

EU reaches deal for price cap on Russian diesel

Deal follows a similar G-7 pact to limit price of Russian crude to \$60/barrel

BRUSSELS: European Union governments tentatively agreed on Friday to set a \$100-per-barrel price cap on sales of Russian diesel to coincide with an EU embargo on the fuel steps aimed at ending the bloc's energy dependence on Russia and limiting the money Moscow makes to fund its war in Ukraine.

Diplomats representing the 27 EU governments set the cap on Russian diesel fuel, jet fuel and gasoline ahead of a ban taking effect on Sunday.

It aims to reduce Russia's income while keeping its diesel flowing to non-Western countries to avoid a global shortage that would send prices and inflation higher.

The information was pro-

vided by diplomats from 3 different EU member nations ahead of a formal announcement by the Group of Seven major industrialized nations. They spoke on condition of anonymity because the official announcement would come later.

The \$100-per-barrel cap applies to Russian diesel and other fuels that sell for more than the crude oil used to make them. Officials agreed on a \$45-per-barrel limit on Russian oil products that sell for less than the price of crude.

The deal follows a similar G-7 agreement to limit the price of Russian crude oil to \$60 a barrel.

All the price ceilings are enforced by a requirement for

the world's largely Western-based shippers and insurers to abide by sanctions and handle oil products only priced at or above the limits.

Russia has said it will not sell to countries obeying the oil cap, but because its oil is selling for less than \$60 per barrel, it has kept flowing to the global market. The price caps encourage non-Western customers that have not banned Russian oil to press for discounts, while outright evasion though possible carries additional costs such as organising off-the-books tankers.

The ambassadors of the 27 EU nations put forward the decision, and national governments have until early Saturday to react with a written objec-

tion. No changes to the deal were expected.

Europe has been steadily reducing its diesel supplies from Russia from around half of all imports. Diesel is key for the economy because it is used to power cars, trucks carrying goods, farm equipment and factory machinery. Prices have spiked since Russia invaded Ukraine on rebounding demand and limited refinery capacity in some places.

If the price cap works as intended and Russian diesel keeps flowing, fuel prices should not skyrocket, analysts say. Europe could get alternate supplies of diesel from the US, India and the Middle East, while Russia could seek new customers outside Europe. AGENCIES

Exposition to promote clean fuels inaugurated

PTI ■ GURUGRAM

Union Minister for Heavy Industries Mahendra Nath Pandey on Saturday inaugurated a conference and exposition here on schemes for promotion of cleaner fuels in the automotive sector.

The event, named 'Towards Panchamrit', is being organised at the International Centre for Automotive Technology (ICAT), Manesar.

To drive India towards cleaner mobility, the government is giving a major push to clean fuels. "Towards Panchamrit" event is an effort in this direction to promote adoption of "Panchamrit" or five clean fuels -- Hydrogen, Ethanol, Bio Diesel, Gas and Electric Vehicles.

Pandey said in line with Prime

Minister Narendra Modi's announcements at COP 26 — "Panchamrit Ki Saugat", five commitments to achieve the vision of becoming a carbon neutral country by 2070, ministries are taking comprehensive efforts to move towards fulfilling this goal.

The government is also working to achieve self-reliance in the automotive industry, he added.

Minister of State for Heavy Industries Krishan Pal Gurjar highlighted the initiatives taken by the ministry to promote clean and green mobility.

He said these initiatives will give a boost to domestic manufacturing, help in employment generation, reduce dependence on exports and thereby help in achieving the vision of 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'.

Protests against Kerala budget proposals hiking fuel prices

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM,
4 FEBRUARY

Opposition parties in Kerala staged protests in different parts of Kerala on Saturday against the LDF government's budget proposal to impose cess on petrol, diesel and liquor,

Youth Congress workers waved black flags and clashed with police outside government guesthouse in Kochi while his convoy left the guest house on Saturday morning. They shouted slogans demanding roll back of the cess imposed on petrol and diesel. The protesters were detained immediately as security had already been enhanced outside the guesthouse in the wake of earlier protests.

The Congress on Friday observed 'Black Day' across the state against the alleged anti-people budget of the LDF government. Congress workers staged demonstrations in different part of the state, demanding reversal of the proposal to levy "social security cess" on fuel and liquor.

On Friday, protests erupted soon after the finance minister presented the budget for 2023-24 in the Assembly, proposing to increase prices of petrol, diesel and liquor. Youth Congress workers and the Bharatiya Janata Party's Yuva Morcha workers protested outside the state secretariat in Thiruvananthapuram, demanding the roll back of the "anti-people" tax proposals.

Youth Congress workers organised several protests programmes including marches and siege of petrol pumps across the state on Friday and Saturday. Meanwhile, KPCC president K Sudhakaran said there will be fierce protests against the backbone-breaking budget of the LDF government.

आम बजट के बाद तेल कंपनियों को झटका, विंडफॉल टैक्स में बढ़ोतरी

■ विशेष संवाददाता, नई दिल्ली

आम बजट पेश करने के बाद सरकार ने तेल कंपनियों को जोर का झटका दिया है। सरकार ने विंडफॉल टैक्स में इजाफा कर दिया है। कच्चे तेल, डीजल और एविएशन फ्यूल एटीएफ पर विंडफॉल टैक्स को बढ़ा दिया है। नई दरें शनिवार से लागू हो गई हैं। सरकार ने कच्चे तेल पर विंडफॉल टैक्स 1900 रुपये प्रति टन से बढ़ाकर 5050 रुपये प्रति टन कर दिया है। इसमें 3000 रुपये प्रति टन से ज्यादा



की बढ़ोतरी की गई है। एविएशन टर्बाइन फ्यूल पर विंडफॉल टैक्स 3.5 रुपये प्रति लीटर से बढ़ाकर 6 रुपये प्रति लीटर हो गया है। डीजल पर 2.5 रुपये प्रति लीटर की बढ़त के साथ अब अतिरिक्त

एक्सपोर्ट ड्यूटी 5 रुपये प्रति लीटर से बढ़ाकर 7.50 रुपये प्रति लीटर पहुंच गया है। विंडफॉल टैक्स ऐसी कंपनियों या इंडस्ट्री पर लगाया जाता है, जो किसी खास तरह की स्थितियों के चलते बड़ा फायदा उठाती हैं। सरकार ने पहली बार 1 जुलाई को विंडफॉल टैक्स लगाया था। उस समय पेट्रोल और एटीएफ पर 6 रुपये प्रति लीटर और डीजल पर 13 रुपये प्रति लीटर का निर्यात शुल्क लगाया गया था। कच्चे घरेलू तेल के उत्पादन पर 23,250 रुपये प्रति टन विंडफॉल प्रॉफिट टैक्स लगाया गया था।