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Prices of petroleum products

52. SHRI RAJKUMAR DHOOT: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether prices of petroleum products have been increased;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have carried out or proposed to carry out any study to reduce the production cost to recover a percentage of subsidy inherent in the selling of petroleum products;

(d) If so, the details thereof; and

(e) If not, what steps are being taken to bring down the prices of petroleum products?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR) (a) and (b) Taking into consideration the prevalent high international oil prices, the consumer prices of petrol, diesel and domestic LPG were increased effective 16.6.04.

(c) to (e) In a decontrolled scenario, the Oil companies have the incentive to cut their costs to remain competitive.

Effective 16.6.04, the Government reduced the excise duty rates on petrol, diesel and LPG to contain the impact of high international prices on domestic consumer prices of these products. The burden of high international oil prices was also shared by OMCs by not passing the full impact of international oil prices in the increase of the domestic consumer prices of aforesaid products effective 16.6.2004. Further, OMCs did not increase the selling price of PDS kerosene.

Pipeline between India and Nepal

53. SHRI K. RAMA MOHANA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that IOC is laying a pipeline from India to Nepal to move petroleum products;

(b) if so, the details of the proposed projects;

(c) whether any agreement has been signed by India and Nepal in this regard; and

(d) if so, what are the salient aspects of the agreement?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has a proposal to lay a product export pipeline from Raxaul (India) to Amlekhgarh (Nepal). Estimated capital cost of approximately 35 kilometers long pipeline will be 33 crore (Phase-I) and additional Rs. 2.3 crore (Phase-II). The throughput will be 0.7 Million Metric Tonnes Per Annum (MMTPA) and 1.1 MMTPA for Phase-I and Phase-II respectively of the pipeline.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Tourists in India

54. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) the number of tourists, who visited India during the last three years, year-wise and country-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that in the year 2003 India has received the largest number of tourists;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the number of tourists expected to visit India during 2004?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) Foreign tourist arrivals in India from top 15 countries for the last 3 years is given in the Statement. (See below).

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Foreign tourist arrivals to India during 2003 has been estimated at about 2.75 Million as compared to about 2.38 Million during 2002, showing a growth of more than 15%. The figure of 2.75 Million estimated for the year 2003, is the highest so far.