INDIAN EXPRESS, Delhi, 6.12.2023
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3 contentious issues — rise in green energy capacity, fossil fuels phase out, reducing methane — discussed for 1st time

AMITABH SINHA
DUBAI, DECEMBER 5

TRIPLING THE capacity of renewable energy, phasing out fossil fuels and a targeted reduction of methane all made an appearance in the first draft of negotiating texts at the COP28 climate conference here.

The three issues are among the most keenly-watched and contentious ones to be decided at the conference. The issues are under discussion for the first time at COP and various proposals will be discussed and negotiatied over the coming days to reach common ground. There is the possibility that none of them will make it to the final decisions.

Fossil fuels account for nearly 80 per cent of all global emissions, yet their phase-out has never been part of any agenda at the climate conference. Mention of its phase-down was made for the first time at the Glasgow conference in 2021.

International Energy Agency assessments suggest if the global renewable energy capacity is increased from the current approximate of 3,400 GW to about 11,000 GW by 2030, it will help avoid nearly one billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent emissions every year on an average. This amounts to more than what other climate actions undertaken by other countries are together expected to achieve by 2030.

Tripling enewable energy has already received wide support from countries. The G20 countries had backed it during the New Delhi Summit in September, and more than 120 countries gave their support to it through a pledge here at COP28. However, this doesn't mean its a done deal. Decisions at the COP meetings are taken by consensus, and even one country can block the agreement.

Reduction of methane emissions is a much more contentious issue, with countries like India completely opposed to it. Methane is several times more potent than carbon dioxide in its ability to cause global warming, as it remains in the atmosphere only for a few years, unlike carbon dioxide which survives for hundreds of years. One of the major sources of methane emissions happen to be agriculture and livestock, sectors that India is extremely protective about.

A rapid phaseout of unabated coal power this decade was also expeted to be hotly contested.

Countries have to deliver a final outcome by December 12.

Contentious COP28 draft moots end to fossil fuel use

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Dubai: Putting all options on the table for negotiation during the next seven days, the UN climate conference (COP28) negotiating team on Tuesday released an ambitious draft text of the global stocktake seeking to not only get countries to agree to triple renewable energy capacity to 11,000 GW by 2030 but also to brainstorm on phasing out fossil fuels.

Though the 24-page draft text will see several rounds of updates incorporating countries' viewpoints in the next few days, the formulation on phasing out of fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas) and fossil fuel subsidies will certainly cause deep divides among participants, including India, China and the oil-rich nations, on different points until a landing zone arrives in the final text in terms of "an orderly and just phase-out" or "phase out of unabated use" or "phase-down".

CO_2 emissions may hit record level this year

Global carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels are projected to increase by 1.1% from 2022 to reach a record level of 36.8 billion tonnes this year. Emissions in India are estimated to increase by 8.2% and in China by 4%, and may decline by 7.4% in the EU. **P 24**

▶**Oppose carbon tax, P 24**

TIMES OF INDIA, Delhi, 6.12.2023
Page No. 1, Size:(7.47)cms X (8.37)cms.

India to continue using coal, oppose carbon border tax

▶Continued from P 1

India's points on "sustainable lifestyle and sustainable pattern of consumption" — the bedrock of the country's concept of Mission LiFE (lifestyle for environment) — is also noted in the text as one of the options to address climate change issues.

India has on several occasions categorically said that the country is committed to substantially increasing its clean energy capacity, but coal would continue to be the mainstay of its electricity needs and development goals.

COP28 is expected to conclude the first ever GST, which is a mandated global report card of climate actions every five years. It'll become the basis of what more the countries need to do to meet the Paris Agreement goals through their next round of pledges in 2025.

The draft text is, however, not going to offer clarity on a final outcome of the COP28 as it keeps all the main options of different countries and negotiating groups on the table. It even keeps the "no text" option — it means if any country can't agree on any option, it gets deleted and the process will be open to any new suggestions on climate action which can be incorporated in subsequent negotiating texts.

On the sustainable lifestyle issue, the draft text notes the importance of "transitioning to sustainable lifestyles and sustainable patterns of consumption and production in efforts to address climate change and encourages efforts towards transitions to sustainable lifestyles, sustainable patterns of consumption and circularity approaches, including circular economy and circular carbon economy approaches". All these points are part of India's Mission LiFE, which pitches for mindful consumption of resources.

Besides the coal issue, India will also strongly oppose any formulation on a carbon border tax regime, such as the European Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism, which some of the developed countries may try to introduce in the guise of "unilateral" measures to reduce emissions.

ECONOMIC TIMES, Delhi, 6.12.2023
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COP28 CLIMATE CONFERENCE IN DUBAI

Differences Add Fuel to Hot Topic of Tackling Fossils

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REUTERS

Activists participate in a demonstration against fossil fuels during the UN Climate Change Conference COP28 in Dubai on Tuesday

Dubai: There is consensus that the world is not on track to meet the Paris Agreement goals, however there is little agreement on what needs to be done to get back on track.

Differences remain on how to tackle fossil fuels, emphasis on coal as negotiators continue with their efforts to narrow differences before ministers take over at the end of the week.

The global stock take is the main deliverable of the Dubai talks. It is the ambition mechanism of the Paris Agreement, where countries collectively assess progress across all pillars – emissions reduction, adapting to impacts of climate change, loss and damage, means of implementation, including finance.

The text released early morning on Tuesday puts together several options representing country or negotiating group positions. There has been little progress in finding compromise positions that would bridge these options. Progress on details across options is uneven. Adaptation continues to lag mitigation in terms of details.

On mitigation or emissions reduction, language on renewable energy and energy efficiency augmentation has been provided as an option but agreement on including language on fossil fuels phase out eludes. several options have been included ranging from silence on fossil fuels, focus on clean energy systems, abatement options like carbon capture and storage, focus on coal phase out to phase out of all fossil fuels.

By end of day negotiators were back working on the text attempting to find landing zones or at the very least reduce options. Tuesday's text is far from final it offers a glimpse into the discussions that will dominate the Dubai meet for the remainder of this week.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS, Delhi, 6.12.2023
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Fossil fuel phase-out among options on COP28 table

KATE ABNETT, WILLIAM JAMES & VALERIE VOLCOVICI
Dubai, December 5

Activists stage a demonstration against fossil fuels in Dubai on Tuesday REUTERS

COUNTRIES AT THE COP28 climate conference are considering calling for a formal phase-out of fossil fuels as part of the U.N. summit's final deal to tackle global warming, a draft negotiating text seen on Tuesday shows.

The proposal is set to spark heated debate among the nearly 200 countries at the two-week conference in Dubai, with some Western and climate-vulnerable states pushing for the language to be used and many oil and gas producers keen to leave it out.

Research published on Tuesday showed global carbon dioxide emissions from burning fossil fuels are set to hit a record high this year, fuelling concerns among scientists that efforts to combat climate change are not enough to avert its worst impacts.

The draft of what could be the final agreement from COP28, released by the U.N. climate body on Tuesday, proposed "an orderly and just phase-out of fossil fuels" which if adopted would mark the first global deal to end the oil age.

On the COP28 main stage, the CEOs of several major energy firms argued in favour of oil and gas, highlighting their progress in areas such as cutting the greenhouse gas methane.

"We are big guys and we can do big things. We can deliver results and we will have to report them very soon," said Jean Paul Prates, CEO of Brazil's state-run oil company Petrobras. "The energy transition will only be valid if it's a fair transition," he added.

At least 2,400 fossil fuel lobbyists registered for this year's summit, an analysis of U.N. registration data published by Kick Big Polluters Out showed, outnumbering the delegates from the 10 most climate vulnerable countries combined.

Climate activists staged several small protests against the presence of the fossil fuel industry. The Marshall Islands, meanwhile, unveiled a national plan to adapt to rising sea levels, a recognition that the impacts of warming are already hitting its shores. "While we hope for a world where the world fulfils the promise of the Paris Agreement to contain climate change, as an extremely climate vulnerable country we need to be realistic and honest about the difficult path ahead," said Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner, the country's climate envoy.

The draft text for a COP28 final deal includes three options for dealing with fossil fuels.

The first is "an orderly and just phase-out". In U.N. parlance, the word "just" suggests wealthy nations with a long history of burning fossil fuels would phase out fastest.

The second calls for "accelerating efforts towards phasing out unabated fossil fuels". And a third would be to avoid mentioning a phase-out at all.

The United States, the 27 countries of the European Union and climate-vulnerable small island states are pushing for a fossil fuel phase-out to drive the deep CO_2 emissions reductions scientists say are needed this decade.

Even so, none of the world's major oil and gas-producing countries have plans to eventually stop drilling for those fuels, according to the Net Zero Tracker, an independent data consortium including Oxford University. **—REUTERS**

Global Stocktake draft calls for phasing out fossil fuels

Jacob Koshy
DUBAI

For the first time, a key document being negotiated at the UN's annual climate summit has underlined the need for the world to do away with all fossil fuels, in its draft text. As the first week of negotiations at COP-28 nears an end, the latest version of the Global Stocktake (GST) includes a clause committing all signatories to "an orderly and just phase out of fossil fuels".

The summit's location in the United Arab Emirates, a petro state, and the COP leadership's own ties to oil have "influenced language" in the GST, said a person closely involved in negotiations.

In previous years, climate talks have generally circled around the need for the world to wean itself away from coal, but negotiations have generally ended in a stalemate.

However, with the science becoming more emphatic that any hope of keeping a global temperature rise below 1.5 degrees Celsius requires significant cut in emissions, and fossil fuel responsible for 80% of them, its mention in an early draft is significant.

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HINDU, Delhi, 6.12.2023
Page No. 1, Size:(7.33)cms X (24.25)cms.

Stocktake draft calls for phasing out fossil fuels

The GST, the first of its kind since 2015, is expected to take stock of the implementation of the Paris Agreement; assess the progress made towards its goals of preventing temperature increases from going beyond 2 degrees Celsius, preferably 1.5 degrees Celsius; and guide countries in updating their stated commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The GST is only one of many negotiation tracks. There are separate drafts expected, for instance, on finance and adaptation. After intensive discussions on each draft - expected to last at least until next Thursday - a final agreed 'declaration' or 'agreement' is expected to take shape.

Energy efficiency pledge

The GST also includes a clause calling for "...tripling renewable energy capacity globally by 2030 compared to the 2022 level to 11,000 GW and doubling the global average annual rate of energy-efficiency improvement compared to the 2022 level to 4.1 per cent by 2030." This was first formally articulated during the G-20 leaders summit in Delhi, though at that time, there was no mention of improving energy efficiency. In Dubai, India was not among the 118 signatories to the 'energy efficiency pledge,' which laid down this directive, reportedly on the grounds that it came with a caveat to give up the use of coal.

The text also mentions "...the importance of transitioning to sustainable lifestyles and sustainable patterns of consumption and production in efforts to address climate change and encourages efforts towards transitions to sustainable lifestyles, sustainable patterns of consumption...", a sentiment that undergirds the 'Mission Life' movement articulated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

'No clear roadmap'

There are 193 separate points spread out over the 24 pages of the GST draft. Several lay out 'options' that countries can agree to adopt, reject or avoid mention of in the final agreement.

Independent experts who have seen the draft said that in its current format, it would seed multiple points of contention. "The mention of phasing out of all fossil fuels is quite big. There is also separate language on ending coal as well as phasing out 'inefficient fossil-fuel subsidies' that will be disputed," said Vaibhav Chaturvedi, a fellow at the Council on Energy Environment and Water, a prominent think-tank.

Others described the text as 'disappointing', as it gave no clear roadmap yet on how to actually implement the GST. "The text as it stands now is too large, vague and lacks clear language on how countries should report their progress and goals," said Suruchi Bhadwal, senior fellow and associate editor at The Energy Resources Institute.

ECONOMIC TIMES, Delhi, 6.12.2023
Page No. 12, Size:(8.23)cms X (5.05)cms.

Record Number of Fossil Fuel Lobbyists

Dubai: NGOs may have slammed the record number of fossil fuel lobbyists at UN climate talks here, but the industry won't be browbeaten, with the OPEC cartel hosting a chat on "climate initiatives" and one of the heads of the "Big Oil" majors sparring with activists.

Activists were already up in arms over the appointment of Sultan Al Jaber, the head of Emirati national oil company ADNOC, as president of COP28.

The oil-rich hosts made no secret of their desire to give the fossil fuel industry a voice at the talks where the fate of oil, gas and coal is at the heart of deliberations. On Tuesday, the umbrella group Kick Big Polluters Out (KBPO) claimed 2,456 people tied to fossil fuel interests have signed up to COP28 – about four times the number from last year's UN talks in Egypt. —**AFP**

STATESMAN, Delhi, 6.12.2023
Page No. 8, Size:(7.86)cms X (7.02)cms.

Share of non-fossil fuels in India's power generation rises to 44 pc

AGENCIES
NEW DELHI, 5 DECEMBER

As much as 44 per cent of India's power generation capacity is now based on non-fossil fuels, Power and Renewable Energy Minister R.K. Singh informed Parliament on Tuesday.

"So far, a total of 186.46 GW (gigawatts) capacity from non-fossil fuel-based energy resources has been installed in the country as on 31.10.2023," the minister said in a written reply to a question in the Rajya Sabha.

Another 114.08 GW of capacity is under implementation, with a further 55.13 GW under tendering, the statement added.

India aims to boost the share of non-fossil fuel sources in its electricity generation capacity to 50 per cent by 2030. These include solar, wind and hydro power as well as nuclear and bio-power. The country is ahead of its international commitment for energy transition to fight climate change.

Around 50 per cent of the funds allocated for development and deployment of renewable energy have been utilised in the first ten months of this year, according to figures tabled by the minister.

MINT, Delhi, 6.12.2023
Page No. 4, Size:(23.44)cms X (7.98)cms.

Bioenergy, exports to drive Praj Industries' revenue growth

Dipti Sharma
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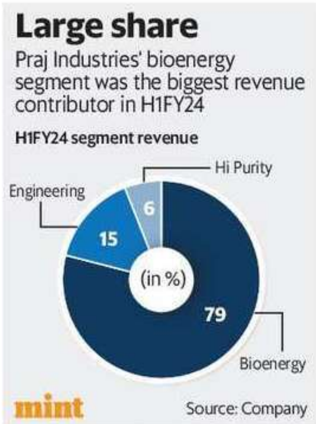
Praj Industries Ltd's investors find themselves in a sweet spot with its shares rising by almost 67% in the past six months. The company aims to triple its revenue by FY30, it said in an analysts meet.

The management said it has a two-pronged strategy focussing on bio-mobility (decarbonizing transportation with advanced, next-gen, and conventional biofuels) and bio-prism (technologies to produce green chemicals and material). Praj Industries' bioenergy segment, which provides technologies and equipment to ethanol plants and technologies to produce compressed biogas (CBG) and future fuels like sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) will be driving growth. This vertical contributed 79% to its revenues in H1FY24.

The Centre's order mandating blending CBG with CNG for transportation and PNG for domestic use for city gas distribution firms is expected to be a big catalyst for growth. Its management is confident the directive will accelerate order awards in the CBG business. Along with CBG, the SAF business is likely to be a key driver in achieving its FY30 revenue target.

The company aims to triple its revenue by FY30.



PRANAY BHARDWAJ/MINT

The firm's strategic partnerships with Indian Oil Corp. Ltd, Gevo, and Axens is expected to enhance opportunity in the SAF space. Besides, as India joins the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation, the requirement for SAF blending from 2027 could open up opportunities.

"The firm has multiple high-growth opportunities across its segments in the near to medium term, CBG and Ethanol Gen 1 export has started seeing traction and engineering has shown strong traction in FY24," said Prathamesh Sawant, an analyst at Axis Securities.

In bioenergy and engineering, exports will enjoy a higher margin profile compared to domestic business, he added. Engineering business revenue in H1 was at 15%.

It is seeking a 50:50 split in its order book from domestic and international (exports) orders. In FY23, 82% of its revenue was from domestic orders, with the rest coming from exports.

After a sharp rally, the stock trades at 33 times its estimated earnings for FY25, according to *Bloomberg* data.

As such, any further re-rating may be capped. Revenue prospects appear bright at the least.

Amit Anwani, analyst at Prabhudas Lilladher, said monitoring government tenders for CBG will be crucial, as a slow pace of expected export ordering may derail growth momentum. Investors should also track the order inflows from the US markets as the current focus in international market remains in the US and Europe, he added.

SUPPORTING PUBLIC EXPENDITURE-LED GROWTH REVIVAL

CPSEs meet 58% of annual capex target in April-Oct

Railways, NHAI, state-run firms invest ₹4.28 trillion

PRASANTA SAHU
New Delhi, December 5

THE CENTRAL PUBLIC sector enterprises (CPSEs) and large government agencies present in the infrastructure sector like the NHAI and the Railways have invested ₹4.28 trillion or 58.4% of their combined annual capital expenditure target in April-October of the current financial year, supporting the public capex-led economic growth revival.

On an annual basis, these entities' capex grew by 22% on-year in the first seven months of the current financial year compared with ₹3.51 trillion in the year-ago period.

Investment demand grew by 11% in the September quarter compared with 8% growth in the first quarter of FY24. The investment rate (GFCF as % of GDP) also inched higher to 35.3% compared with 34.2% a year ago.

This was supported by higher capital expenditure at both the Centre and state government levels as well as state-run entities/agencies. As against the target of ₹10 trillion, the Centre's capex has reached 54.7% in April-October of FY24.

Capital expenditure by state governments surged by 56% on-year in the first half of the current financial year compared with just a 2% rise in the year-ago period, supported by capex loans from the Centre.

The capex target for the CPSEs and other agencies was set at ₹7.33 trillion for FY24.

Railways and NHAI, with substantial budgetary support as well as petroleum CPSEs, are the largest public-sector investors that play a key catalytic role in crowding capex from other entities.

In April-October 2023, budgetary investment in Railway projects rose 54% on-year to ₹1.57 trillion.

Fuel retailer-cum-refiner Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) achieved capex of ₹20,180 crore or 66% of its annual target of ₹30,395 crore in April-October of FY24 compared with 58% of the annual target achieved in the corresponding period of last fiscal. IOC is expanding its refining capacity and investing in hydrogen plants at several locations in the country.

ONGC, the top CPSE player in oil and gas exploration, has achieved a capex of ₹17,714 crore in the first seven months of the current financial year or 60% of the annual target.

ON TRACK

Capex by CPSEs and other central agencies **(April-October)**

	FY23 (₹ trillion)*	% of annual target	FY24 (₹ trillion)*	% of annual target
Total	3.51	53	4.28	53
Railways (budget support)	1.02	75	1.57	75
Indian Oil	0.17	58	0.2	58
ONGC	0.14	47	0.18	47

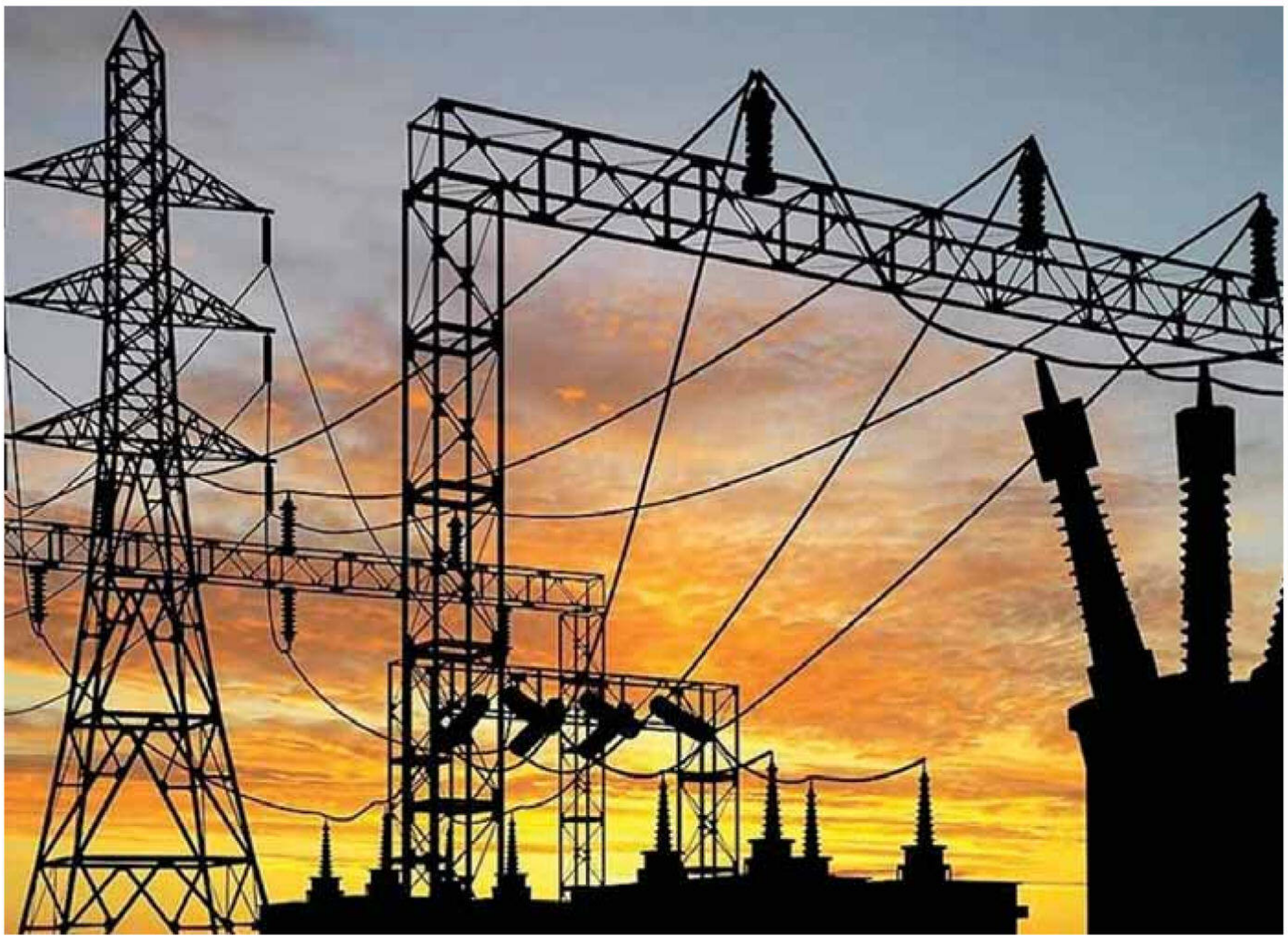
*State-run entities with minimum annual capex of ₹100 crore

PIONEER, Delhi, 6.12.2023
Page No. 7, Size:(24.55)cms X (37.13)cms.

Cut out red tapism in public sector share sale

UTTAM GUPTA

The lengthy and cumbersome process of approval and bureaucratic red tape undermines the chances of the Government selling CPSU shares to willing investors



In the Budget for 2023-24, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman had set a target of Rs 51,000 crore for proceeds of the sale of Union government shareholding in central public sector undertakings (CPSUs). As per available indications, the government may fall short of this target by Rs 30,000 crore.

An overwhelming share of the shortfall is due to delays in the disinvestment plans of IDBI Bank (the government plans to sell 30.48 per cent of its stake as well as 30.24 per cent shareholding of LIC aggregating to a total stake sale of 60.72 per cent) and state-owned NMDC Steel. Whereas, in the case of IDBI Bank, this is due to delays in the vetting process for potential buyers by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), The sale of NMDC Steel is hamstrung due to elections in Chhattisgarh where the company's main plant is located.

The shortfall in proceeds during the current fiscal year is in sync with the trend seen since 2015-16 when the Modi - government started disinvestment with a particular focus on 'strategic' sale (a sophisticated nomenclature for a share sale that reduces its holding in the CPSU to below 50 per cent or privatization). Barring two years viz. 2017-18 and 2018-19 when the actual proceeds exceeded the target, in the remaining six years, the achievement was far short.

Even during 2017-18 and 2018-19, the government could achieve the target primarily because of the two big-ticket sales of its shares in one CPSU to another viz. (i) sale of its 51.11 per cent shareholding in Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) to the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) during 2017-18 that yielded Rs 37,000 crore; (ii) sale of its 52.63 per cent stake in Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) to the Power Finance Corporation (PFC) during 2018-19 yielding Rs 13,000 crore. These sales can't be termed as strategic as the purchaser being another CPSU namely ONGC/PFC, the Government continues to have effective ownership over the divested entity viz. HPCL/REC.

It makes no sense to fix a target for proceeds from share sales. This is because unlike tax revenue, which can be projected with a degree of certainty, the same cannot be said about proceeds from disinvestment. In this case, a lot depends on the market scenario and, in particular, the perception of investors about the company in which share-sale is contemplated. In cases where the strategic sale is mooted, the Government faces a bigger challenge as apart from a favourable market, it needs bidders with deep pockets. The lengthy and cumbersome process of approval and bureaucratic red tape further undermines the chances of the Government kicking the ball rolling just around the time when the strategic investors are ready to put in their bets.

The Niti Aayog identifies companies for disinvestment which are then considered by the Core Group of Secretaries on Divestment (CGD), a long-drawn process by itself, which takes it to the Alternative Mechanism (AM) - a group of ministers, including finance, road transport & highways, administrative reforms, etc., - for approval. After AM's approval, the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) moved a proposal for in-principal approval of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA). Taking all these approvals is a time-consuming process and by the time these are in place, the market scenario could become adverse.

> THE GOVERNMENT WANTS TO REMAIN IN THE DRIVER'S SEAT EVEN AFTER STRATEGIC SALE. THIS IS AMPLY REFLECTED IN A STATEMENT IN SITHARAMAN'S BUDGET SPEECH FOR FY 2019-20

At a fundamental level, disinvestment of the government's shareholding in a PSU is tantamount to the sale of assets. Therefore, receipts arising therefrom can only be treated as 'capital receipts' (CRs). While preparing the budget, it won't be advisable to plan for receipts from this source in the same manner as it is done for revenue receipts (RRs) which are receipts generated from the day-to-day business activities e.g. dividends on shares held by the government.

The government should only provide for proceeds from share sales in CPSU on an 'actual' basis after it has happened instead of making provision at the time of presenting the budget. Having delinked from the budgetary process, it should take up disinvestment in CPSUs as an independent exercise guided by the broad principle of where it shouldn't be in.

In an approach outlined in the Budget for 2021-22, the government divided CPSUs into two broad categories i.e. strategic and non-strategic. The strategic group covers atomic energy, space and defense; transport and telecommunications; power, petroleum, coal and other minerals; and banking, insurance and financial services. The non-strategic category includes all other sectors such as industrial and consumer goods, hotel and tourist services, trading, and marketing.

While, the government wants to sell CPSUs in the strategic sector with the caveat that at least one (and a maximum of four) will be retained in the public sector, it will privatise 'all' undertakings in non-strategic sectors. All loss-making undertakings in the latter category will be closed. Based on this template, it is working on a detailed action plan which is fine. But the process is hamstrung because of a host of legacy issues.

For instance, despite the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) and Niti Aayog recommending the privatisation of all nine CPSUs in the fertiliser sector (it falls in the non-strategic category) coming under the administrative control of the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilisers, the latter has opposed it. The ministry feels that with control over fertilizer PSUs gone, the government won't be able to ensure adequate availability of this politically sensitive agri-input in every nook and corner of the country.

The strategic sale of Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) hasn't happened nearly four years after it was initially mooted in 2019-20. A prime reason is the government's intent to regulate the prices of petrol and diesel (despite the price of these fuels having been deregulated way back in 2010/2014) which it can do by asking the three oil marketing CPSUs including BPCL to do its bidding. Its ability to influence prices will be hampered if BPCL is privatised.

The government wants to remain in the driver's seat even after strategic sales. This is amply reflected in a statement in Sitharaman's budget speech for FY 2019-20. She had stated the intent was to change the existing policy from "directly" holding 51 per cent or above in a CPSU, to one whereby its total holding, "direct" plus "indirect", is maintained at 51 per cent.

In yet another glaring instance, even though an order of the Ministry of Finance (MoF) issued last year prohibits participation of CPSUs in the strategic sale of other PSUs, a caveat "…unless otherwise specifically approved by the Central Government in public interest" enables the powers that be to bypass this prohibition if they so wish.

Above all, the majority ownership and control by the Government for several decades has ingrained in the bureaucrat a feeling of exercising command (albeit remote) over the management of the PSU. The latter readily acquiescing has added to the sense of bureaucratic power. Although things have improved under the Modi - dispensation (courtesy of its focus on a 'policy-driven state', and increase in 'transparency'), the basic ingredients remain intact.

Modi needs to play some hardballs to kill the existing mindset of the bureaucracy. The process of share sale should be de-bureaucratised by setting up a holding company (HC) where all government shares in CPSUs are placed. To be manned by eminent professionals, the HC should be fully empowered to make all decisions.

(The writer is a policy analyst, views are personal)

TIMES OF INDIA, Delhi, 6.12.2023
Page No. 22, Size:(9.60)cms X (12.78)cms.

Jaber Jabber

COP chief & oil boss's flip-flop on fossil fuel shows switching to clean fuel won't be easy

That eliminating fossil fuels is tough is clear from COP 28. The current COP president Sultan Al-Jaber, who's also the boss of Abu Dhabi National Oil Company, said there was "no science" showing that the phase-out of fossil fuels was going to limit warming. There was an uproar. Al-Jaber backtracked. But his flip-flop points to important questions.

Phase out or phase down | 'Phase down' is not the evil plan it's made out to be. India introduced the idea of phasing down fossil fuels last year and 80 nations agreed. In 2021's COP, India, China successfully opposed the recommendation of "phasing out" unabated coal use.

But who phases down first | Rich countries fuelled climate change, which hurts the global south most. India is a fast-growing economy of 1.4 billion people with aspirations. It can't just decarbonise. When energy prices rise, democracies find it hard to not give fossil fuel subsidies. So, the original sinners must pony up cash for the transition.

Is there money on the table | COP has agreed on a new global loss and damage fund of $420 million to start with, with the UAE committing $100 million, pressuring others. America remains reluctant, though it now produces more oil than any country in history.

What else is being done | Companies that account for 40% of global oil output pledged to eliminate carbon from their operations by 2050. But this is only about their own operations, rather than the use of their products by consumers. A deal to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030 is on COP's agenda.

Let's be sceptical about all this. Because the transition to clean fuel, as we said, is going to be tough.

Oil output reduction is better than plugging methane leaks

Hydrocarbon industry efficiency matters less than scaling it back

DAVID FICKLING
is a Bloomberg Opinion columnist covering energy and commodities.

Gas flares sometimes let methane escape into the air AP

What sort of climate deal is a summit hosted by the world's third-largest net oil exporter most likely to pull off? The type that boosts revenues for petroleum companies.

The Oil and Gas Decarbonization Charter unveiled at the United Nations CoP-28 summit in Dubai counts as one of the most substantive pacts to have emerged from the conference so far.

The agreement includes most of the traditional Western oil majors, state producers from Saudi Arabia and hosts the United Arab Emirates, between them accounting for about 40% of global oil output. The agreement talks about cracking down on tonnes of methane pumped into the atmosphere through leaks at oil and gas-fields and flares burning off surplus gas.

Campaigners will rightly complain that the pledges are unenforceable, making the deal little better than a pinky promise. A similar vow to end routine gas flaring was agreed upon at CoP-21 in Paris, and there's precious little evidence it's going to meet its targets.

The Global Methane Pledge was one of the centerpieces of the Glasgow CoP-26 conference. Roughly a quarter of the warming to date has been caused by methane. Over the coming century, each tonne of CH4 emitted will heat the atmosphere by as much as 28 tonnes of CO2.

Petroleum producers must be motivated to do something about the problem. Natural gas, which is almost entirely methane, is still running at elevated prices, with European futures for the 2024-25 winter peak season at more than double the level they were at three years ago.

Capturing that valuable commodity and selling it—instead of venting it or burning it as waste gas—should be extremely profitable. About 41% of methane emissions from oil and gas facilities can be eliminated at no net cost, according to the International Energy Agency.

There's a more cynical reason for fossil-fuel producers to get on board. Since the warming impact of CH4 is so front-loaded, a quicker reduction in methane emissions might eke out a few more years to sell down those petroleum reserves before the chaos of climate change forces tougher action.

The main issue is that the easiest way to tackle this is to cut petroleum production as a whole. Oil companies aren't stupid. If they are throwing away CH4 as waste gas, it's very often because capturing it and selling it is a lot harder to do in practice than it is on paper. If you're managing an oilfield, a pipeline or a storage tank, you don't always have good alternatives to releasing methane into the atmosphere. A large share of pollution comes from blowdowns—deliberate releases—to prevent build-ups of gas that may make equipment inoperable or dangerous. Burning this gas off in a flare is cheaper and easier than installing the infrastructure needed to capture and sell it, but even then, about 9% of the CH4 coming out of the pipe doesn't get set alight and gets released in its raw form into the atmosphere.

Since the mid-1980s, attempts to reduce the share of flaring in global petroleum production have shown only limited effectiveness. Much of the success of late has likely been a result of the US increasing its share of the global oil market.

Even a complete elimination of petroleum's methane emissions won't make much of a difference, unless the rest of the industry cuts back. CH4 from oil and gas facilities released the equivalent of 2.3 billion tonnes of CO2 into the atmosphere in 2022, according to the IEA. Reduce that by two-thirds by 2030, and you still won't have cut emissions enough to offset the 1.8 billion tonnes of additional CO2 that would be produced if the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries' forecast for oil output over the period plays out.

The more effective action against the oil and gas industry's carbon footprint may be happening closer to OPEC's headquarters in Vienna than the CoP-28 talking shop in Dubai. The crude oil cartel's supply cuts of 2.2 million daily barrels announced last week, if they're not offset by increases elsewhere, will cut CO2 emissions by about 347 million metric tonnes, equivalent to about 1% of the annual total.

OPEC would argue that those cuts are temporary. If they are the first signs of a peak and decline in petroleum production, that's the real action the world needs—and it's not being done out of altruism.

An Oil and Gas Decarbonization Charter is an oxymoron because the carbon is locked into the chemical structures of oil and gas molecules themselves. The only viable way to tackle that is to stop burning fossil fuels. It's a looming decline in oil and gas production itself, rather than any attempt to make the industry's operations more efficient, that will make the real difference to the planet.

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टॉमी, शेरू और ब्रूनो का मोक्ष द्वार तैयार, सीएनजी से होगा शवदाह

द्वारका के सेक्टर-29 में कुत्तों के लिए बना, अगले सप्ताह शुरू होने की जताई जा रही संभावना; मुंबई, चेन्नई, लखनऊ और पटना में भी बनाने की योजना

अमर उजाला ब्यूरो

नई दिल्ली। दिल्ली में टॉमी, शेरू और ब्रूनो समेत सभी पालतू व लावारिस कुत्तों का मोक्ष द्वार तैयार है। यहां सीएनजी से शव दाह की सुविधा दी गई है। पशु-प्रेमी विधि-विधान से अपने प्रिय डॉगी का अंतिम संस्कार कर सकेंगे। फिर कुत्तों की अस्थियां रखने का लॉकर रूम भी होगा।

एमसीडी द्वारका के सेक्टर-29 में पहले शवदाह स्थल को अगले सप्ताह शुरू करने की तैयारी में है। अधिकारियों का कहना है कि आईजीएल ने यहां गैस पाइप लाइन बिछाई है। इसका ट्रायल भी पूरा कर लिया गया है। शवदाह के लिए यहां दो भट्ठियां हैं। पहली भट्ठी सिर्फ पालतू कुत्तों के लिए है, जबकि दूसरी भट्ठी में बिल्ली, बंदर, लावारिस कुत्ते इत्यादि का शवदाह होगा।

द्वारका सेक्टर 29 में कुत्तों के लिए बना शवदाह केंद्र। स्रोत : स्वयं

अपनी तरह का पहला शवदाह गृह बनाने की योजना पर एमसीडी की दलील है कि अपने देश में आदिकाल से कुत्तों को इंसान के सबसे करीब रहने वाले जानवरों में से एक माना गया है। लोगों का इनसे आत्मीय लगाव होता है। पशु प्रेमी कई बार इनको अपने बच्चे की तरह पालते हैं। इसी भाव को ध्यान में रखते हुए पालतू कुत्तों के लिए ये कदम उठाया गया है। यहां सीएनजी से जानवरों का शवदाह किया जाएगा, इसलिए इसे पर्यावरण के अनुकूल माना जा रहा है। आधे घंटे में एक छोटे जानवर का शवदाह हो जाएगा।

सीएनजी से शवदाह।

700
वर्ग मीटर में फैले श्मशान परिसर के भीतर कुत्तों के लिए नसबंदी केंद्र भी

अस्थियां रखने के लिए लॉकर रुम

- *शवदाह परिसर में पालतू कुत्तों की अस्थियों को रखने के लिए लॉकर रूम भी मिलेगा। जो लोग अपने पालतू कुत्ते की अस्थियों का विसर्जन करना चाहेंगे, वे यहां से अस्थियां ले जा सकेंगे। एमसीडी के अधिकारियों ने बताया कि इसी हफ्ते मेयर डॉ शैली ओबरॉय इस परिसर का दौरा करेंगी। इसके बाद अगले हफ्ते तक इसके खोलने की तैयारी की गई है।*

बेसहारा का मुफ्त में होगा शवदाह पालतू के लिए लगेगी फीस

इंद्रप्रस्थ गैस लिमिटेड ने यहां गैस पाइप लाइन लगाई है। करीब 700 वर्ग मीटर में फैले इस श्मशान परिसर के भीतर कुत्तों के लिए नसबंदी केंद्र भी है। बेसहारा जानवरों का फ्री में शवदाह किया जाएगा। पालतू जानवरों के लिए फीस रखी गई है। 30 किलोग्राम से कम वजन के जानवरों के शवदाह के लिए 2000 रुपये, जबकि 30 किलोग्राम से अधिक वजन के जानवर के शवदाह के लिए 3000 हजार रुपये फीस तय की गई है।

कई नगर निगमों को पसंद आया

द्वारका में कुत्तों का शवदाह स्थल तैयार करने वाली एजेंसी ने जानकारी दी है कि ये अपनी तरह का देश का पहला शवदाह केंद्र बना है। ये आइडिया देश के कई नगर निगमों को पसंद आया है। मुंबई, पुणे, बेंगलुरू, हैदराबाद, चेन्नई, कोलकाता, लखनऊ, नागपुर और पटना में भी इस तरह के शवदाह परिसर बनाए जाने की योजना है। कई शहरों में इनका निर्माण हाल ही में शुरू हुआ है और कई जगहों पर निर्माण कार्य जल्द शुरू होने की संभावना है।