

High Speed Diesel Oil in the country have come to the notice of the Government in recent months. But some stray cases of such malpractices have been reported.

(b) The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

(c) There has not been any case in which the officers of the Indian Oil Corporation were found guilty on this account.

Installed Capacity for Production of Caustic Soda

7733. SHRI R. K. MHALGI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) the total installed capacity for caustic soda production in the country and what is the yearly requirements in the country;

(b) the actual production during the years 1977-78, 1978-79 and 1979-80;

(c) is power shortage the only reason for shortfall in the production;

(d) are Government contemplating to permit imports of caustic soda to consuming industries; and

(e) if not, what other steps Government propose to take to fill the gap between demand and supply of this important basic chemical?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM, CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI VEERENDRA PATIL): (a) The total installed capacity for the production of Caustic Soda in the country is 7.65 lakh tonnes per annum. According to an assessment made by the Working Group on Inorganic Chemicals, the yearly requirements of Caustic Soda in the country for the cur-

rent year and the next few years are as under:—

Year	Estimated Demand (in lakh tonnes)
1980-81	6.50
1981-82	7.00
1982-83	7.50
1983-84	8.00

(b) The actual production of Caustic Soda during these years was as under:—

Year	Production (in lakh tonnes)
1977-78	5.21
1978-79	5.63
1979-80	5.50

(c) The shortage of power continues to be main reason for shortfall in the production of Caustic Soda in the country.

(d) Imports of Caustic Soda are already permissible to any actual user of Caustic Soda under the Open General Licence (OGL).

(e) Government have also arranged for imports of Caustic Soda through the State Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals Corporation of India Ltd. (CPC) to meet the requirements of industrial consumers, particularly from the small scale sector. A total quantity of 15,000 tonnes of Caustic Soda has already been imported and distributed by the CPC. Further imports are being arranged by them.