

**Speech by Shri Jitin Prasada, Hon'ble Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas on the occasion of the national launch of a common toll free number and SMS/IVRS facility for Delhi- 31<sup>st</sup> August ,2009**

Shri Murli Deoraji, Hon'ble Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas,

Shri R. S. Pandey, Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India,

Shri Sarthak Behuria, Chairman, IndianOil,

Shri Ashok Sinha, Chairman, Bharat Petroleum,

Shri Arun Balakrishnan, Chairman, Hindustan Petroleum,

Officials from the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

Colleagues from the Oil Industry,

Distinguished invitees, my friends from the Press & Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. It is indeed a pleasure to be here with you all today. We are privileged to have amongst us Shri Murli Deoraji, the Hon'ble Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas under whose visionary leadership and guidance, we have been able to implement several new initiatives that are changing the face of the oil industry in the country.

2. As the Indian economy begins to make its presence felt in the global arena, the importance of reaching the benefits of petroleum products to every Indian, becomes even more pronounced. By setting up new refineries and stepping up existing refinery capacities, we are ensuring enhanced availability of petroleum products for the people of this nation. But alongside, it is our endeavor to work towards ensuring greater customer comfort and convenience while fulfilling the energy needs of the nation.

3. Exactly two months ago, we had given ourselves a set of goals in the form of Vision 2015. The main thrust of these was to pan out the outreach of our services and products to common man especially in rural areas. Fulfilling this vision, the Government has already approved the Rajiv Gandhi Gramin LPG Vitarak Yojana (RGGLV) and today we are taking another step in this direction by launching this easy to remember toll free number and the SMS booking service. With a common toll free number being launched here today, we have taken a bold new step to further integrate the customer service initiatives of the three companies. From today, all customers across the country, irrespective of which company they are interacting with will have to just access one common toll free number i.e. 155233. This 6 digit number will now replace the separate 11 digit toll free numbers being used by the three oil marketing companies. The charges towards the calls will be borne by the Oil Marketing Companies.

4. To avail of the SMS service, a consumer can simply send out a SMS for booking his or her refill. This initiative would will go a long way in curbing the diversion of the domestic 14.2kg LPG cylinder which is a subsidized product. The SMS/IVRS facility for all the three oil companies is being launched in Delhi for now and would cover the entire city in a month's time. It will gradually be made available to all towns across the country having a population of over 5 lakh.

5. There is an urgent need that our OMCs should acquit themselves in a way that their customer friendly face is more and more visible. The increasing refinery capacities, lengthening pipeline network and other capacity upgradations are only meant towards the ultimate goal of reaching out to the customers. We should not forget that a satisfied customer is the keystone of any marketing company. We should appreciate that whenever there is a shortage of LPG, it is the common man who suffers through late & uncertain delivery schedule. At the same time it is equally important to accept that one Sales Officer at the cutting edge of monitoring/supervision is just not enough for 2 -3 districts, to be effective. So it is all the more necessary that we should use more and more of the available technology to ensure speedy complaint redressal and enhancing customer satisfaction quotient.

6. Today, we can proudly claim to have come a long way from the time when consumers had to stand in long queues to book cylinder refills at the showrooms of LPG distributors. I am happy to note that the oil industry collectively has taken this initiative and by leveraging the benefits of technology we have brought to customers a facility which will be effective across all the oil marketing companies in the Oil Industry namely Indian Oil, BPCL and HPCL.

7. It will be the endeavor of our Ministry to bring in more and more of such initiatives for the greater comfort and convenience of all our consumers. We seek your support and encouragement for all our projects. We also look forward to your feedback and suggestions to improve the implementation and execution of our ideas.

Wishing you the very best.

Thank You & Jai Hind