

**LOK SABHA**  
**STARRED QUESTION NO. \*85**  
**TO BE ANSWERED ON 5<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2026**

**Contamination of Drinking Water due to Petroleum Leakage**

\*85. Shri K Sudhakaran:

पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री

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

- (a) whether the Government has taken cognizance of the serious environmental and public health crisis in Pallikunnu under Kannur district of Kerala where drinking water wells have been contaminated with mineral oil due to a suspected leakage from a retail outlet of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) and if so, the details thereof;
- (b) the specific steps taken by IOCL to conduct integrity testing of its underground storage tanks and associated infrastructure in order to identify the source of the breach;
- (c) the details of the immediate remedial measures and the long-term restoration plans initiated by the Government to decontaminate the affected wells and to ensure the provision of safe drinking water to the residents of the densely inhabited area; and
- (d) whether the Government intends to fix accountability for the said environmental negligence and to establish new preventive protocols for the operation of petroleum outlets located in close proximity to residential water sources so as to avoid recurrence of such incidents and if so, the details thereof?

**ANSWER**

पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री

(श्री हरदीप सिंह पुरी)

**MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS**  
**(SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI)**

- (a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

**STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF THE LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 85 ASKED BY SHRI K SUDHAKARAN TO BE ANSWERED ON 05<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY, 2026 REGARDING 'CONTAMINATION OF DRINKING WATER DUE TO PETROLEUM LEAKAGE'.**

(a) to (d) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) has informed that it received a complaint on 14.12.2025 regarding contamination of four water wells with mineral oil from a Retail Outlet (RO) operated by the Central Prison and Correctional Home Kannur, Government of Kerala. The said wells are located approximately 150 meters away from the RO at Pallikunnu, Kannur District, Kerala. Reports dated 30.12.2025 of tests conducted by Kerala State Pollution Control Board suggested contamination of said water wells with traces of hydrocarbons (Petrol and Diesel).

Acting promptly on the said complaint, hydrotesting of the High Speed Diesel (HSD) product pipeline was carried out on 16.12.2025 and no leakage was observed. Subsequently, hydrotesting of the Motor Spirit (MS) /Petrol pipeline was conducted on 18.12.2025, during which pressure drop/pin-hole leakage was detected. Sale of Petrol from dispensing units connected with the affected Petrol pipeline was immediately stopped. All product pipelines of MS and HSD including affected pipeline were replaced by 21.12.2025. Sale of MS was resumed on 23.12.2025.

Subsequently, sale of MS & HSD was suspended on 21.01.2026 based on directions of Kerala State Pollution Control Board. Hydrotesting of all underground product storage tanks was carried out under the supervision of a PESO-authorized competent person, officials from Kerala Pollution Control Board, Superintendent of Jail and representative(s) of the affected residents. No leakage was found in any of the storage tanks.

Kerala State Pollution Control Board has since directed IOCL to provide secondary containment in the form of double walled tanks or concrete protective walls around the underground storage tanks and to ensure that all safety and environmental conditions are satisfied by the RO before allowing resumption of operations. IOCL has initiated necessary steps to construct concrete wall around the storage tanks and for flushing of contaminated water wells. IOCL has also ensured provision of new water storage tanks, pipeline connections and packaged water supply to affected households.

Preventive protocols to avoid such occurrences are already in place. For establishment of a new Retail Outlet, under Rule 144 of Petroleum Rules 2002, OMCs make an application for grant of No Objection Certificate (NOC) with proposed layout of Retail Outlet to District Magistrate (DM). DM NOC is issued after duly consulting various departments viz. Revenue, Police, Fire, PWD, Pollution, Local Development Bodies etc. Simultaneously, the RO layout drawing is also submitted to PESO for obtaining construction approval. Depending on location, NOC and access permission from NHAI with requisite details/layout are also obtained. After completion of construction of the RO, an application is made to PESO for grant of Final License required for commissioning of RO. In respect of outlets located in close proximity to residential water bodies, applicable Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) guidelines are also required to be complied with before commissioning of RO. The Retail Outlet under reference was commissioned only after following the applicable protocols.

With regard to fixing of accountability in this incident, IOCL has sought explanation from the dealership i.e. the Central Prison and Correctional Home Kannur, Government of Kerala for not reconciling daily stock on regular basis and non-reporting of abnormal stock variation.

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