

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY): (a) Government is trying to ensure import of natural gas through transnational gas pipeline, including from Iran through the Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) Gas Pipeline Project. Various important issues, viz., pricing of gas, delivery point of gas, project structure, payment of transportation tariff and transit fees for passage of natural gas through Pakistan, security of supply, etc., are under discussion amongst the participating countries.

(b) and (c) An agreement to meet the requirement of natural gas for Brahmaputra Cracker & Polymer Ltd. (BCPL) has already been signed between BCPL and Oil India Ltd. (OIL) on 19.9.2007 and between BCPL and Oil & Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) on 15.10.2007. Projects of such nature are given priority by the Government in allocation of natural gas. Further, the Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) constituted to consider and decide issues pertaining to *inter alia* commercial utilization of natural gas under New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP) in its meeting held on May 28, 2008 decided that, as a matter of general policy, natural gas produced/imported in the country should be stripped of its higher fractions, subject to availability, to ensure maximum value-addition before supply to consumers. The decision ensures that natural gas has to be supplied on priority to petrochemicals plants for extraction of rich components.

Sanitation facilities in rural areas

*100. SHRI MOINUL HASSAN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that according to the WHO/UNICEF report on "Progress on sanitation and drinking water 2010 update", only 31 per cent of the rural population of the country use sanitation facilities;

(b) whether this is in conflict with the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation's figure of 67 per cent;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the corrective measures Government intends to take for increasing coverage to the remaining areas?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI VILASRAO DESHMUKH): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) According to the information presented in the WHO/UNICEF report on 'Progress on sanitation and drinking water 2010 update' the use of sanitation facilities as a percentage of population was 31% in rural areas of the country. The information presented in the report includes data from household surveys and censuses completed during the period 2007-2008 only. Further, as mentioned in the report itself, the data in the report do not reflect the efforts of the international year of sanitation 2008 and beyond which mobilised renewed support to stop the practice of open defecation and to promote the use of toilets. Moreover WHO/UNICEF report monitored usage while at present TSC figures speak of availability of physical facility of access to toilet with rural households. The sanitation coverage in rural areas was 21.9% as per census 2001. With the effective implementation of Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC), the rural sanitation coverage has since increased to approximately 69% as of January 2011, as per the progress reported by all the States through online monitoring system maintained by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

(d) TSC is a demand driven, project based programme taking district as a unit. The main components under the programme are Information Education and Communication (IEC), incentives for Individual Household Latrines (IHHL), School Sanitation and Hygiene Education (SSHE), assistance for Community Sanitary Complex, Anganwadi toilets and Solid and Liquid Waste Management (SLWM).

To increase effective demand for sanitation facilities in rural areas, the Department has strengthened IEC component by releasing IEC Guidelines 2010 for creating awareness among rural people.

Assistance provided under TSC for construction of school and anganwadi toilets has also been increased with effect from 1.4.2010 for better quality of construction and speedy coverage of schools and anganwadis with sanitation facilities.

TSC supports training of technical manpower like masons in the rural areas, publications of various technical designs, technical supervision when needed and NGO support to ensure good engineering quality of toilets.

Comprehensive web-based online monitoring system for TSC is in place with Gram Panchayat level data on objectives and achievements for effective monitoring.