

(b) to (d) India had been pursuing exploration opportunities in the Gulf of Mannar and Cauvery basins of Sri Lanka. Meetings between various Organizations /Departments of the two countries were held to explore the possibilities for acquisition of the blocks on nomination basis. However, no block has been awarded to OVL on nomination basis and the Government of Sri Lanka has recently announced second offshore Bid Round 2013. The Bid Round will close in September, 2013.

Allotment of gas agencies in rural areas

4468. SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has allocated gas agencies only in urban areas ignoring remote and rural areas;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the percentage of gas agencies in villages and rural areas as compared to the urban areas; and

(d) the steps Government proposes to take to allocate more LPG gas agencies to rural areas and villages?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (d) In order to spread LPG distribution network in rural areas and uncovered areas, a new Scheme namely, "Rajiv Gandhi Gramin LPG Vitaran Yojana" (RGGLVY) for establishing small-size LPG distribution agencies, was launched on 16.10.2009. Moreover, regular LPG distributorships are also operating in rural areas. As on 01.03.2013 the number of LPG distributors commissioned in rural areas under RGGLVY and regular distributorships are 1845 and 1713 respectively.

The percentage of gas agencies in rural areas is 28.8 as compared to 57.4 in urban area. In addition 1701 regular LPG distributors are in Urban-Rural area.

The setting up of LPG distributors in the rural/under-served areas is a continuous process.

Implementation of MDGS by Oil PSUs

4469. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has given the liberty to the Public Sector Oil Corporations to overlook and avoid the clauses of special statutes while implementing the Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDGs) of 2005 and 2012 against the petrol pump dealers;

(b) if so, whether the oil corporations are bound to honour operative manual and relevant clauses prescribed in special statutes like Bureau of Indian Standards Act. Petroleum Act. Essential Commodities Act and Weight and Measurement Act and principle of natural justice while implementing MDGs; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) to (c) Chapter 8 of the Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG), 2012 (which are the existing guidelines) have the following provisions:

"Under existing laws, Control Orders etc., various authorities, Acts/Rules of Central Government - in addition to Oil Company Officers - are empowered to carry out checks of the dealership for determining and securing compliance with such laws/Control Order. If any "malpractice or irregularity" is established by such authorities after checking, the same would also be taken as a "malpractice or irregularity" under these guidelines and prescribed action would be taken by the Oil Company, on receipt of advice from such authority."

As per above mentioned provisions, action against erring dealers are initiated based on the advice of various authorities and principle of natural justice is followed.

PNG connections in the country

4470. SHRI A. A. JINNAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the cities and towns in the country where Piped Natural Gas (PNG) is being supplied by Government, including Tamil Nadu and the National Capital Region of Delhi;

(b) whether Government has drawn any time bound programme for PNG distribution in various cities and towns of Tamil Nadu;