

(a) the number of indigenous and foreign multinational companies to which Government have given permission for import of petroleum products and LPG in private sector;

(b) the future plans for the sale of petroleum products and LPG by these companies and the quantum thereof, State-wise;

(c) the time by which their sale is likely to be commenced on the basis of permission accorded to them;

(d) whether the Government have made any arrangements to check the functioning and management of these companies; and

(e) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA): (a) to (e). Under the Parallel Marketing System, the Government had allowed the private agencies to import and market Kerosene, LPG and LSHS by using/setting up their own import facilities and distribution network. They do not need any permission from the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas. However, they are required to obtain necessary approvals under the relevant Acts and Rules from the Central/State/Local authorities regarding safety, pollution control, etc. as applicable.

Govt. have decanalised the import of following items: 1. LPG 2. SKO 3. NAPHTHA 4. LUBRICANTS 5. LSHS/LSWR 6. HEXANE 7. BENZENE/TOLUENE 8. RPC/CPC 9. CBFS 10. PARAFFIN WAX.

Under the Parallel Marketing System, Kerosene, LPG, LSHS/LSWR have been imported by the Private Agencies. Likewise, other Petroleum products like CBFS, RPC/CPC, Hexane and Benzene/Toluene are also being imported. Government have also approved the formation of Joint Ventures by the Public Sector Companies with Foreign Companies as detailed below for manufacture and marketing of lubricants:-

1. Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited with Shell.
2. IBP with Caltex.
3. Indian Oil Corporation Limited with Mobil.
4. Indian Oil Corporation Limited with Balmer Lawrie & Co. Limited and Nyco.
5. Balmer Lawrie & Co. Limited with Fuchs.

[English]

National Highways in Andhra Pradesh

169. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of on-going road-widening scheme on the National Highways in Andhra Pradesh scheduled for completion in 1994-95;

(b) the present stages of the various such schemes, especially on N.H. No. 5;

(c) whether some such schemes have been delayed; and

(d) if so, the reasons therefor?

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI JAGDISH TYTLER): (a) and (b). Two schemes on National Highway 7 and one on National Highway 43 for widening are scheduled for completion during 1994-95. These are in advanced stage of progress.

(c) and (d). There has been some delay on two schemes on National Highway 7 due to slow progress by the contractors.

Indo-Norwegian Agreement

170. SHRI D. VANKATESWARA RAO: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level technical delegation of oil experts from Norway have visited India to explore the possible avenues of Indo-Norwegian co-operation in the field of oil and gas sector;

(b) if so, whether any agreement has been reached with Norway in this regard;

(c) if so, the details of the agreement; and

(d) to what extent Norway is going to help India in exploring the oil and gas in the country;

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (CAPT. SATISH KUMAR SHARMA): (a) No sir.

(b) to (d). Do not arise.

Iron and Steel, Ranchi

171. SHRI UPENDRA NATH VERMA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state the progress achieved by the Research and Development Centre for Iron & Steel (RDCIS), Ranchi, during the last three years;

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV): Steel Authority of India Limited has taken up number of steps to improve its research and development programmes. Research and Development Centre selects and pursues such projects which would lead to maximum benefits in terms of improvement in productivity, quality and yield, reduction in rejection, reduction in input cost as well as reduction in specific consumption of energy and materials and development of new products. To meet such requirements, projects taken up by Research and Development Centre have been classified in the following categories:—

- Plant Performance Improvement (PPI) which accounts for the bulk of Research and Development efforts and are directed towards improvement in productivity, quality, yield and energy conservation and development of new products in steel plants of SAIL.
- Basic Research (BSR) and Major Technology Development (MTD) for developing new steel technologies.
- Investigation and Consultancy Assignment (ICA).