

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government has launched Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) to provide 5 crore new LPG connections over a period of three years starting from 2016-17 to the adult woman member of BPL households identified through SECC data 2011, with a budgetary support of ₹ 8,000 crore.

(b) The Government has already achieved the target of providing 1.5 crore LPG connections in the Financial Year 2016-17 under PMUY. As on 16.03.2017, the Public Sector Oil Market Companies (OMCs) have released more than 1.90 crore LPG connections under the Scheme.

(c) and (d) The national LPG coverage as on 01.01.2016 was 61%, which has now increased to 71.7% as on 01.03.2017. OMCs are continuously pursuing release of new connections to the prospective consumers, which will help in increasing the LPG coverage in the ensuing years.

**Deal with UAE to fill oil storage facility at Mangaluru**

2354. SHRI K. R. ARJUNAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India has signed a deal with the UAE that allows the Gulf nation to fill half of an underground crude oil storage facility at Mangaluru that is part of Government's strategic reserve system;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that India is hedging against energy security risks by building emergency storage;

(d) whether Government is considering to create more such storage facilities like the one which is going on in Mangaluru; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) On 25 January, 2017, Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserve Ltd (ISPRL) signed the Definitive Agreement on Oil Storage and Management with Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC) of UAE for filling up one of the two caverns at Mangaluru Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) facility.

(c) Under Phase I of SPR programme, Government, through the Special Purpose Vehicle *i.e.* ISPRL, has built Strategic Petroleum Reserve (SPR) facilities at three

locations viz. Vishakhapatnam, Mangaluru and Padur with a total capacity of 5.33 MMT. The total reserve of Phase-I of SPR is currently estimated to supply approximately 10.5 days of India's crude requirement according to the consumption during 2015-16. The reserve is proposed to be utilised mainly during an emergency situation and will augment India's energy security.

(d) and (e) In order to further augment the energy security of the country, Government, under Phase II of SPR programme, has announced to set up additional 10 MMT SPR facilities at Chandikhol in Odisha and Bikaner in Rajasthan.

### **Oil/petroleum policy**

2355. SHRI TAPAN KUMAR SEN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposes to hold consultation with the industry/investors before formulating any new policy regarding development of oil/gas and other petroleum products and if so, the details thereof along with the salient features of new oil/petroleum policy; and

(b) whether Government proposes to deregulate the prices of natural gas and if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN): (a) The consultations are carried out with the industry and its representatives at various stages of policy formulation wherever considered necessary.

(b) The Government notified New Domestic Natural Gas Pricing Guidelines, 2014 in October, 2014 where the prices has been linked to the prices of various markets in different parts of the world such as Henry Hub, NBP, Alberta Canada and Russia. After issuance of these guidelines various representations were received from various stakeholders to give marketing freedom for the gas to be produced from difficult areas. After due consideration, the Government on 21st March 2016 has notified marketing including pricing freedom for the gas to be produced from Discoveries in Deepwater, Ultra Deepwater and High Pressure-High Temperature areas which were yet to commence commercial production as on 01.01.2016 and to future discoveries in such areas. Recently, Government has also given approval for marketing and pricing freedom to the Coal Bed Methane (CBM) Contractors to sell the CBM at Arm's Length Price in the domestic market.