

(b) whether the British Petroleum (BP) is keen to offer its stakes in assets located in Colombia, Venezuela and Vietnam to meet its Gulf of Mexico oil spill liabilities;

(c) whether India has evinced interest in the BP's Vietnam assets currently producing about 13 million cubic meters of gas a day; and

(d) if so, whether the negotiations have been concluded?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI JITIN PRASADA): (a) Government is securing energy needs of the country through various measures including encouraging oil Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) to acquire overseas oil and gas assets based on commercial consideration. Oil PSUs have presence in 29 countries with an investment of about Rs.5630 crore made during 2009-10 in overseas Exploration and Production activities.

(b) to (d) British Petroleum (BP) has not offered its stakes in assets located in Colombia and Venezuela to any Indian Oil PSU.

As regards Vietnam, BP has a partnership with ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL) and PetroVietnam in the Block 06.1 and has indicated to sell its stake in this Block. Based on commercial considerations, OVL would take a final view regarding acquisition of BP's stake in the Vietnam project.

#### **Shortage of cooking gas in Himachal Pradesh**

†2300. SHRIMATI BIMLA KASHYAP SOOD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is an acute shortage of cooking gas in Una, Hamirpur, Palampur and Shimla districts of Himachal Pradesh;

(b) the number of persons who are in the waiting list of cooking gas for the years 2008-09 and 2010;

(c) whether it is also a fact that for cooking gas connection recommendations of Members of Parliament are required or requests have to be made to the Minister time and again; and

(d) if so, the steps being taken by Government so that the general public may not have to face difficulties?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

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.

(b) to (d) 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. The enrolment of new LPG customers and release of new LPG connections is a continuous process. New LPG connections are made available as soon as possible and in any case, within a period of sixty days. LPG distributors of OMCs are releasing new LPG connection to prospective customers in their area of operation after verifying the valid residence and ID proof etc.

OMCs have been advised to instruct all their area officers to release LPG connections against the request made by Members of Parliament.

OMCs have released 188.43 lakh LPG connections in the country including 1.65 lakh in the State of Himachal Pradesh during the last two years and between April 2010 to September 2010.

#### **Details of labours engaged in oil PSUs**

2301. SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of permanent and contract labours engaged in oil Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) PSU-wise; and