

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS  
**RAJYA SABHA**  
**UNSTARRED QUESTION NO-145**  
ANSWERED ON- 25/11/2024

**INCIDENTS OF FIRES IN UNDERGROUND GAS & OIL PIPELINES CAUSED BY  
UNAUTHORIZED DIGGING**

145 Dr. Ajeet Madhavrao Gopchade:

Will the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government is aware of incidents involving fires in underground gas and oil pipelines caused by unauthorized digging;
- (b) the measures that have been implemented or will be implemented to protect underground oil and gas pipelines from unauthorized digging; and
- (c) the steps Government has taken in collaboration with State Governments and Central Government agencies to establish regulations requiring prior approval for excavation, whether because leaks often occur during digging due to insufficient information about underground gas and oil pipelines?

**ANSWER**

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS  
(SHRI SURESH GOPI)

- (a) Oil and gas companies report major accidents to the Government whenever they occur including those involving fires in underground gas and oil pipelines caused by unauthorized digging.
- (b) Oil and Gas companies have implemented various measures to protect underground oil and gas pipelines from unauthorized digging which inter-alia includes Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) systems for real-time monitoring, regular security patrolling, Leak Detection Systems (LDS), public awareness campaigns, Pipeline Intrusion Detection Systems (PIDS), negative pressure wave leak detection systems, Geographic Information System (GIS)-based pipeline mapping, etc.

(c) The Petroleum and Minerals Pipelines (P&MP) Act, 1962 restricts the construction of permanent structures or tree plantations in pipeline Right of User (ROU) areas and provide penalties, including imprisonment for damaging pipelines. Under the aegis of PM Gati Shakti program, any new project in the vicinity is notified to the utility owners using Gati Shakti portal. This aids in identification of potential infringement. The Department of Telecommunication has developed an application CBuD (Call Before you Dig) and is being implemented by the oil and gas companies to facilitate coordination between excavation agencies and the oil and gas companies GAs (Geographical Areas) thus reducing the incidents and damage to the CGD (City Gas Distribution) infrastructure. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are in place to identify pipeline locations, determine pipeline depth, and obtain approvals for crossing work. Thus, oil and gas companies maintain close coordination with the State and Central Government agencies to secure underground gas and oil pipelines.

\*\*\*\*