

has been constructed.

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: The railways have got a crunch for the EMUs. We too have our own problems. After looking into it in depth, we have to take a view about it.

SHRI RAM KAPSE: The money is to be spent by the CIDCO and they are not going to spend for it. But, even for spending through SIDCO for Sanpada station, for Panvel-Belapur railway line, for Kadve-Turge railway line, they are not giving the sanction. We wanted to have an assurance about the sanction.

SHRI RAM NAIK: If the commuter line is not opened, the whole purpose of having a railway line will not be served.

SHRI ANNA JOSHI: My question is regarding Sanpada railway station only. The CIDCO is going to construct it and they are only asking for the permission of the railways. My question is why are they not giving the permission?

SHRI MALLIKARJUN: It is not question of giving the permission. We have to take the viability of the operation and for that reason, we have asked the Central Railway to examine this.

[*Translation*]

Requirement of LPG cylinders

*653 SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD:
SHRI PHOOL CHAND VERMA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of LPG cylinders manufactured annually;

(b) the number of LPG connections issued so far;

(c) the number of LPG cylinders re-

quired daily and the number available at present; and

(d) the steps taken to meet the shortage of LPG cylinders?

[*English*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR): (a) Average of 34.30 lakhs cylinders annually during the last three years.

(b) About 172 lakhs customers.

(c) and (d). The installed cylinder manufacturing capacity far outnumbers the demand of LPG cylinders. Hence there is no shortage.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Sir, in a way the hon. Minister has given a reply that goes against the facts. May I know from the hon. Minister the number of cylinders manufactured every year as against the number of applications received.

[*English*]

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: The total installed capacity of cylinder manufactures in 170 lakhs cylinders per annum. Up to 1984-85, they had produced, on an average 100 lakh cylinders per annum. At what time, the supply and demand were more or less equal. Since cylinder manufacturing for LPG is in the small scale sector, no industrial licence is required. And in spite of the repeated information we have given to the State Governments IDBI and other financial institutions saying that new units should not be encouraged, many new LPG cylinder manufacturing units came up in the country. With the result, even though their installed capacity is 170 lakh cylinders per annum now, this year, we will be able to give orders for about-25 lakh cylinders.

Every year's requirement is calculated as per the formula which depends on the enrolment plan, double bottle connections, replacement of existing cylinders and the new connections. Thus there is a surplus capacity in the cylinder manufacturing industry. We have a formula for distributing the orders to the existing companies so that the sickness of the companies is minimised.

[Translation]

SHRI HARIKEWAL PRASAD: Sir, the hon. Minister has said that there is no shortage. But he has not replied to my question about the total number of applications received year wise. Is the hon. Minister aware that applications for gas cylinders made by people 5-6 years ago are still under consideration. What is the total number of applications received and the number of new connections given?... (Interruptions)...

MR. SPEAKER: Please make a distinction between gas and cylinder.

[English]

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: I beg to submit that the hon. Minister is making a little confusion or distinction between the LPG connections and the cylinders manufacturing to which the main question pertains. In the manufacture of cylinders, there is a surplus capacity and there is no shortage. His present supplementary is about the pending applications for gas connections. We have 17 million gas connections existing in the country and the people waiting in the queue are about 7 millions. We can satisfy only half a million this year, one million next year, four millions from 194 onwards depending on the availability of LPG, manufacture of LPG and the restraints relating to the import of LPG.

[Translation]

SHRI PHOOL CHAND VERMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir. I agree with this point and would like to ask separate questions on LPG and LPG cylinders. The hon. Minister in the

end of his reply has stated that there is no shortage of cylinders in the country. I want to know why the Double Bottle Connection is not being provided to the consumers who have applied for the same and are having just one gas cylinder for the last 4-5 years? Secondly, the reply states that connections to 17.2 million consumers have been provided and 7.2 million persons are on the waiting list. In MP alone, 3.34 lakh persons are on the waiting list. When there is no shortage of cylinders, why is the DBC not being provided to consumers desirous of having the facility? Another thing I want to know is... (Interruptions)... why the 10,000 LPG connections released on the recommendations of MPs of the last Lok Sabha have been cancelled?

[English]

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: The hon. Minister is again making a distinction between the cylinders, that is the cylinder without gas being manufactured by small scale industries in the country. There are about 90 manufacturers of cylinders in the country. The gas is a different question. We have this year only about 2094 metric tonnes of LPG and we propose to increase it to 2883 metric tonnes by 1994-95 and to 4875 metric tonnes by AD 2000. This is the optimum we can raise the production of LPG because LPG is produced from our refineries and fractionators in our gas fields. The production of indigenous LPG is related to development plans of the refineries as well as the production of gas in the country.

We also import some LPG. For that, we have infrastructural bottlenecks in the ports. We need special infrastructural installations in the ports of LPG including special pipelines. There is also the constraint of foreign exchange. Therefore, there is a constraint in the rate of increase of LPG which can be made available to the consumers year after year. That is why I said we can give only five lakh new connections this year, 10 lakh next year. From 1994-95 onwards, 40 lakh new connections will be given every year.

The manufacture of cylinders and the distribution of LPG are two different aspects. I think, I have answered the question.

SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH: Sir, we have a situation in this country where we have cylinders but no gas. *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI PHOOL CHAND VERMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, why have the 10,000 LPG connections released on the recommendations of MPs of the last Lok Sabha been cancelled?

MR. SPEAKER: You please sit down, your earlier supplementary question itself was quite lengthy.

SHRI PHOOL CHAND VERMA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I seek your protection in this regard.

MR. SPEAKER: You please sit down

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: No, no; not like this.

(Interruptions)

SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH: The manufacturers of cylinders are totally dependent on the wishes and will of the Petroleum Ministry. What exactly are the criteria fixed by the Petroleum Ministry to allot the number of cylinders to be supplied by the manufacturers to a particular oil industry?

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: Sir, as I have stated earlier, the number of cylinders to be procured by the oil industry every year is calculated on the basis of the enrolment plan, the double bottle connections to be given, the replacement of existing cylinders and one-and-a-half cylinders for every new connection that is given.

SHRI DIGVIJAYA SINGH: What is the criterion?

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: I am coming to that. Please be patient. After calculating the total procurement order that is required, after calculating the requirements of the oil industry in this manner, order is distributed between the manufacturers on the basis of the proportion of quantity they had supplied in the past, orderliness and the timeliness of deliveries, vendor rating system based on inspection and technical qualifications.

There is a very detailed distribution guideline on how about 76 manufacturers, who are eligible, get the order. We distribute the order as per the guidelines on the vendor rating system. We ensure that each unit gets at least 20,000 cylinders a year.

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA: Sir, through you, I would like to apprise the Ministry of very serious allegations of irregularities against the boards which have been set up by the Government for selection of agencies for the distribution of LPG. Now, I have with me data on a couple of cases where cooperatives, which are supposed to be given a priority in the matter of having agencies, have been refused.

MR. SPEAKER: Does it come out of this question?

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOUDHURY: No gas is there in the cylinders, Sir.

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA: I have also got data about a lady, who is a handicapped person, who asked for such an agency and was refused without there being any proper investigation in the matter.

My question is whether these boards in the different regions are accountable to the Government for the manner in which they distributed their agencies and whether the Govt. will make enquiries.

MR. SPEAKER: It does not come out of

this question. I am sorry, Madam.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: No, no, I am disallowing this question.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO: Mr. Speaker Sir, the hon. Minister has answered very technically. It is very obvious that the hon. Minister has asked about the shortage of LPG cylinders but only the word 'cylinder' is used in the question. The hon. Member actually wanted to know, there is terrible shortage of LPG and also demand-supply gap, what are the steps taken by the Government and the steps envisaged by the Government to fill the demand -supply gap.

MR. SPEAKER: This point was discussed already some days back very extensively in the House.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, market is flooded with duplicate cylinders. Through you, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether he is aware of the presence of duplicate cylinders and if so, what steps have been taken to check this malpractice? What steps have the Government taken to make the detection of duplicate cylinders possible?

[English]

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: Sir, we have what are known as marketing guidelines. There are very regular inspections by the oil companies and also surprise inspections *suo motu* as well as on the basis of complaints received from the consumers. This is an on-going process. Every single complaint is investigated into and action taken including cancellation of dealership and presentation in some cases. (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN: Please tell us some thing about original and

duplicate cylinders... (Interruptions)... many women have lost their lives because of the duplicate cylinders... (Interruptions)...

[English]

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: The hon. lady Member has raised a question that there is a difficulty for a customer in differentiating a genuine cylinder from a spurious one. This matter has not been brought into the focus before our Minister. But we shall certainly examine and if there is any confusion in that regard, we shall not only let the hon. lady Member know how to differentiate it but also disseminate the information to the public. (Interruption)

DR. KARTIKESWAR PATRA: Sir, has the Government received any allegations regarding non-supply of LPG connections on priority basis? Hon. Members of this House have applied for LPG connections. For example, I have applied for LPG connection and I have been waiting for more than 15 days but no connection is given to me. LPG connections are given by back door methods. Will the hon. Minister say as to what steps are taken in this regard? (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I am disallowing this question.

(Interruptions)

SHRI S. KRISHAN KUMAR: Sir, as there is confusion about the MPs recommendations, I want to clarify the position. All applications for out of turn connections recommended by the MPs are being speedily cleared the honourable Cabinet Minister has given the deadline as two weeks and that is being adhered to. So, all applications which are within the quota of MPs are being cleared within the time limit.

[Translation]

Coal Extraction

*654. DR. LAL BAHADUR RAWAL: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state: