

immediately and if not, the reasons therefor ;

(c) the number of persons likely to be rendered jobless in the event of closure of these units and the loss likely to be suffered by them during rains ; and

(d) the action being taken by Government to ensure that workers employed in these units are not rendered jobless ?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI NARAYAN DATT TIWARI) : (a) & (b) Government has seen a News item in one of the Newspapers that some scale salt manufacturers in the Kutch in Gujarat were facing difficulties due to non-availability of railway wagons for lifting salt. Government maintains a constant dialogue through the Office of the Salt Commissioner with the Railways to see that orderly movement takes place from all regions of the country. There has been increase in movement of quantities of salt by rail in Kutch area in the recent years. It increased from 0.43 million tonnes during 1983-84 to 0.55 million tonnes in 1984-85 registering an increase of 28%. From April 1985 to January, 1986, 0.50 million tonnes of salt have already been despatched as against 0.46 million tonnes despatched during the corresponding period last year. Salt Commissioner has, however, requested the Railway Board to enhance the zonal quota in Western Railway to clear the accumulated stocks to the extent possible.

(c) & (d) Production of salt during 1985 was far more than the demand. The prevailing practice is that a few big parties purchase the production of small manufacturers in advance. As such in case of rains, small manufacturers themselves are not likely to be put to loss directly.

Small scale salt manufacturers are exempted from taking licence or payment of case for production of salt. The Government of Gujarat are being persuaded not to encourage un-economic holdings. The small scale manufacturers are also being advised to form cooperatives, improve methods of manufacture

and quality of salt so that their produce finds larger market.

[English]

Distribution of LPG in Bombay

*442. SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state :

(a) the existing machinery available for properly supervising the distribution of cooking gas all over the country ;

(b) whether Government are aware of the problems being faced by consumers in Bombay due to delays and other inefficient handling of requests of consumers;

(c) if so, the number of complaints received in that regard; and

(d) the action taken in 1985 against errant LPG dealers of Bombay?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR SINGH) : (a) Apart from officers at the local level dealing with LPG, the oil marketing companies have officers at the Divisional/Regional level, besides whole time General Managers at the Corporate level, for supervising LPG marketing.

(b) Owing to development of a backlog, LPG consumers in Bombay have been facing inconvenience.

(c) Out of 1090 complaints received by the oil companies in 1985, 316 related to delayed supplies.

(d) (i) Two distributors have been issued show cause notices and their distributorship has been suspended temporarily.

(ii) Caution/warning letters have been issued to 21 distributors and they have been asked to improve their services.