

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3356

ANSWERED ON:10.08.2015

Allocation of PDS Kerosene

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

- (a) whether the Government proposes to introduce kerosene marker system to ascertain adulteration/ diversion of kerosene in the country and if so, the details of cases of irregularities, black-marketing/diversion of kerosene reported during the last three years and the current year and action taken by the Government, State/UT-wise;
- (b) whether the Government has constituted independent investigative agency for inquiry into the alleged irregularities in awarding contract for supplying the marker and if so, action taken/proposed to be taken against the persons found responsible for the lapses;
- (c) whether the State Governments have requested for increasing the Superior Kerosene Oil (SKO) and if so, the details thereof along with per capita Public Distribution System (PDS) SKO allocation and consumption in the country during each of the last three years and the current year along with the reasons for variation in per capita allocation of PDS Kerosene among various States/UT-wise including Gujarat;
- (d) whether the reduction in PDS kerosene has caused difficulties for weaker sections of the Antyodaya Anna Yojana/Below Poverty Line beneficiaries in the States including Gujarat and Chhattisgarh and if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government for optimum utilisation by various States and action taken thereon, State-wise ;
- (e) whether the Government proposes to start Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) scheme for transfer of kerosene subsidy direct into the consumers account and if so, the details thereof and the total amount of subsidy being transferred in the country at present along with any assessment has been made in the reduction of subsidy amount after implementation of DBT scheme, State/UT-wise; and
- (f) whether the Government proposes to reduce the subsidy on kerosene and discourage the use of kerosene for cooking food in view of the rising pollution in the cities/villages and if so, the details thereof and the steps taken in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI DHARMENDRA PRADHAN)

(a) : Yes, Madam. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) is continuing research on the development of a non-launderable marker which can easily be used on-site/in the field. Gas Chromatography device is required for the detection of marker especially for field testing. IOCL has reported that a covert chemical Marker System for kerosene to detect adulteration in petrol and diesel has been developed and has been evaluated under laboratory conditions. The State-wise details of irregularities detected and action taken thereon for last three year and current year (April-June, 2015) is at Annexure-I.

(b) : The Marker System was implemented by doping of all Superior Kerosene Oil (SKO) with marker from October, 2006 to 31st December, 2008. The tests conducted by the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) in their labs have shown that marker supplied by M/s Authentix can be laundered with certain chemicals in lab conditions. The marker supplied by M/s Authentix was discontinued from 31st December, 2008. The matter was inquired into by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) and certain gross irregularities were found in the procurement of Marker. Based on Department Inquiry findings, CVC advice and other facts of the case, Chairman & Competent Disciplinary Authority, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) had ordered for 'Exoneration of all charges leveled' against the then Chief Regional Manager (Research & Development), IOCL and accordingly the disciplinary case was closed. The Disciplinary Authority, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) has imposed a major penalty against the then Director, Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) presently in HPCL.

(c) : State-wise details of the per capita allocation and consumption of kerosene in the country during each of the last three years and the current year are at Annexure-II and Annexure-III respectively.

The variation in the per capita allocation is on account of historical allocation, difference in LPG coverage etc. The scale of PDS Kerosene allocation to beneficiaries under various categories such as Antyodya Anna Yojana, Below Poverty Line is done by the State/UT Governments.

(d) : The Government allocates PDS Kerosene to States/UTs including the State of Gujarat and Chhattisgarh on quarterly basis for distribution under PDS for cooking and illumination only. Further distribution within the States/UTs through their PDS network to

various categories of ration card holders as per their respective criteria, is the responsibility of the concerned States/UTs. Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have reported that there is no shortage of Kerosene reported from any part of the country including the State of Gujarat and Chhattisgarh.

(e) : Government of India intends to implement Direct Benefit Transfer Scheme in kerosene in identified Districts of different States in consultation with States, on a Pilot basis. Accordingly, this Ministry has written letters to Chief Ministers/Administrators of State Governments, requesting them to identify 2-3 suitable districts, keeping in mind level of computerization and administrative convenience.

(f) : The Government has been encouraging the use of LPG and PNG as a cooking fuel. For rural areas, a scheme for providing one time grant to BPL families in the rural areas for release of new LPG connections through regular LPG Distributors and Rajiv Gandhi Gramin LPG Vitrak Yojna (RGGLVY) is in operation. As per the scheme, the security deposit (up to Rs.1600/-) for one cylinder and pressure regulator is paid from the funds created for this purpose.
