

Pending taking a view on the report of NCAER the allocations for 2005-06 have been maintained at the level of 2004-05, including additional allocations made during that year to meet emergency/urgent demands for PDS Kerosene in States/Union Territories. For the 1st quarter of 2006-07, allocations have been maintained at the level of 2005-06.

(b) and (c) While no such request has been received from the State Government of Uttar Pradesh in the recent past, requests for additional allocation for floods/drought in the State were received in this Ministry during 2005-06. Additional allocations of 1320 KL each were made to the State during August 2005 and October 2005 against these requests.

Sale of IOC and ONGC holding in GAIL

3279. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that IOC and ONGC have planned to block sale of GAIL holding;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the benefits likely to accrue to the Nation by such a move?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) IOC have already sold 50% of its equity holding in GAIL, fetching them net sale proceeds of Rs. 560.98 crore. Similarly, though ONGC Board have also approved the sale of their holding in GAIL, the plan to do so at an appropriate time, depending upon their liquidity requirements and other commercial considerations.

(c) By sale of their holdings in GAIL, not only the profitability, networth and liquidity position of IOC and ONGC is expected to improve, but it would also help them fund their new projects, benefitting the nation as well.

Mixing of Naptha in Petrpl

†3280. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that Naptha is mixed in petrol;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

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(b) whether it is a fact that Naptha mixed petrol fumes are harmful from environmental and health point of view; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by Government to prevent such adulteration?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) The possibility of mixing of Naptha with petrol by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out owing to substantial price differential between petrol and Neptha and the easy miscibility of Naptha with petrol.

(b) Yes, Sir. If petrol is mixed with Naptha, it affects the Octane Number and thereby combustion, which leads to increase in unburnt Hydrocarbon and Carbon-monoxide emissions.

(c) Government have issued the Naptha (Acquisition, Sales, Storage and Prevention of Use in Automobile) Order, 2000 under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to prevent diversion and misuse of naptha for adulteration. State Governments have been empowered under this Order to take action in the case of malpractices/irregularities. Also, the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) take action against their dealers under the Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG), for adulteration in petrol.

Criteria for new blocks for exploration

3281. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of blocks to be offered for exploration under NELP-VI;

(b) the technical and evaluation criteria decided by Government for NELP-VI;

(c) whether allegation have been levelled in sending officers abroad for studying various aspects of NELP;

(d) if so, the officers who were sent to foreign countries;

(e) whether these officers possess the desire qualification, experience and expertise in this field; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?