.

Shortage of gas cylinders in Himachal Pradesh

‡3064. SHRIMATI BIMLA KASHYAP SOOD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Ministry is not able to supply gas according to demand as a result everyday there is news of shortage of gas cylinders in newspapers while on the other hand vehicles are being run on gas which is illegal; and

(b) if so, the number of gas consumers in Himachal Pradesh, district-wise, the number of consumers who are in waiting list and the number of gas cylinders being provided by the Ministry to the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that at present, there is no overall shortage of LPG in the country including in the State of Himachal Pradesh and LPG supplies to distributors are being made by the OMCs through indigenous production and imports in accordance with the genuine demand of customers registered with the LPG distributors.

OMCs have reported a backlog of few days in LPG supplies in certain States in the country including in the State of Himachal Pradesh due to a combination of factors *viz.* unplanned shutdown of refineries at some of the sources, shortage of LPG in the global market, restricted movement of bulk LPG tank trucks, heavy unexpected rainfall in different parts of the country and excessive booking due to various festivals etc.

Government has reviewed the overall backlog situation and has advised OMCs to liquidate it by operating the bottling plants on holidays and during extended hours.

The possibility of blackmarketing/diversion of subsidized domestic LPG cylinders by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out due to the wide gap between the retail price of LPG for domestic use and the market price for commercial LPG.

Refill audits are also being conducted by the OMCs, especially for distributors indenting for substantially more cylinders than the average consumption pattern to ensure that the distributors do not indulge in diversion of domestic cylinders and do not put the customer to hardship.

‡Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Government has enacted “Liquefied Petroleum Gas (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000” and formulated “Marketing Discipline Guidelines, 2001” which provide for penal action against erring LPG distributors for diversion of domestic LPG cylinder for non-domestic use.

In addition to the action taken by the OMCs, State Governments are also empowered to take action under the LPG (Regulation of Supply and Distribution) Order, 2000.

(b) As on 01.10.2010, OMCs are serving 14.154 lakh domestic LPG customers in the State of Himachal Pradesh.

OMCs have reported that at present there is no waiting list for release of new connections with their LPG distributors in the State of Himachal Pradesh.

During the period from January — October, 2010, OMCs have supplied 55.2 lakh domestic LPG cylinders in the State of Himachal Pradesh.

Pricing of petroleum products by companies

†3065. SHRI MOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has taken a decision to hand over the supply and retail pricing of diesel to companies from the year 2010;

(b) whether Government is taking some steps to protect consumers from the increase in prices of petrol and diesel; and

(c) if so, the details of the steps being taken?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) to (c) In the light of the recommendations made by the Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Dr. Kirit S. Parikh to advise on a Viable and Sustainable System of Pricing of Petroleum Products, the Government made the price of Petrol, both at the Refinery Gate and at the Retail Level, market-determined with effect from 26.6.2010. As a result, the price of Petrol went up by Rs. 3.50 per litre. Subsequent to the decontrol of Petrol pricing, the oil companies are free to take appropriate decision on the pricing of Petrol on the basis of international oil prices, market conditions and commercial considerations.

Government has also taken a decision ‘in principle’ that the price of Diesel will be made market-determined, both at Refinery Gate and Retail Level. However, Government has initially increased the retail selling price of Diesel by only Rs. 21/- per litre with effect from 26th June, 2010 (at Delhi), with corresponding increases in the rest of the country.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.