

**Check artificial LPG cylinder shortage
Ram Naik appeals to Petroleum Minister**

Mumbai, March 21st : "Check nation-wide artificial scarcity of LPG gas cylinders and control the black marketing and corruption", appealed Shri Ram Naik, former Petroleum Minister in his meeting with Shri Jaipal Reddy, present Petroleum Minister, on Friday last week. While Shri Sumant Ghaisas, former President, BJP - Mumbai North-West District accompanied Shri Naik; Shri S Sundareshan, Secretary & Shri Apoorvachandra, Jt. Secretary, Petroleum Ministry also attended the meeting.

The scarcity of LPG cylinders has reached a dangerous proportion all over the country. The 5 kg. cylinders which were introduced by the Shri Naik in his tenure for the benefit of domestic consumers of low income group and hilly areas have disappeared from the market. The standard size 14.2 kg. cylinders are in short supply and consumers have to wait for more than one month to get replenishment cylinders. As a result black-market is thriving. This must be stopped; Shri Naik told Shri Jaipal Reddy.

Elaborating further Shri Ram Naik said, "The 14.2 kg. domestic cylinder presently costs Rs.348.45 i.e. Rs.21.45 per kg. At this rate a domestic 5 kg cylinder should be available at Rs.122.70. However, it has disappeared from the market, but in some areas, it is available at the commercial rate of Rs.362.47. Who will purchase such a cylinder at high price when it is costlier than a 14.2 kg domestic cylinder? The consumers or agents in hilly area find it difficult to pay more than Rs.300 at one time. Hence the model of 5 kg cylinder was developed."

It is not only that the 5 kg. cylinders have disappeared but the artificial scarcity of 14.2 kg cylinders is also promoting black-marketing as more than a month is being taken for delivery. "When we were in the government, we used to deliver the cylinder within 24 hours. What then is the reason for the present situation? Kindly enquire promptly and with all the sincerity", appealed Shri Naik. Shri Jaipal Reddy assured to enquire and also to take appropriate corrective action.

(Office Secretary)