

(b) Afforestation and allied activities are being carried out in the State under various state plan and centrally sponsored schemes. An externally-aided Integrated Forestry Development Project, supported by Overseas Economic Cooperation Fund, Japan, is also under implementation since 1995-96.

[English]

Widening of National Highway-63

851. SHRI VIJAY SANKESHWAR: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the action taken with regard to the strengthening and widening of NH-63 (Ankola to Joladrahi between Hubli and Gadag) so far; and

(b) the time by which this task is likely to be accomplished?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) and (b) An estimate for widening without strengthening in Km. 140 to Km. 157 in Hubli-Gadag Section of NH-63 has been sanctioned by the Ministry for Rs. 358.23 Lakh. The work is targetted to be completed by the year 2001.

[Translation]

Inspection Charges by LPG Distributors

852. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the LPG distributors of various oil companies are charging Rs. 100 instead of Rs. 20 as inspection charges of gas stoves;

(b) if so, the facts thereof and reasons thereto; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to check the activities of LPG distributors in the country who are charging extra on inspecting gas stoves?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The earlier charges for the inspection of hot plates and fittings, etc. to ensure conformity of B.I.S. specifications have been revised from Rs. 20/- to Rs. 100/- on industry basis from 21.1.1999 from those prospective customers who are purchasing the hot plate from the open market.

(c) Oil Companies conduct elaborate and regular surprise checks and inspection of their LPG Distributors. Suitable action is taken against the distributors who are found indulging in various malpractice including forced sale of hot plate. The customers are free to purchase hot plate from the open market.

[English]

Regularisation of Contract Labourers in ONGC

853. PROF. JOGENDRA KAWADE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of contract labourers engaged for sweeping, cleaning, clerical job etc., regularised by Oil and Natural Gas Commission as per the orders of the Supreme Court; and

(b) the number of employees out of them belonging to Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes and OBCs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) There is no Supreme Courts Order directing ONGC to regularise the contract Labourers engaged for sweeping, cleaning, clerical job etc. Hence, no such contract Labourer has been regularised by ONGC.

Public Telephones in Villages

854. SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of policy adopted for providing public telephones to Panchayat Headquarters, big villages and the rural cluster villages during Eighth Five Year Plan and proposed for Ninth Five Year Plan including the targets fixed and achievement made by the Telecommunications Department in this regard;

(b) whether there was some delay in the implementation of the policy due to some policy changes by the Government with regard to the village telephones;

(c) if so, the details thereof;