

industry characterized by very volatile prices. Providing some level of protection and thereby adequate refining margins is necessary for encouraging investment in expansion, and more importantly in modernization of our domestic refineries. Failure on this count can impede our quest for energy security. Further, many of the public sector refineries are very old (built between 1901 to 1985) and located in sub economic zone (such as the North-East refineries) with low economies of scale and therefore often have very low GRMs. Removing Customs Duty protection or implementation of EPP based pricing for refineries would render some of them financially unviable. It is also pointed out that the profit as a percentage of turnover of OMCs is around 1% which are barely enough to meet their fund requirements for modernization and upgradation.

Provisional bills sent by IGL arbitrarily

†3800. SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH MAHRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of the fact that without taking reading, the provisional bills are being sent by Indraprastha Gas Limited in Delhi;
- (b) if so, whether Indraprastha Gas Limited has shortage of staff; and
- (c) the steps Government is going to take to prevent Indraprastha Gas Limited from sending bills arbitrarily and preventing the collection of amount from consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN): (a) The process of raising bills on domestic Piped Natural Gas (PNG) consumers at Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) has been adopted as prescribed in Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) (Code of Practice for Quality of Service for City or Local Natural Gas Distribution Networks) Regulations, 2010. According to these Regulations, the bill on customer is raised at bi-monthly frequency on the basis of meter reading collected from the PNG meter installed at customer's premises.

In case the meter is not read during any billing cycle due to reasons attributable to domestic consumer, like unavailability at home at the time of visit etc. IGL sends a provisional bill based on average consumption of last six billing cycles as per Clause 6, Sub-Clause (1), Section G of said Regulations.

(b) The activity of meter reading has been out sourced. As informed by IGL, vendors have deployed sufficient manpower to complete the task within defined time frame for each billing cycle.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) IGL sends bills to domestic PNG customers as per the Regulations prescribed by PNGRB.

Irregularities in weighing LPG cylinders

3801.SHRI AAYANUR MANJUNATHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has issued strict guidelines to petroleum companies to maintain the approved weight of subsidized LPG cylinders, as irregularities have been found in weight of LPG cylinders; and

(b) if so, the number of such cases registered within last three years as on date in this regard and the corrective action taken to avoid under weighing of LPG cylinders?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Government has instructed Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) to direct their LPG distributors to check the weight of LPG cylinders at their godowns. All the distributors are under instruction to provide portable weighing scales to all their delivery boys so that weight of the cylinder can be checked before delivery to the customers.

Details of established cases of supply of underweight cylinders/ pilferage of gas from LPG cylinders during the last three years and from April-May, 2014 are as under:

Year	IOCL	BPCL	HPCL	Total
2011-12	12	4	4	20
2012-13	20	1	5	26
2013-14	7	6	5	18
April-May 2014	3	1	2	6

In all established cases, action is taken against the erring LPG distributors as per the provisions of MDG.

Cases of pilferage of oil during transportation

3802.SHRI AAYANUR MANJUNATHA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn towards the cases of oil pilferage during transportation;

(b) if so, the State/Union Territory-wise and OMC-wise details thereof and the number of such cases which have come to the light during the current year and the last three years;