

(c) and (d) IGL has regularly been spreading awareness amongst consumers about safety through various campaigns. As per Rule 35 of Gas Cylinder Rules, 2004, CNG can only be dispensed to cylinders which have been subjected to hydrostatic test or hydrostatic stretch test as per period specified by Bureau of Indian Standards. In accordance with the norms prescribed for CNG vehicles (AIS 028), a compliance plate is to be installed near the filling point and it has to be clearly visible to the re-fueller. Apart from other details, the compliance plate carries the date of last testing of the cylinder, which the filler can see before dispensing CNG to check the validity of the CNG cylinder. In order to ensure strict adherence to the above, IGL would stop dispensing CNG *w.e.f.* 1st June, 2013 to all such vehicles which have not been fitted with a compliance plate near filling point indicating the validity of the CNG cylinder.

(e) IGL has been in regular contact with all the stakeholders involved in enforcement of prescribed safety regulations namely, Petroleum & Explosives Safety Organisation (PESO Nagpur), Transport Department (Govt. of NCT of Delhi), Traffic Police (Delhi). These organizations have been issuing instructions/guidelines from time to time, which are given due publicity by IGL.

Negative growth rate in gas production

4466. SHRI N.K. SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the growth rate of natural gas production was negative both in February, 2013 at (-) 20.1 per cent and in February 2012 at (-) 7.6 per cent;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government is proposing any measures to increase the crude oil production in India; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) and (b) Natural gas production in the country in February, 2011, February, 2012 and February, 2013 was 3.906 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM), 3.608 BCM and 2.884 BCM respectively. Natural gas production was 7.62% less in February, 2012 in comparison to the production in February, 2011 and natural gas production was 20.06% less in February, 2013 in comparison to the production in February, 2012.

The major reason for decline in natural gas production is due to less production from KG-DWN-98/3 (KG-D6) block. In addition, natural gas production from aging fields of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) & Oil India Ltd. (OIL) is on natural decline.

(c) and (d) Several measures have been taken by the Government/Oil PSUs to accelerate the production of crude oil in the country, which includes the following:

- (i) Carving out more and more areas for exploration for offer under various rounds of New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP)/Open Area Licensing Policy (OALP).
- (ii) Implementation of New Technologies such as horizontal well drilling etc.
- (iii) Application of Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR)/Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) techniques for increasing recovery factor from existing fields.
- (iv) As a policy, operators are allowed to do exploration in production phase also.

Oil exploration in the waters between India and Sri Lanka

4467. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are immense opportunities for exploration of oil blocks in the waters that separates India and Sri Lanka;

(b) if so, whether any meeting has been held between the two countries to discuss the possibilities of exploration of oil blocks;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the future strategy to be adopted by Government to gain priority in oil exploration blocks in Sri Lanka over other countries?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) No discovery of oil has been reported in the region. However, two gas discoveries, namely Barracuda and Dorado, were announced by Government of Sri Lanka in 2011. Commerciality of these gas discoveries is yet to be proved.