

- (ix) Promoting energy conservation, energy efficiency and demand side management measures.

Infection caused by candles on cakes

*66. SHRI AVINASH RAI KHANNA : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Medical Research Council of Australia after a research has banned the practice of blowing out candles placed on cakes on birthdays and other occasions;

(b) whether Government would take steps to ban such practice in India, if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is a fact that when the candle placed on cake is blown out, the cake is infected with some bacteria which may spread disease; and

(d) if so, what is Government's reaction in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD) : (a) The Indian Council of Medical Research has informed that Australia's National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has banned blowing out candles on community cakes and has instructed daycare centres to provide birthday boys and girls with their own individual cupcakes to blow the candles out to avoid the spread of germs.

(b) and (c) The move to ban blowing out candles is still being debated.

(d) No study has been carried out by ICMR to find out that when candle placed on cake is blown out the cake infected with some bacteria will spread disease.

Production of shale gas in the country

†67. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the United States of America has become an exporter from that of an importer country after it started the production of shale oil and gas;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether it is also a fact that the exploration on the availability of shale gas has been completed many years ago in India also;

(d) if so, when this exploration took place and information regarding availability of shale gas was confirmed; and

(e) the action taken by Government for the production of shale gas till September, 2013, after the information of availability of this gas was confirmed in the country?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRIM. VEERPPA MOILY) : (a) and (b) The production and consumption of Oil in USA as follows:

<i>MMT</i>						
Year	2010	Change 2010 over 2009 (%)	2011	Change 2011 over 2010 (%)	2012	Change 2012 over 2011 (%)
Production	332.9	3.25	345.7	3.84	394.9	13.9
Consumption	847.4	1.7	837	-1.2	819.9	-2.3

The production and consumption of Gas in USA is as follows:

<i>Million Metric Tonnes of Oil Equivalent (MMTOE)</i>						
Year	2010	Change 2010 over 2009 (%)	2011	Change 2011 over 2010 (%)	2012	Change 2012 over 2011 (%)
Production	549.5	3.15	589.8	7.3	619.2	4.7
Consumption	619.3	4.9	626.5	1.16	654	4.1

Source: BP Statistical review, June 2013.

Due to increased production of Shale Oil and Gas in the US, the gap between Consumption and Production is gradually narrowing

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The Government has on 14.10.2013 notified policy guidelines for exploration and exploitation of Shale Gas and Oil by National Oil Companies (NOCs) in their onland Oil and Gas nomination acreages. As per the policy, the NOCs will undertake a mandatory Minimum Work Program in a fixed timeframe for Shale Gas & Oil exploration and exploitation, so that there is optimum accretion and development of Shale Gas and Oil resources from the area already granted to them.

Currently there is no commercial production of shale gas in the country. The cost of production and the commerciality of shale gas would depend upon a host of factors which, *inter-alia*, include the quality of reservoirs, the technology adopted, the enabling policy environment and development of other associated infrastructure.

Irregularities by agents/dealers of oil PSUs

*68. SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Public Sector Oil Companies have received a number of complaints of irregularities being committed by their authorized agents/dealers during each of the last three years and the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the action taken on such complaints; and

(c) the remedial measures taken or being taken by Government to keep a check on such irregularities being committed by the authorized agents/dealers of PSU oil companies?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI M. VEERAPPA MOILY) : (a) Yes, Sir. The Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) received 22,145 complaints of various kinds of irregularities against their Retail Outlet (ROs) and LPG Distributorships during the last three years and current year (April - Sept. 2013). Irregularities are also detected through inspections conducted by OMCs from time to time.

(b) During the last three years and current year (April-Sept., 2013), action of termination, suspension of sales and supplies, issuing of warning letter, fine & penalty etc. in 11127 and 6256 established instances including those received through complaints was taken against Retail Outlet Dealers and LPG distributors respectively. Year-wise details of action taken are given in the Statement (*See below*).