

modern weapons and bullet-proof jackets/helmets (Rs. 30.15 crores), construction of police lines (Rs. 13.44 crores) and training (Rs. 3.68 crores).

(c) to (e) Some other States affected by extremist activities have also sought financial assistance from the Central Government. The matter is being considered in consultation with the Ministry of Finance for devising a suitable package for affected states, including Bihar. It may, however, be mentioned that a sum of Rs. 10.16 crores has been released to the Government of Bihar since May, 1997, under the Scheme for Modernisation of State Police Forces. The Government of Bihar has also been provided with wireless sets, arms and ammunition worth Rs. 1.20 crores, on credit basis, from the Central Para-military forces.

Manufacturing of Illegal Cylinders

3710. SHRI DADA BABURAO PARANJPE:
SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA:
DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI:

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

(a) whether a large number of illegal units continue to manufacture LPG cylinders endangering many lives despite a ban on the manufacture and sale of illegal LPG cylinders;

(b) if so, the number of incidents of cylinder explosions taken place in the country during each of the last three years, State/UT-wise and the number of illegal manufactures of cylinders traced during the said period;

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon;

(d) whether there is a proposal to ban the use of small cylinders; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No case of illegal units manufacturing LPG cylinders for PSU Oil Companies has been reported. There is no ban on manufacturing of cylinders for parallel marketing and machines required for such manufacturing are the same as for manufacturing 14.2 Kg. cylinders marketed by PSU Oil Companies.

(b) The following number of accidents of cylinder explosion have occurred during last three years.

Year	No. of Accidents
1995-96	63
1996-97	71
1997-98	58

The PSU Oil Companies have not come across any case of illegal manufacturer of cylinders during the last three years. However, instances of illegal manufacture of the small LPG cylinders in Meerut by some small scale units registered with the Directorate of Industry Meerut have come to the notice.

(c) The Chief Controller of Explosives, Bureau of Indian Standards and State Govt. Authorities of Uttar Pradesh and N.C.T. Delhi were requested to take action under relevant laws against the manufacture of illegal LPG cylinders.

(d) and (e) Small cylinders conforming to specifications of BIS and CCOE can be used. Therefore, ban in such cases is not feasible.

[English]

Study Group on Essential Commodities

3711. SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR:
SHRI NADENDLA BHASKAR RAO:
SHRI T.R. BAALU:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the shortage of essential commodities and price rise have affected the people in various States;

(b) if so, whether the Government have any proposal to set up a study group to check the availability and equitable distribution of essential commodities particularly in Uttar Pradesh and North Eastern States;

(c) if so, the details and the composition thereof; and

(d) whether the representation of each State is included in the said group?