

(e) whether gas agencies are also continuously violating the rules; and

(f) whether Government will take any concrete measures to curb black marketing of gas to solve problems of the consumers ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (f) The possibility of malpractices/irregularities in subsidized domestic LPG cylinders by some unscrupulous elements cannot be ruled out due to the lower retail price of subsidized LPG for domestic use *vis-a-vis* the market price for commercial LPG.

To prevent such malpractices, OMCs carry regular surprise inspections at distributors premises, conduct refill audits, surprise checks at customers premises, en-route checking of delivery vehicles etc. If LPG distributors are found guilty of any malpractice, punitive action is taken in accordance with the provisions of the Marketing Discipline Guidelines (MDG).

Whenever OMCs notice/receive complaints of illegal business in domestic LPG by any person/agency in the country, including Delhi, the same are forwarded to State Government for further action in accordance with the law.

Various initiatives have been taken by the Government such as cap on supply of subsidized cylinders, de-duplication, introduction of Transparency Portal, KYC exercise etc. which have reduced the misuse and diversion of subsidized LPG cylinders.

Losses of petroleum companies due to rise in crude oil prices

†869. SHRI NARESH AGRAWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether in the wake of Iraq crisis, the prices of crude oil has gone up sharply and inspite of this, the prices of petrol has not been increased in the country while petro-companies are free to increase the prices;

(b) whether these companies are incurring loss due to petrol prices not being increased;

(c) if so, how and from where the losses of these companies are being recompensed; and

(d) if not, the reasons for frequent revision of price of petrol in a month by these very companies earlier ?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN): (a) to (d) Currently, there is no impact on import of crude oil from Iraq due to the prevailing political crisis in that country. However, the political situation in Iraq led to an increase in crude price from \$106.43 per barrel to \$109.75 per barrel in the period between 5th June, 2014 to 30th June, 2014, resulting an increase in Petrol price by 2.09/litre on 01.07.2014.

As the price of Petrol has been made market determined effective 26th June 2010, the Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) take appropriate decision on the pricing of Petrol in line with the international oil prices and market conditions.

Deferring revision of natural gas price

870. SHRI R. LAKSHMANAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government has deferred its decision to fix price for natural gas till September, 2014; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM and NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. The Government considered the gas price issue in the CCEA meeting held on 25th June, 2014 and has decided that the whole issue of domestic natural gas pricing needs comprehensive re-examination and that the Domestic Natural Gas Pricing Guidelines, 2014 be kept in abeyance upto 30.09.2014.

Inquiry into blast in GAIL pipeline

871. SHRIMATI WANSUK SYIEM: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the recent disaster at the GAIL pipeline in Nagaram Village in Andhra Pradesh, causing 15 deaths by explosion, has prompted Government to revisit the pending proposal for a statutory safety regulator for the Hydrocarbons sector;

(b) whether even with the hindsight provided by a ghastly fire at the IOC storage installation near Jaipur few years back, causing huge losses, Government could not put in place a safety mechanism to prevent the GAIL Nagaram disaster; and

(c) whether Government has ordered a departmental enquiry and if so, whether any time-frame has been set for submission of its findings ?