

13 city bakeries to move to cleaner fuel, others in pipeline

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Mumbai: While applications of 13 bakeries seeking PNG connections to convert to a cleaner fuel have been found to be feasible, in the case of several other applicants, MGL will have to verify the feasibility of providing such connections.

Applications for PNG connections were made during a recent facilitation camp organised by the BMC for the transition of bakeries from conventional fuels such as coal, wood and diesel to cleaner fuels like LPG, PNG and electricity. So-



A recent BMC camp for bakeries facilitated the move to cleaner fuels

me of the bakeries are also looking at the feasibility of using LPG as an interim arrange-

ment until a PNG connection or other cleaner fuel options are made available for their ba-

keries. The camp also enabled filing applications for financing the conversion to cleaner fuels under the Pradhan Mantri Formalization of Micro Food Processing Enterprises (PMFME). Bombay High Court had rejected a plea for more time sought by bakery owners to switch to cleaner fuels.

"There are 592 licensed bakeries within the BMC's jurisdiction. Of these bakeries, 295 have to move to cleaner fuels. The civic body has in turn identified 160 of these 295 that can convert to PNG. However, there are practical issues, as trenching has to be carried out for

laying PNG pipelines. BMC will allow trenching only after monsoon," said a civic official.

During the BMC camp, some bakery owners also made enquiries regarding moving to LPG as an interim arrangement, though they are not inclined to use it because of safety issues and the cost, as a large number of LPG cylinders is required to keep bakeries operational. "But industrial LPG connection is an option that can be considered. In case of PNG, too, laying of a pipeline is either not feasible for some bakeries or there are safety issues because of the location of

the bakery," the official added.

"Under the guidance of municipal commissioner Bhushan Gagrani and additional municipal commissioner (city) Ashwini Joshi, we organised a facilitation camp for bakery owners along with various stakeholders, including BMC departments, MGL, and manufacturers and suppliers of bakery equipment, to iron out issues faced by bakeries and provide solutions to enable them to transition to cleaner fuels," said Avinash Kate, deputy municipal commissioner (environment and climate change department).



New tariff model to boost gas sector eyed

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NEW DELHI

India's gas regulator Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) is planning to push ahead with the entry-exit tariff system for natural gas transmission, in a move aimed at opening up the market to even small consumers and making gas prices more competitive.

In an interview with *Mint*, PNGRB chairman Anil Kumar Jain said that several advanced gas economies, including in Europe, have moved towards the entry-exit tariff model, which charges customers separately for where gas enters and exits the pipeline. It is the ultimate tariff model for all mature gas markets, towards which India should also strive to reach, with its gas pipeline network growing, he added.

"We are thinking of starting to work on entry-exit tariff model, which is the ultimate tariff model. Currently, the tariff is decided based on the distance and slabs. In advanced gas economies of the world, they have moved away from this. The tariffs are market-determined. The entry-exit model will drive efficiency," the chairman said.

Currently, the tariffs are fixed based on distance and pipeline capacity.

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Hope we can fix it, says Rubio on US tariffs on India for Russian oil buy

ARCHIS MOHAN

New Delhi, 23 September

US Secretary of State Marco Rubio told an American media outlet on Tuesday evening (IST) that "a lot of progress" was made during his meeting with Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar on the subject of New Delhi's purchase of Russian oil. However, a few hours later, US President Donald Trump told the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) that China and India were the "primary funders" of the Russian war in Ukraine with the purchase of Russian oil.

In his interview to a news channel, Rubio said that the Trump administration hoped it could 'fix' the 'measures' it had imposed on India for buying Russian oil, and urged the European countries to impose similar sanctions, something that Trump also advocated in his UNGA address.

The White House has imposed a cumulative 50 per cent tariffs on Indian goods, including a 25 per cent penalty for New Delhi buying Russian oil.

"I think it's important for Europe to impose sanctions, too. Right now, there are countries in Europe that are still buying massive amounts of oil and natural gas from Russia, which is absurd. I mean, they're asking for the US to impose more sanctions, but there are countries in Europe that are not doing enough," Rubio said.

"So, I think they need to do more. We've already seen the measures we've taken with regards to India, although that's something we hope we can fix... and the President has the ability to do more, and he's considering doing more because of the direction this has taken," Rubio said.



External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar and European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas (second from right) during a meeting in New York on Tuesday.

PHOTO: PTI

Jaishankar met Rubio on the sidelines of the UNGA in New York on Monday evening. Rubio did not mention if the Indian delegation flagged the Trump administration's H-1B visa \$100,000 fee, but sources in New Delhi said that the Indian side brought up the issue, which has become the latest stress point in the India-US ties. Apart from Jaishankar, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal is also in the US.

Rubio also repeated the claim that Trump had ended the recent conflict between India and Pakistan. "And look what the President's done and the wars he's brought about to an end - Thailand and Cambodia, India and Pakistan," he said.

In his UNGA address, Trump said he has resolved 'seven wars', but did not specifically mention the India-Pakistan mili-

tary conflict.

On Tuesday morning, in US State Department readout about his Monday evening meeting with Jaishankar, Rubio said that "India is a relationship of critical importance to the US". He voiced 'appreciation' for New Delhi's continued engagement on bilateral issues, including trade, defence, energy, pharmaceuticals and critical minerals, related to the bilateral relationship.

In the evening, Rubio told ABC News' 'Good Morning America' programme, "We had meetings with them (Indian delegation) again yesterday (Monday), and it has to do with their purchase of Russian oil." In his interview, Rubio alluded to Senator Lindsey Graham's bill proposing punitive tariffs on India and China for buying Russian oil. He also said the White House has

nudged the European countries to cut down their purchases of Russian gas.

Addressing the UNGA, Trump urged Nato countries to stop buying Russian gas and asked European countries to adopt the same measures as his country has done, that is to impose tariffs on goods produced by countries buying Russian oil.

According to the US State Department readout, Rubio and Jaishankar agreed that the US and India will continue working together to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific region, including through the Quad, the statement said.

In a post on X late Monday evening, Jaishankar said it was 'good to meet' Rubio in New York. "Our conversation covered a range of bilateral and international issues of current concern. (We) agreed on the importance of sustained engagement to progress on priority areas. We will remain in touch," Jaishankar said about his almost an hour-long meeting with Rubio. The two had last met in July in Washington DC on the sidelines of the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

On Monday, Jaishankar also met European Union Foreign Ministers at their informal meeting. US Ambassador nominee to India and Special Envoy for South and Central Asia Sergio Gor also met Jaishankar. "They look forward to further promoting the success of the US-India relationship," the State Department's Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs said.

Jaishankar met the Philippines Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Theresa P Lazaro, and they discussed the cooperation between the two countries in the Indo-Pacific region and in the domains of defence and security, including maritime security.

MOU—OIL INDIA LTD

In a significant step towards strengthening India's self-reliance in critical & strategic mineral sourcing, OIL & HCL have signed a MoU recently to co-operate & collaborate for exploration & development of critical & strategic minerals including Copper & associated minerals. Oil India possessing proven expertise in exploration, development, production and transportation of crude oil & natural gas. Given the increasing importance of critical minerals, OIL has diversified into Critical Minerals apart from its present portfolio of Oil & Gas. HCL is engaged in mining, production, processing & marketing of copper & related products.



Russia Crude Exports Hit 16-Mth High Despite Output Cuts Due to Attacks

Ukrainian drone strikes on refineries forcing cos to divert crude to export terminals

Bloomberg

Russia's seaborne crude exports climbed to a 16-month high in the past four weeks, a period in which the nation's own oil refineries have been forced to scale back production because of Ukrainian drone attacks.

Four-week average shipments from the country's ports reached 3.62 million barrels a day in the 28 days to Sept. 21, according to vessel-tracking data compiled by Bloomberg. That is the highest since the period ending May 5, 2024. The average provides a clearer picture of underlying trends than more volatile weekly figures.

As a result of the spate of Ukrainian drone attacks, Russian refining runs have dropped below 5 million barrels a day, the lowest since April 2022, according to estimates from JPMorgan Chase & Co. Traditionally, Russia's downstream industry processed around 5.4 million barrels of crude a day in August and September, implying that the strikes have affected at least 7% of Russia's fuel-making, according to Bloomberg estimates.

Attacks on pumping stations linked to key pipeline routes don't yet appear to have had a dramatic impact on supplies to export terminals on Russia's Baltic



A total of 31 tankers loaded 23.7 m barrels of Russian crude in the week to Sept 21

and Black Sea coasts. A record 12 crude cargoes were loaded at the Baltic port of Primorsk last week. Damage to pump stations may reduce, rather than halt, flows, while storage tanks at ports may allow shipments to be maintained while facilities are repaired.

Meanwhile, Russia's oil output is rising under a deal among members of the OPEC+ group of producers that's seen Moscow's production target increase by

more than 400,000 barrels a day since March. The drone strikes on the country's refineries appear to be forcing companies to divert crude to export terminals, adding even more barrels to the flow.

Separately, any new sanctions aimed at forcing Russia to negotiate an end to the war in Ukraine seem some way off.

US President Donald Trump has linked further US measures to a full halt in purchases of Russian oil by European Union countries, which appears unlikely in the immediate future while Hungary and Slovakia hold out. The bloc is considering using trade measures, such as tariffs, rather than sanctions to target the remaining crude volumes. Unlike sanctions, whose adoption requires the backing of all member states, trade measures only need the support of a majority of countries.

CRUDE SHIPMENTS

A total of 31 tankers loaded 23.69 million barrels of Russian crude in the week to Sept. 21, vessel-tracking data and port-agent reports show. The volume was up from 22.26 million barrels on 29 ships the previous week.

The gross value of Moscow's exports edged up, rising by about \$50 million to \$1.33 billion in the week to September 21.

'Hope We Can Fix It' Rubio on Tariffs Against India for Russian Oil Purchases

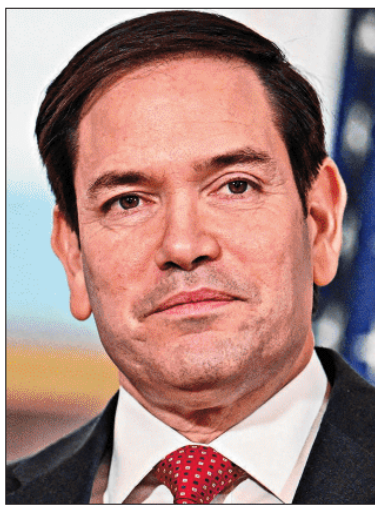
New York: US Secretary of State Marco Rubio has said that the Trump administration hopes it can "fix" the "measures" it has taken with regard to India for its purchases of Russian oil.

"I think it's important for Europe to impose sanctions, too. Right now, there are countries in Europe that are still buying massive amounts of oil and natural gas from Russia, which is absurd. I mean, they're asking for the US to impose more sanctions, but there are countries in Europe that are not doing enough," Rubio said in an interview with media outlet on Tuesday.

"So I think they need to do more. We've already seen the measures we've taken with regards to India, although that's something we hope we can fix. But—and the President has the ability to do more, and he's considering doing more because of the direction this has taken," he added.

PROGRESS IN TRADE TALKS

Earlier Rubio told another media outlet that the US and India made progress on Monday, amid ongoing trade talks. "We had meetings with them again yesterday, and it has to do with their purchase of Russian oil," he said.



Marco Rubio

id, citing "a lot of progress."

Trump last month imposed a 25% punitive levy on Indian imports from August 27, doubling overall tariffs to 50%, as his administration pressures New Delhi to cut its Russian oil purchases.

Rubio did not say whether the two sides discussed the Trump administration's \$100,000 H-1B visa fee or Washington's demands that India open its agriculture and dairy sector for US companies. Indian officials are expected to ask US trade negotiators this week to ease access for thousands of skilled workers.

Agencies