



Mahanagar Gas woos LPG users for PNG shift

The Hindu Bureau

MUMBAI

Mahanagar Gas Ltd. (MGL), a City Gas Distribution (CGD) company, stepped up efforts to shift customers using LPG to Piped Natural Gas (PNG) offering uninterrupted

supply and sops. It is also offering Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) for transport across its geographical areas (GAs) in Maharashtra and Karnataka. In line with the Natural Gas (Supply Regulation) Order 2026, domestic PNG and CNG

have been recognised as the highest priority sector.

MGL has taken steps for consistent supply to ensure clients get reliable and safe fuel for daily use. Alongside, MGL unveiled customer-focused initiatives to hasten PNG adop-

tion in the GAs, including offering free gas worth ₹500 to all new registrations and ₹1,000 adjustment in gas bills from new buildings where penetration is over 60%.

For commercial customers, MGL is waiving registration charges.

PM: Iran war a concern for India's energy needs



Prime Minister Narendra Modi speaking in the Lok Sabha during the second part of the Budget session of Parliament in New Delhi

PIONEER NEWS SERVICE

■ New Delhi

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on Monday, said in the Lok Sabha that the war in Iran presents a "concerning situation" given India imports significant quantities of crude oil and gas from Gulf nations. Expressing serious concern, the PM called upon the nation to remain prepared and united, just as it had

stood together during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A day after reviewing the West Asia situation in the Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), Modi informed the nation through Parliament that the difficult global conditions caused by the West Asia conflict are likely to persist for a long time.

In a statement in the lower house, Modi addressed concerns related to the impact on

fuel, fertilisers, national security and other areas in India as well on its nationals residing in the West Asia region, detailing steps taken by the government to ensure that "ordinary families face as little trouble as possible", and said a unanimous voice should go out to the world from India's Parliament on this crisis.

Reaffirming India's unwavering commitment to humanity and peace, Modi

said the dialogue and diplomacy remain the only path to resolution.

Informing the House that he has engaged with all relevant West Asian leaders and urged them to reduce tensions, Modi emphasised that attacks on commercial ships and obstruction of international waterways like the Strait of Hormuz are "wholly unacceptable".

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PM: Iran war a concern for India's energy needs

He said endangering any life in this war runs counter to the interests of humanity and "India's efforts to encourage all parties to arrive at a peaceful resolution as soon as possible".

On India's diplomatic response to the West Asia conflict, the Prime Minister said India's stand has been clear from the very beginning, when the US and Israel attacked Iran and the latter retaliated by targeting its Gulf neighbours and Israel, "one of expressing deep concern, advocating de-escalation, and opposing attacks on civilians and on energy and transport infrastructure". "India, through diplomacy, is making continuous efforts for the safe passage of Indian ships even amidst the war environment. Due to such efforts, several of our ships that were stuck in the Strait of Hormuz have also arrived in India in recent days," he said.

The prime minister also drew the attention of the House to the internal security dimension of the crisis, warning that certain elements attempt to exploit such situations. He said all security agencies have been placed on alert and that security across all domains, coastal, border, cyber, and strategic installations is being further strengthened. "Whether it is coastal security, border security, cyber security, or strategic installations, the security of all is being reinforced," he said.

Urging patience, restraint, and vigilance, and cautioning against those who may seek to exploit the situation by spreading falsehoods, engaging in black-marketing, or hoarding, Modi appealed to all state governments to ensure strict monitoring and swift action against such elements. Expressing his abiding faith in the collective resolve of the nation, the Prime Minister said that when every government and every citizen of this country walk together, "we can challenge every challenge, this is our identity, and this is our strength". The prime minister said the crisis has been going on now for more than three weeks, and it is having a very adverse impact on the global economy and on people's lives. The entire world is urging all parties for the earliest resolution of this crisis, he said. This region is important to India for yet another reason, as nearly one crore Indians live and work in the Gulf countries and among the commercial ships that sail in these seas, the number of Indian crew members is also very high, he said. "India's concerns are naturally greater, and therefore it is essential that a united and unanimous voice goes out to the world from India's Parliament on this crisis," he said. Modi underscored how the energy diversification strategy pursued over the past decade has proven its worth in the current crisis. He informed the House that India has expanded its energy import sources from 27 countries to 41 countries over the past 11 years, thereby reducing dependence on any single region.

Modi said India has more than 5.3 million metric tonnes of strategic petroleum reserves, and the country is also working on arrangements for more than 6.5 million metric tonnes of storage. Apart from this, he said, there are reserves held by the domestic oil companies.

"In the last 11 years, our refining capacity has increased significantly, and the government is in constant touch with suppliers from different countries. The effort is to ensure that oil and gas supplies continue from wherever possible," he said. Highlighting the scale of the evacuation effort, the Prime Minister said more than 3.75,000 Indians

have safely returned to India since the war began, including approximately 1,000 Indians from Iran alone, of whom over 700 are young medical students. He said the government is working with a comprehensive short-term, medium-term, and long-term strategy, supported by strong economic fundamentals, sector-specific stakeholder consultations, and a dedicated Inter-Ministerial Group that meets daily to assess and resolve every difficulty in India's import-export chain.

He said another question is the impact of the war on agriculture, but the good part is that the country's farmers have filled the food grain reserves so India is well prepared in terms of food security. "We are also making efforts to ensure that the Kharif sowing takes place properly. For this, the government has made adequate arrangements for fertilisers to deal with any emergency. In the past as well, our government did not let any global crisis impact our farmers," he said. Modi assured that as the summer season has begun in India, electricity demand has increased, but all power plants in the country have adequate coal stock available.

Centre mulls rules to make oil firms fortify LPG buffer

The present practice of stocking LPG for 2-3 days has left India short of supply due to the war

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India is considering making it mandatory for oil marketing companies (OMCs) to hold minimum kitchen gas reserves to double the buffer, as the world's second-largest importer of the fuel faces a supply crunch amid the ongoing West Asia war, according to two people aware of the development.

"Companies may have to look at having an inventory for longer reserves for themselves than the usual two-three days. There is so far no such mandate. Given the scenario, the government may consider coming up with a mandate for minimum LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) storage for a certain period for the OMCs," said one of the two people mentioned above, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

"Any such move would require an order from the petroleum ministry. However, the decision would be taken after factoring in several aspects, including the cost factor as setting up additional storage capacity would involve a higher inventory cost for these companies," the person added.

The present practice of stocking LPG for two to three days has left India short of supply after the US and Israel's war on Iran, and subsequent retaliation from Tehran blocked the Strait of Hormuz. The country imports



Panic booking and long queues were seen outside retail LPG distribution centres after the war in West Asia broke.

AFP

up to 65% of its annual LPG requirement of around 33 million tonnes, with 90% of it sourced from West Asia.

"It is of utmost importance to develop more reserves for LPG, whether strategic or commercial. Currently, India may have about 18.6 days of LPG reserves, which are spread across pipelines, depots and the commercial reserves. It's quite small given the country's requirement," said D.K. Sarraf, former chairman of the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) and former chairman of Oil and Natural Gas Corp. "Given that about 90% of the country's LPG consumption

goes towards domestic cooking, the government cannot afford any discontinuity in LPG supplies."

LPG is used for cooking by nearly 340 million households. Panic booking and long queues were seen outside retail LPG distribution centres after the war in West Asia broke. The government has prioritized domestic supplies over commercial and industrial sales and has directed oil companies to maximize production. It also restricted households in rural areas to one LPG refill 45 days after the previous booking, and in urban areas to 25 days. It also asked households and commer-

cial consumers to move towards piped natural gas (PNG), which is supplied through natural gas supplies, and has also eased the norms for using fuels like kerosene and coal.

Mandates to ensure minimum reserves are in place across several member countries of the International Energy Agency (IEA), but India has so far imposed such mandates on the OMCs, which are commercial entities, said the second person cited, who also did not want to be identified.

Apart from storage by OMCs at depots or other storage tanks, the government is also working on a roadmap to increase the cavern-based underground commercial LPG reserves. Currently, the country has two commercial reserves with a cumulative capacity of 140,000 tonnes, owned and operated by state-run Hindustan Petroleum Corp. Ltd (HPCL) and TotalEnergies.

"Both caverns are operational, and drawdowns have also taken place from the caverns as a regular business operation. More such reserves will be developed. Consultations have already started. The plan right now is to enhance reserves of LPG in the country," said the second person.

Queries emailed to the spokespersons of Union ministry of petroleum and natural gas remained unanswered until press time.

For an extended version of the story, visit livemint.com

65%

The share of annual LPG requirement imported by India

90%

Share of yearly LPG need imported from West Asia

Centre sets up 7 empowered teams to fight effects of war

The groups were formed on the lines of a similar exercise during covid, Modi says

Rituraj Baruah & Vijay C. Roy
NEW DELHI

P rime Minister Narendra Modi has said the Centre has constituted seven empowered groups of officials and experts to assess the impact of the war in West Asia and take remedial measures across sectors.

The groups were formed on the lines of a similar exercise during covid, Modi informed Rajya Sabha on Tuesday. "These groups will work on issues such as supply chain, petrol, diesel, fertilizers, gas, inflation, among others."

The government is constantly monitoring the situation and is working strategically to address the short-, medium-, and long-term effects of the crisis, the prime minister said.

Following strikes by the US and Israel, Iran has effectively blocked the Strait of Hormuz, a chokepoint through which 20% of the world's oil and gas passes, causing a supply squeeze and a spike in prices. For India, which imports about 85% of its total oil and gas requirements, the shortage of crude and gas threatens to impact everything from fertilizers to cooking gas supply.

Citing risks of inflation, rate hikes and exchange rate volatility from a prolonged war, Neeraj Hatekar, visiting faculty at the School of Development, Azim Premji University and former professor of economics, Mumbai



Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the groups will work on issues like supply chain, fuel, fertilizers, gas and inflation.

University, said, "Depreciating rupee also may lead to a higher price for inputs now, right across the board; that hits import-supported industries even more."

The groups would look at strategic issues such as defence and external affairs; economy, finance and supply chain-related issues, including export and import; petroleum, liquefied natural gas (LNG), liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) and energy; fertilizer and other farm inputs; prices and supply of essential commodities; transport and logistics; information, communication, etc. The convener of the committee on

strategic issues is Vikram Misri, secretary, external affairs ministry; while Anuradha Thakur, secretary in department of economic affairs is the convener for the committee on economy, finance and supply chain, per an office memorandum notified by the cabinet secretariat and reviewed by *Mint*.

Neeraj Mittal, secretary, ministry of petroleum and natural gas, has been designated the convener of the committee on petroleum and energy, while Nidhi Khare, secretary in the department of consumer affairs, will be the convener on prices and supply of essential commodities.

The spokesperson for the cabinet secretariat did not immediately respond to queries emailed by *Mint*.

"These groups will identify issues and take immediate necessary steps to address the situation. They will also formulate plans, strategize operations and take all necessary steps for their effective and time-bound implementation, in their respective domains," the office memorandum said.

The terms of reference of the groups include assessing risks to energy supplies and pricing and take measures to mitigate supply disruptions; manage price volatility and ensure adequacy of strategic reserves; identifying alternative import sources to reduce dependency and improve resilience; and monitoring domestic availability and price stability of essential commodities including food items, fertilizers, etc.

Meanwhile, the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board on Monday directed city gas distribution entities to connect residential schools and colleges, hostels, community kitchens, anganwadi kitchens through piped natural gas within five days, wherever infrastructure is available in vicinity, said Sujata Sharma, joint secretary, marketing and oil refinery, petroleum and natural gas ministry, while addressing the media on the fuel stock situation.

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For an extended version of this story, go to livemint.com.



No shortage of domestic gas supply in Haryana: Minister

STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE
Chandigarh, 24 March

Haryana's Minister of State for Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Rajesh Nagar, has assured citizens that there is no shortage of domestic LPG supply in the state and there is no need to panic.

He said that any irregularity related to LPG is being acted upon immediately. The situation regarding LPG cylinders in the state is normal, and citizens should remain assured.

The minister stated that the government has taken strict action against black marketing and illegal use of LPG cylinders. So far, 8 FIRs have been registered, 52



individuals have been found involved, and 825 cylinders have been seized.

He emphasised that the government has a zero-tolerance approach towards black marketing and misuse of LPG cylinders. He also clarified that the supply of petrol, diesel, and domestic LPG in the state is completely normal.

He warned that strict action would be taken against those

spreading rumours, especially in the context of tensions in the Middle East.

A spokesperson of the department shared that out of the total 825 domestic LPG cylinders seized, 131 were from Jhajjar, 109 from Mahendragarh, 86 from Ambala, 21 from Bhiwani, 2 from Faridabad, 71 from Fatehabad, 75 from Gurugram, 39 from Hisar, 17 from Jind, 10 from Kaithal,

44 from Karnal, 21 from Kurukshetra, 16 from Nuh, 23 from Panipat, 21 from Rewari, 98 from Rohtak, 12 from Sirsa, 12 from Sonapat, and 17 from Yamunanagar.

He added that 7 FIRs were registered in Faridabad and 1 in Sonapat, while three vehicles were seized during the crackdown.

The spokesperson further said that over the last 6 days,

oil marketing companies supplied 61,034 domestic LPG cylinders of 14.2 kg, and the current stock at bottling plants stands at 982,212 domestic cylinders.

Regarding commercial LPG, he said that over the last 25 days, 848 commercial cylinders of 19 kg were supplied, and the current stock at bottling plants stands at 179,566 cylinders.

The department confirmed that the supply of petrol, diesel, and domestic LPG across Haryana is running smoothly, and major oil companies — Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) — have sufficient stock.

Activate Windows

Ethanol shift should expand choices

SHREY MADAAN

India's dependence on imported oil means global conflicts often end at the fuel pump. With nearly 85 per cent of crude oil imported, a fiasco in the Strait of Hormuz can trigger price shocks at home. Ethanol blending is one response to such a crisis. Diversifying fuel sources is a sensible policy. But the next phase of India's ethanol strategy must ensure that energy security does not come at the expense of consumer choice.

There is clear logic behind ethanol blending. It is produced domestically, burns cleaner than conventional petrol, and carries a naturally high-octane rating that improves fuel stability. As a renewable alternative, ethanol can diversify India's fuel basket while helping reduce the carbon footprint of the transport sector.

Over the past decade, India's ethanol programme has reduced crude imports, saved more than Rs 1.40 lakh crore in foreign exchange, and created new demand for crops such as sugarcane and maize. It has also encouraged investments in rural bio-refining infrastructure and bolstered the link between energy market and farm output. Integrating fuel policy with agricultural markets has helped address persistent sugar surpluses and moderate price swings, making ethanol a more

pragmatic addition to India's energy resilience strategy.

For an economy exposed to volatile global oil markets, exploring alternative fuel sources makes economic sense. Domestic brewed biofuels can curb reliance on imported crude, provide a buffer against supply shocks, and create revenue streams for rural communities. Ethanol therefore is important for India's broader energy strategy.

But diversification should not mean rigid policy design. Fuel transitions are most effective when consumers and markets are allowed to adjust over time. When policy moves too quickly, the costs often fall on consumers, reducing their confidence in energy reforms.

Brazil's ethanol shows how fuel transitions can succeed without heavy mandates. Most vehicles are flex-fuel, capable of running on ethanol, petrol, or any blend of the two, giving consumers and markets a choice of fuel that works best for them. Market competition, not administrative framework, ultimately determines fuel usage. This freedom allowed fuel demand to respond to price movements and performance realities rather than administrative calculations.

The transition itself was not smooth. Fluctuating crop prices, patchy supply, and early investment uncertainty exposed the limits of

a policy-driven expansion before market conditions began to stabilize. Steady growth in agricultural output and distribution later helped reduce costs and improved the supply. Ethanol gained acceptance not through policy promotion alone, but because it gradually became an economically viable option for both producers and consumers.

Clear pump labelling and proper public communication also played an important role in building consumer trust. This stands in contrast to transitions that rely heavily on mandates without ensuring affordability or adequate infrastructure. When policy targets move faster than market readiness, adoption tends to become uneven and politically sensitive. Brazil's experience shows that durable fuel shifts are rarely the product of blending ratios alone. They take shape when technological flexibility, competitive pricing, and consumer confidence evolve together rather than being forced into alignment through regulation.

With E20 now rolled out nationwide, India's ethanol programme has reached an important milestone. The next step should expand choice rather than mandates. Encouraging flex-fuel vehicle uptake, improving distribution network, and providing clear pump-side labelling would allow ethanol to compete on market terms while keeping the transition smooth for consumers.



India's energy security cannot rest on a single fuel pathway, no matter how promising it appears on paper. Real resilience comes from diversification, an environment where competing technologies balance risk and consumers retain the freedom to make price and performance driven choices.

Ethanol's long-term viability will depend on whether it offers

consumers an affordable and reliable alternative, rather than relying largely on policy-driven support. A cleaner fuel future will therefore depend less on meeting blending milestones and more on whether policy fosters competition, improves efficiency, and preserves consumer choice at its core.

(The writer is Indian Policy Associate, Consumer Choice Center.)



Today's oil shock should revive market reforms

Let GST take fuel products in its fold, set their retail pricing free and privatize all state-run retailers except one. This sector needs a central plan and market forces to work in tandem

In every crisis lies an opportunity, it is said. At the very least, today's hydrocarbon crisis should re-open India's forlorn debate on pushing oil and gas into a closer market embrace as a sector. Ever since we ran into supply snarls that began with yet another war in West Asia, shock-absorbers have been in focus, along with our import dependence. To be sure, this is no ordinary shock. International Energy Agency head Fatih Birol has described it as being worse than the twin oil shocks of the 1970s and the gas crisis after Europe's 2022 outbreak of war combined. For enduring resilience, however, we need structural change. Policy must not just enlarge the scope for domestic exploration and production while we speed up our transition to clean energy, both of which demand a comprehensive central plan, but also explore the advantages of a vibrant domestic market for oil products that can get supply in better sync with demand to deliver superior outcomes. What might such a market-reform agenda look like? *First*, cast GST's net to cover all petroleum products (not just a few); *second*, free retail fuel pricing of state influence (in practice); and *third*, privatize all state-run oil marketing companies (barring one).

All three aim for market orientation. All require political will. Consider the benefits. Full coverage of petroleum products by India's goods and services tax (GST) would enable input tax credits on fuel inputs, easing a cost cascade that burdens businesses. Since local taxes on these items help fill state coffers, some states may resist losing levy control; but they should view it as a small price to pay for future gains in terms of economic efficiency. A patchy GST net keeps the economy's cost base higher than it should be. We all benefit if we fix that

deficiency. Another reform that got stuck midway was a gradual move away from retail price controls in this sector. Given India's stark disparities, some essentials need subsidy-funded price caps, but the policy space that our oil marketing companies (OMCs) were given to price fuels freely has rarely been exercised by the trio owned by the government. As Indian Oil, Hindustan Petroleum and Bharat Petroleum dominate fuel pumps, prices are found to move by central command. Undeniably, consumer price-sensitivity lends such decisions a political angle, but tightly held price lines deprive demand of flexibility. When prices rise in line with crude costs, they reduce at least discretionary usage. Dynamic rates would not just match demand better with supply, but also help modulate imports and adjust our trade balance to that extent. Pressure on the rupee may ease too. On the other hand, if we persist with rigid pricing, either OMCs or the Centre must pick up the tab for supply shocks. Both options are distortive. One distorts the market value of OMCs and the other contorts India's fiscal plan. Moreover, state backing for retailers dishevels the field for private players, which simply get pushed out of play by fuel underpricing.

Lastly, India should dust off its disinvestment policy of 2021 that tags oil and gas as a 'strategic sector'—one in which the Centre's stated intent is to retain only a minimal presence. One OMC could be kept in state hands to insure the sector against the potential clout of a private cartel, but the rest ought to be privatized swiftly—with competitive intensity as the primary aim. If real rivalry takes hold, efficiency gains could reward consumers and stimulate private investment. For too long has this sector remained a legacy of India's pre-reform era. It needs to change.

Oil industry pushing for ethanol to cut dependency on LPG imports

OUR CORRESPONDENT

NEW DELHI: The petroleum industry on Tuesday urged industry players to develop ethanol as a clean cooking fuel for Indian households as part of efforts to reduce dependence on imported LPG and expand biofuel use.

R S Ravi, Director (Downstream) at the Federation of Indian Petroleum Industry (FIPI), made the appeal while addressing the All India Distillers' Association (AIDA) conference, highlighting ongoing research into ethanol-based cooking stoves. "A lot of work is happening" at agencies like the LPG Equipment Research Centre (LERC) and various IITs to develop ethanol-compatible and efficient cooking stoves, with prototypes likely to be ready soon, Ravi said.

He sought active support from the All India Distillers Association (IDA) and its members on two key fronts: connecting with manufacturers to scale up production of these stoves, and more importantly, developing a viable supply chain to deliver ethanol directly to households. "This is a different ballgame. As of now, the way you are supporting the oil industry is by supplying bulk... It needs to change," Ravi stated.

"How this supply chain is going to be developed, what form it needs to be delivered, the form factor is very critical."

He added, "Can AIDA come forward and give us ideas in terms of how we make this ethanol as a cooking fuel possible



Research institutions are already working on ethanol stoves as a cleaner alternative that could complement or partially replace LPG, in rural and semi-urban areas

in India?"

Ravi's remarks came against the backdrop of India's successful rollout of 20 per cent ethanol blending (E20) in petrol. He credited the distillery industry for enabling the programme and a recent government notification mandating the sale of E20 petrol with a minimum Research Octane Number (RON) of 95 from April 1, 2026.

The shift to higher-octane E20 petrol is expected to improve vehicle power output and efficiency while addressing past concerns over lower-octane blends. Ravi also made two other requests to the ethanol industry — accelerating

production of isobutanol (IBA) for blending in diesel and developing technological readiness for ethanol-to-Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) routes -- but laid special emphasis on the cooking fuel initiative.

Research institutions are already working on ethanol stoves as a cleaner alternative that could complement or partially replace LPG, particularly in rural and semi-urban areas.

The FIPI official noted that transitioning ethanol from bulk industrial supply to household-level distribution would require innovative logistics, suitable packaging or dispensing formats, and last-mile delivery mechanisms.

India has been aggressively pushing ethanol blending in petrol to cut crude oil imports, save foreign exchange, reduce emissions, and support farmers.

Extending the biofuel ecosystem to cooking fuel could further diversify ethanol demand and enhance energy security. Ravi called for collaborative efforts between the oil industry and distillers to make ethanol-based cooking a practical reality in the country.

An opportunity in a crisis

Growing oil import dependence is an outcome of a policy flaw that needs immediate correction

ILLUSTRATION: BINAY SINHA



How serious is the oil crisis for the Indian economy? What lessons must India draw from the current situation, where shortages and price increases have already begun to hurt economic activity?

First, it is important to understand that the price of Brent crude oil is not a proper indicator for gauging the impact of the oil crisis on Indian petroleum refining companies and the government's finances. It is the Indian Basket crude oil price that needs to be tracked to assess the impact of an oil crisis on Indian refiners and the government's external account. As of March 19, the Indian Basket crude oil price was about \$150 a barrel. Brent crude oil price on the same day hovered between \$105 and \$108 per barrel.

The Indian Basket crude oil price is derived from a mix of crude oil varieties comprising sour grade (an average of Oman and Dubai oil) and sweet grade (Brent) oil, processed by Indian refineries in a 79 to 21 ratio. This mix causes a sharp variation between the prices of the Indian Basket and Brent crude. This difference cannot be ignored, as it underlines the nature of the crisis the Indian economy faces.

Indian refiners, therefore, have yet to face the full impact of higher crude oil prices on their operations. During the current financial year, ending in a few days, the average Indian Basket crude oil price was about \$71 per barrel. Indeed, this is slightly lower than the average Indian Basket crude oil price of \$78.56 a barrel in 2024-25. Therefore, the current financial year may not fully capture the adverse impact of the West Asian war on Indian oil companies and the Indian economy regarding oil prices. However, the impact will be felt during the coming financial year, as the crisis shows no signs of an early resolution.

As the accompanying chart shows, the Narendra Modi government has been relatively lucky with oil prices during its tenure since 2014. In the last three years of the Manmohan Singh government, average annual Indian Basket crude oil prices hovered between \$105 and \$112 per barrel. In the 12 years of the Modi government, annual average crude oil price has stayed between \$46 and \$93 a barrel, with seven of those years recording a decline in the annual average price over the previous year.

Indeed, the annual average price of the crude oil used by Indian refiners fell by over 11 per cent and 5 per cent in the last two years.

But a disturbing question arises from these 12 years of relatively modest crude oil prices. Did the Modi government use this period as an opportunity to fix the

inherent problems of India's rising dependence on imports in the petroleum sector? The country has done reasonably well in ramping up its renewable energy production capacity. But should the government have paid similar attention to reducing import dependence and increasing domestic processing of petroleum products?

There have been many policy pronouncements and new schemes in the last few years to reduce India's oil import dependence. But the reality is quite sobering. Since 2014, India's indigenous crude oil output has been falling every year. Domestic crude oil output fell from 35.9 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 26.49 million tonnes in 2024-25. In the current year, production from April 2025 to February 2026 was 23.81 million tonnes, signifying that the declining trend will continue this year as well. Note that the Indian economy was growing rapidly during these years and its demand for crude oil was also on the rise. Crude oil imports thus rose from 189 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 243 million tonnes in 2024-25. Dependence on imported crude oil thus went up from 84 per cent in 2014-15 to 90 per cent last year.



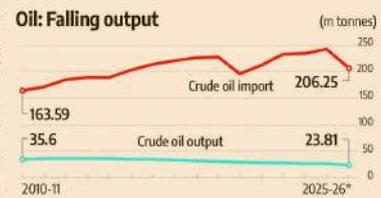
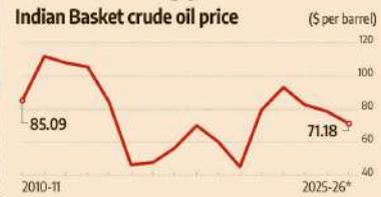
RAISINA HILL
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Clearly, the government's policy initiatives, such as the switch from the cost-recovery based New Exploration Licensing Policy (Nelp) to the supposedly investor-friendly Hydrocarbon Exploration and Licensing Policy in 2016, have so far failed to yield the desired results. India's domestic crude oil output has continued to fall, and no significant benefits have accrued from the new exploration policy.

What about petroleum products? Indian oil refining and marketing companies have, of course, increased their domestic production, but this has not been enough to make any dent in their imports. From 2014-15 to 2024-25, India's imports of petroleum products more than doubled from 21.3 million tonnes to 51 million tonnes. Domestic output of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) or cooking gas has grown at a snail's pace, from 9.84 million tonnes in 2014-15 to 12.79 million tonnes in 2024-25. But LPG demand has seen robust growth, from 18 million tonnes to over 33 million tonnes in this period. Thus, dependence on LPG imports has gone up from 46 per cent to 62 per cent. Clearly, the government did not take necessary steps to increase domestic LPG manufacturing, even after launching well-intentioned schemes to promote LPG use among rural homes, which naturally boosted its demand.

One possible explanation for the absence of effective policies to promote *atmanirbharata* or self-reliance in

Uneven energy flow



*For 2025-26, data as of March 23, 2026 for crude oil price; data for crude oil and LPG output till February 2026, and data for crude oil and LPG import till January 2026. Source: Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas

crude oil and petroleum products is perhaps the modest rise in their international prices. Thanks to relatively benign international crude oil prices, India's import bill for crude oil rose by an average annual rate of 2.16 per cent in the 10-year period from 2014-15 to 2024-25. India's cost of petroleum product imports rose at a slightly higher rate—an average annual increase of 9.5 per cent. But even that increase did not push either the oil companies or the government to take adequate steps to boost domestic output in the petroleum sector.

The oil crisis that India is currently facing will be a lost opportunity if the government does not come out with a detailed action plan on how it wishes to reform its oil exploration policies to make a material difference to India's domestic output of crude oil. A more worrying outcome would be if the government fails to get the entire petroleum refining and marketing companies to take up the manufacturing of petroleum products, including LPG, in a big way. As for the government, it should examine its policies on the pricing of these products so that there is adequate incentive for companies to produce more without either a squeeze on their margins or an increase in their reliance on government subsidies.



Distributors told to make available piped gas to residential schools and colleges in 5 days

Nistula Hebbar
Saptarno Ghosh

NEW DELHI

Spurring the government's objective of accelerating the transition from liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) to piped natural gas (PNG), the Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB), in an order dated

March 23, asked city gas distributors (CGD) to make "all out efforts" to provision piped gas to residential schools and colleges, hostels, community kitchens and anganwadi kitchens, etc, within five days, subject to infrastructure feasibility.

Additionally, the regulator has sought a com-

pliance report on connectivity after five days, and thereafter, the same on a daily basis.

New connections

The Hindu learnt from senior officials that over the next two weeks, India holds the potential to further add 15 lakh new PNG connections.

An official said that instituting last-mile connectivity amidst unfavourable city infrastructure in certain areas was among the major hurdles in expanding the piped gas network.

"[Amid the government's push], the obstacles are being expeditiously addressed," the official stated.



Mahanagar Gas woos LPG users for PNG shift

The Hindu Bureau
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Mahanagar Gas Ltd. (MGL), a City Gas Distribution (CGD) company, stepped up efforts to shift customers using LPG to Piped Natural Gas (PNG), offering uninterrupted

supply and sops. It is also offering Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) for transport across its geographical areas (GAs) in Maharashtra and Karnataka. In line with the Natural Gas (Supply Regulation) Order 2026, domestic PNG and CNG

have been recognised as the highest priority sector.

MGL has taken steps for consistent supply to ensure clients get reliable and safe fuel for daily use. Alongside, MGL unveiled customer-focused initiatives to hasten PNG adop-

tion in the GAs, including offering free gas worth ₹500 to all new registrations and ₹1,000 adjustment in gas bills from new buildings where penetration is over 60%.

For commercial customers, MGL is waiving registration charges.



Gas refineries operating at high capacity

The Government on Tuesday said that all the gas refineries in the country are operating at high capacity and 18,700 tonnes of commercial LPG have been lifted (till Monday). In an inter-ministerial briefing, Sujata Sharma, Petroleum and Natural Gas Ministry's Joint Secretary, Marketing and Oil Refinery, said that all the refineries are operating at high capacity and the country has sufficient stocks of petrol and diesel.



Govt says fuel stocks adequate, warns against panic buying

The Government on Tuesday said India has adequate stocks of petrol, diesel and LPG, and that all refineries are operating at high capacity despite disruptions linked to the Strait of Hormuz situation.

In an update on fuel availability, Sujata Sharma, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, said petrol pumps across the country remain fully functional, though panic buying triggered by rumours led to unusually high sales in some areas. She urged citizens not to engage in hoarding and to

rely on official information.

Sharma said domestic LPG production has been stepped up, with no reported dry-outs at distributorships, even as supply remains under pressure due to the prevailing geopolitical situation. Deliveries continue as normal, she added. Natural gas supplies to priority segments such as domestic PNG and CNG transport remain fully protected, while supplies to industrial and commercial users are being maintained at about 80% of average consumption. **-PTI**

TWO MORE INDIAN LPG CARRIERS CROSS HORMUZ

Gaurav Vivek Bhatnagar

NEW DELHI

Two more India-flagged LPG carriers have crossed the Strait of Hormuz, offering reassurance amid mounting energy anxieties triggered by the West Asia crisis.

The Centre on Tuesday said Jagat Vasant and Pine Gas safely transited the strategic waterway late Monday and are expected to reach Indian ports on March 26 and 27, carrying a combined 92,700 metric tonnes of LPG.

At a media briefing, Special Secretary in the Ministry of Shipping Rajesh Kumar Sinha confirmed that all Indian vessels and sailors in the Gulf region remain safe. He said Pine Gas, carrying 45,000 metric tonnes of LPG, is set to dock at New Mangalore Port on March 27 morning, while Jagat Vasant, loaded with around 47,600 metric tonnes, is headed for Kandla, due on March 26.

Sinha added that 20 Indian-flagged ships, with 540 Indian sailors on board, are cur-



rently operating in the Persian Gulf.

Seeking to calm fears of shortages, Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Petroleum Sujata Sharma said that while LPG supplies have been impacted by geopolitical tensions, adequate cargoes have been lined up. "No dry-out has been reported at LPG distributorships," she said, assuring that domestic consumers continue to receive cylinders without disruption.

She further emphasised that piped natural gas (PNG) supply remains fully stable for households, while petrol and diesel stocks are sufficient across the country. Refineries, she noted, have also ramped

up domestic LPG production.

Amid sporadic rumours of shortages, Sharma urged consumers not to panic, reiterating that fuel supplies remain adequate.

In a push to reduce dependence on LPG, the government is expediting PNG connections to residential schools, colleges, hostels, community kitchens and Anganwadi kitchens within five days, wherever pipeline infrastructure exists.

Additionally, the Centre has increased commercial LPG allocation by 50 per cent and extended Ujjwala benefits to nearly 11 lakh migrant workers, reinforcing its supply buffer strategy.

Strategic oil reserves for just six days; funds underspent

SAURAV ANAND
New Delhi, March 24

AS THE WEST Asia conflict disrupts critical energy flows, India's strategic petroleum reserves (SPR) have just six days of crude stockpiles.

Budget data show that against an allocation of ₹5,876 crore in the current financial year to fill and expand the SPR, the government is likely to spend only ₹1,039 crore, while provisioning for the next fiscal



has been cut to just ₹200 crore. The underspending comes at a time when the Strait of Hormuz — through which nearly 40% of India's crude

imports are routed — has been severely impacted by geopolitical tensions.

In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha, Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas Suresh Gopi said, "Currently, ISPR (Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves Limited) has around 3.372 million tonne of crude stock available which is around 64% of the total storage capacity."

Continued on Page 10

Strategic crude reserves ...

THE COUNTRY'S THREE underground reserves at Visakhapatnam, Mangaluru and Padur can together hold 5.33 million tonne (MT), translating to about nine-and-a-half days of crude cover at full capacity. With inventories currently at around two-thirds, the effective buffer is significantly lower.

Gopi noted that reserves are not static. "The actual reserves is a dynamic number depending on the stocks and actual consumption, both of which are not static," he said.

For a country that imports over 88% of its crude requirements, the gap is significant. Even though India's total oil and fuel stockpiles — including commercial inventories — stand at about 74 days, this remains below the 90-day benchmark recommended by the International Energy Agency (IEA).

Audit findings have already flagged structural weaknesses in the system.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) observed that storage capacity of 5.33 MT provides only 7.88 days of import cover (March 2024) against the 19 days of import cover as envisaged in Phase-I of the Indian Strategic Petroleum Reserves. The audit noted that "significant delays and consequent cost overruns were witnessed in construction and creation of strategic oil reserves" and that "utilisation of caverns has also been sub-optimal."



It recommended that authorities "ensure that the caverns are utilised fully to provide the cover against the oil shortage event."

The current situation marks a stark contrast to 2020, when India moved aggressively to secure energy security at low cost. Taking advantage of a collapse in global oil prices during the Covid-19 pandemic, the government purchased 16.71 million barrels of crude in April-May 2020 at an average price of \$19 per barrel, compared with about \$60 per barrel earlier that year. The move resulted in savings of \$685.11 million (₹5,069 crore) and allowed India to fully fill its strategic reserves.

Since then, however, no comparable replenishment has been undertaken, leaving reserves partially filled despite rising geopolitical risks.

Expansion plans have also lagged.

In July 2021, the government approved two additional SPR facilities — 4 MT at Chandikhol in Odisha and 2.5 MT at Padur in Karnataka — expected to add around 12 days of crude cover.

However, progress has been slow, with the Padur expansion now slated for completion only by August 2030. The Chandikhol project remains stalled, with land acquisition yet to be resolved. Officials said efforts are underway to accelerate progress. "The government is actively expediting both filling and expansion of strategic reserves, but these are complex projects involving land, logistics and procurement cycles," said a senior official, requesting anonymity.

Analysts say the current situation underscores the need for a more proactive approach.

"At a time when geopolitical risks are rising, maintaining reserves at sub-optimal levels increases vulnerability," said an energy analyst. "Strategic reserves are meant for supply security, not timing the market. The lesson from 2020 was clear — act when opportunities arise."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 23 informed the Lok Sabha that India held over 5.3 million tonne of SPR and was working to expand it further, alongside diversifying crude sourcing across 41 countries. However, the ongoing crisis has brought the spotlight back on preparedness.

With supply routes under stress and import dependence high, India's partially filled reserves and delayed expansion plans risk weakening its energy security buffer — even as demand continues to grow.

Oil price remains high as attacks continue

SHUBHANGI MATHUR

New Delhi, 24 March

Crude oil prices remained elevated around \$100 per barrel on Tuesday as US-Israel continued attacks on Iran despite US President Donald Trump announcing a five-day pause on strikes. Benchmark Brent crude prices rose 3 per cent to \$98.57 per barrel at 5pm IST, compared to \$95.96 per barrel on March 23.

Meanwhile, a senior Indian government official denied paying Iran for passage of its tankers through the Strait of Hormuz, a critical maritime chokepoint through which a fifth of global crude oil transits. "Strait of Hormuz is international waters. There is no levy or fee for passing it. Any such report is baseless," said Rajesh Kumar Sinha, special secretary at the shipping ministry. The comment comes amid reports claiming India paying \$2 million to Iran for safe passage of its vessels.

Two Indian-flagged liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) tankers, Pine Gas and Jag Vasant, passed Strait of Hormuz on March 23 and are now headed to Indian shores. Pine Gas, carrying about 45,000 MT LPG, is bound for New



20 Indian-flagged vessels with 540 Indian crew members are stuck in the Persian Gulf region, the government said

Mangalore port with arrival estimated of March 27, while Jag Vasant, carrying about 47,612.59 MT LPG, is bound for Kandla port with estimated arrival of March 26.

Following their safe transit, 20 Indian-flagged vessels with around 540 Indian seafarers remain in the western Persian Gulf region, the government said. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said the government is trying to procure gas and crude oil from all available sources as the country is hit with energy supply shortage amid the war in West Asia.

In a statement in the Rajya

Sabha, PM Modi said the war in West Asia is a cause of concern, and India wants peace in the region through dialogue and diplomacy.

Amid LPG shortage, the Indian government is urging users to switch to Piped natural gas (PNG) by offering incentives such as free gas worth ₹500. The government said over 7,500 domestic and commercial PNG connections were issued or activated on March 23 in 110 geographical areas (GAs).

India's LPG supplies continue to remain concerning but the country has secured some gas cargo to ease the situation, said Sujata Sharma, joint secretary at Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG).



**WEST ASIA
CONFLICT**

Fuel prices under pressure as oil hovers around \$100

● OMCs absorbing annualised losses of ₹3 lakh crore

SAURAV ANAND
New Delhi, March 24

WITH BRENT CRUDE hovering around \$100–102 per barrel, India's fuel pricing system is under acute strain, with oil marketing companies (OMCs) absorbing annualised losses of nearly ₹3 lakh crore, while retail fuel prices would need to rise by as much as 43% for diesel and 19% for petrol to restore normal margins.

The sharp divergence between global crude costs and largely frozen domestic pump prices has pushed the first leg of the oil shock squarely onto OMC balance sheets, exposing the growing stress within India's fuel pricing framework.

"Our estimates suggest that at current Brent prices (@\$100/bbl), retail pump prices of diesel and petrol need to rise by 42% and 18%, respectively, for OMCs to earn normalised gross marketing margins," an Emkay Research report said.

At Brent crude around \$100 per barrel, the report estimates that annualised under-recoveries on auto fuels are as high as ₹4.4 lakh crore, easing to about

CRUDE SHOCK

■ Sharp divergence between global crude costs, frozen domestic pump prices has pushed the first leg of oil shock squarely onto OMC balance sheets

■ Report estimates that annualised under-recoveries on auto fuels are as high as ₹4.4 L cr, easing to about ₹3 L cr after accounting for super-normal refining margins



■ The stress is amplified by the structure of fuel pricing with 35–39% of retail fuel prices comprise central excise, cess & state VAT

■ If the government chooses to fully absorb OMC losses, the fiscal cost could be substantial

₹3 lakh crore after accounting for super-normal refining margins. The burden extends beyond transport fuels. Losses on cooking fuels are also rising, with annualised LPG under-recoveries estimated at nearly ₹70,000 crore even after accounting for subsidies.

The stress is amplified by the structure of fuel pricing. Around 35–39% of retail petrol and diesel prices comprise central excise, cess and state VAT, with the Centre's share alone close to 20%, limiting flexibility to absorb shocks without fiscal consequences.

With pump prices largely unchanged, OMCs are effectively cushioning consumers. The report notes that marketing margins have compressed to their lowest levels since mid-2022, reflecting the extent of cost absorption.

The sensitivity to crude

prices is significant. For every \$1 per barrel increase in Brent, retail prices would need to rise by about ₹0.52 per litre for diesel and ₹0.55 per litre for petrol, indicating how quickly losses escalate when prices are not passed through.

"The eventual growth, inflation, and fiscal hit will largely depend on how the crude price shock—if sustained—is distributed between OMCs, the government, and end consumers," the report said, highlighting the core policy dilemma.

If the government chooses to fully absorb OMC losses, the fiscal cost could be substantial. The report estimates that the Centre may need to cut excise duties by around ₹19.5 per litre on a blended basis and absorb LPG subsidies of about ₹1 lakh crore, resulting in a fiscal impact of nearly 1–1.1% of GDP.

Even a partial burden-shar-

ing approach would not eliminate fiscal pressure. The report notes that OMC losses indirectly hit government finances by reducing dividend and corporate tax flows, effectively shifting part of the burden to the exchequer.

It suggests that a balanced pass-through among OMCs, government and consumers is the most feasible scenario in a prolonged oil shock. Under such a model, OMC losses could fall to about ₹1.3 lakh crore, inflation impact may remain contained at 30–35 basis points, and fiscal slippage could still be around 0.4–0.5% of GDP.

India's vulnerability is heightened by its heavy import dependence, with nearly 90% of crude requirements sourced externally, making the economy highly sensitive to global oil volatility and geopolitical disruptions.

PM calls for de-escalation, reopening of Hormuz

SAURAV ANAND
New Delhi, March 24

INDIA ON TUESDAY pushed for de-escalation of the West Asia conflict and restoration of critical energy routes, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi informed the Rajya Sabha that the ongoing war has created a "severe global energy crisis" impacting supplies of petrol, diesel, gas and fertilisers, while also disrupting key trade routes.

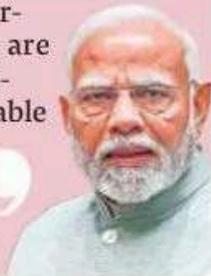
Backing India's diplomatic outreach, Modi said, "Our aim is de-escalation; opening of Strait of Hormuz," underscoring efforts to ensure the resumption of movement through one of the world's most vital energy corridors.

Addressing the house, the PM said the conflict, now continuing for over three weeks, has begun affecting India directly. "Our trade routes are being affected. Routine supplies of essential goods such as petrol, diesel, gas, and fertilisers are disrupted," he said.

Highlighting the gravity of the situation, Modi pointed out that a large number of Indian crewmembers remain stranded on ships in the Strait of Hormuz, while nearly one crore Indians living and working in Gulf countries face uncertainty. "Ensuring their safety and livelihood is a

NARENDRA MODI,
PRIME MINISTER

We are in constant touch with all Gulf nations. Attacks on commercial ships and obstruction in international waterways are unacceptable



major concern for India," he said.

Modi emphasised that India has been actively engaging with global stakeholders to stabilise the situation. "We are in continuous contact with all Gulf countries. We are also in touch with Iran, Israel, and the United States," he said, adding that discussions have focused on de-escalation and reopening of the Strait of Hormuz.

The PM reiterated India's position against disruptions to global shipping. "Attacks on commercial ships and obstruction in international waterways

like the Strait of Hormuz are unacceptable," he said, adding that India has opposed attacks on civilians and critical infra.

Despite the challenges, the government has been working to secure energy supplies. "Our effort is to ensure that oil and gas supplies reach India from wherever possible," Modi said, noting that "in recent days, ships carrying crude oil and LPG from many countries have arrived in India."

At the same time, he acknowledged the risks of prolonged disruption. "If the global circumstances created by this war persist for a long time, serious consequences are inevitable," he said, adding that India is accelerating resilience-building measures.

On preparedness, the prime minister said India has significantly strengthened its energy security in recent years. "Earlier, India imported crude oil, LNG, and LPG from 27 countries. Today, India imports energy from 41 countries," he said.

Modi also highlighted the creation of strategic petroleum reserves exceeding 53 lakh metric tonne, with plans underway to expand capacity beyond 65 lakh metric tonne. "India has adequate crude oil storage and arrangements for continuous supply," he told the House.

No toll on Hormuz transit; India steps up LPG loading

SAURAV ANAND
New Delhi, March 24

INDIA IS STEPPING up efforts to secure LPG supplies amid disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz, even as the government on Tuesday dismissed claims of any levy on vessels crossing the strategic waterways as “baseless” under international law.

Clarifying reports around transit charges, Rajesh Kumar Sinha, special secretary in the ministry of shipping, said, “As you would know, this is an international Strait, and as per international convention, it has the right of freedom of navigation and no levy fee can be imposed on it as per international regulation.”

He added, “Any fact presented by anyone, any argument made by anyone has no basis. It is baseless. This is a baseless argument.”

The clarification comes as India intensifies measures to manage fuel supply disruptions caused by the West Asia conflict, with multiple Indian-flagged vessels stranded in the Persian Gulf.

Sinha said the government is actively loading LPG onto vessels to augment supplies. “There are five LPG tankers which are loaded... one will get loaded in another three to four days. So finally we will have six LPG-

RAMPING UP MEASURES

- Hormuz toll claim ‘baseless’, says govt

- Five LPG tankers loaded; sixth to join in 3-4 days



- Two LPG tankers reached India; two inbound

- Fuel stocks stable while LPG supply is under pressure

- Govt loading LPG onto vessels to augment supplies

loaded carriers,” he said.

According to the shipping ministry, several Indian vessels, including LPG carriers, crude oil ships and an LNG tanker, were impacted by disruptions in the Strait of Hormuz. While two LPG vessels — Shivalik and Nanda — have already reached India, Pine Gas and Jag Vasant are expected to arrive shortly.

The ministry noted that two LPG vessels recently crossed the Strait of Hormuz carrying cargo towards Indian ports, with Pine Gas bound for New Mangalore and Jag Vasant for Kandla.

On the domestic front, the ministry of petroleum and natural gas said refineries are operating at high capacity and “adequate stocks of petrol and diesel

are being maintained”, while LPG supply continues to be monitored. While priority sectors continue to receive protected gas supplies, the government has taken steps to manage demand, including pushing PNG adoption and increasing domestic LPG production.

It also confirmed that “no dry-outs have been reported at distributorships” despite the ongoing disruption.

To ensure availability, additional allocations of commercial LPG have been made to states, and enforcement action has been intensified to curb hoarding and black marketing, with thousands of inspections and raids conducted across the country.

Energy security: The best economic defence



ATHAR SHAHAB

Managing Director, Zuari Industries Limited

Reducing demand, substituting imported fuels, expanding renewables beyond solar, and strengthening strategic buffers critical for India

EVERY MINUTE THE clock ticks, roughly ₹2 crore leaves India's borders. By the end of a typical business day, the country has spent nearly ₹5,000 crore. This is not investment in infrastructure or development. It is simply the price India pays to keep its economy running. It is the nation's petroleum import bill, and it represents one of the most critical structural vulnerabilities in the Indian economy.

India consumes about 5.6 million barrels of crude oil every day, importing 85-90% of its requirement. At illustrative prices of around \$109 per barrel and an exchange rate near ₹92 to the dollar, the annual crude import bill approaches \$200 billion, or roughly ₹18 lakh crore. This alone makes imported energy one of the most consequential macroeconomic variables in the country. The dependence extends beyond transport fuels. India imports over 60% of its liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) consumption as well, linking even household and commercial kitchens to global markets.

The risk lies not just in the scale of imports but in their sensitivity to external factors. A ₹1 depreciation in the rupee increases the annual crude bill by roughly ₹20,000 crore. A \$1 rise in crude prices adds nearly ₹18,000 crore to the outflow. Geopolitical tensions, especially around chokepoints like the Strait of Hormuz, can trigger immediate economic effects. Higher crude prices feed into freight costs, industrial inputs, and eventually consumer inflation. Energy imports are therefore the first link in a broader macroeconomic chain reaction.

This ₹18 lakh-crore outflow is effectively a transfer of national income abroad. It is capital that could other-

wise fund domestic infrastructure, technology, or employment. Addressing this vulnerability requires a coordinated strategy across the energy system. Four pillars are critical: reducing demand, substituting imported fuels, expanding renewables beyond solar, and strengthening strategic buffers.

The most direct way to reduce dependence is to use less oil. In transport, electrification of two-wheelers, three-wheelers, and urban bus fleets offers the fastest gains. India has already begun this transition, with electric two-wheelers gaining share and cities adopting electric buses.

However, mobility is only part of the picture. A major and often overlooked source of fuel demand is commercial cooking. Hotels, restaurants, cloud kitchens, and millions of street vendors rely heavily on commercial LPG. Transitioning even partially to electric cooking for baseload operations can significantly reduce this dependence. Hybrid systems that combine electric cooking for steady heat with gas for high-flame applications can meaningfully cut LPG consumption without disrupting practices. At India's scale, such incremental changes can yield substantial aggregate impact.

Reducing demand must be complemented by replacing imports with domestic fuels. India's ethanol blending programme has shown how coordinated policy and industry action can reduce crude dependence. Blending levels have risen significantly over the past decade, creating additional income streams for

farmers and distilleries. The next step is to enable higher blends where feasible and support the adoption of flex-fuel vehicles.

Beyond ethanol, India has a large, untapped bioenergy opportunity. The country generates about 62 million tonnes of municipal solid waste annually, much of which ends up in landfills. Properly managed, this waste can be converted to energy. Under the Sustainable Alternative Towards Affordable Transition initiative, compressed biogas production from agricultural residue and urban waste is being promoted. Scaling this ecosystem

can address multiple challenges simultaneously—waste management, sanitation, and energy imports.

Global examples underline the potential. Sweden diverts nearly all of its waste away from landfills and uses waste-to-energy systems to heat over a million homes. Singapore's integrated facilities combine waste processing with water treatment and power generation. Reframing municipal waste as an energy resource rather than a disposal problem can unlock a significant domestic fuel source for India.

India's renewable transition is often viewed through the lens of solar power, which will remain central. However, a resilient system requires diversification. Solar generation is concentrated in daylight hours. Meeting round-the-clock demand requires complementary sources.

Onshore wind already plays a role, but offshore wind represents the next frontier. India's coastline, particularly along

Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, holds an estimated 70 gigawatts of offshore wind potential. Offshore wind offers more stable and consistent generation patterns, helping balance the grid. It can also be located near coastal industrial clusters, reducing transmission constraints.

A combination of solar, onshore and offshore wind, bioenergy, and storage will be essential to create a stable renewable backbone capable of displacing imported fuels at scale.

Even with aggressive transition efforts, India will remain dependent on imported oil for years. Building resilience against supply disruptions is therefore essential. India's strategic petroleum reserves currently provide a modest nine to 10 days of consumption cover. Expansion plans for facilities such as Chandikhol and Padur are steps in the right direction. In an uncertain geopolitical environment, such buffers are instruments of economic security.

India stands at the centre of global economic growth, but heavy reliance on imported hydrocarbons leaves it exposed to external shocks. The ₹18 lakh crore spent annually on petroleum imports is not just an energy bill. It is a structural drain on national wealth.

Reducing this dependence requires action across the entire system. Every electric vehicle, every unit of waste converted to fuel, every offshore wind installation, and every litre of domestically produced ethanol strengthens economic resilience.

In a volatile world, energy policy can no longer be viewed only through environmental or technological lenses. It must be seen as a core pillar of economic and national security.

The ₹18 lakh crore spent annually on petroleum imports is a structural drain on national wealth



Oil rises as supply disruption persists

REUTERS

London, March 24

OIL RALLIED ON Tuesday as the world's biggest supply disruption persisted and Iran denied it held talks with the United States to end the war in the Gulf, contradicting US President Donald Trump, who said a deal could be reached soon.

Crude futures had dropped more than 10% on Monday, after Trump ordered a five-day delay of attacks on Iran's power plants, saying the US had talks with unnamed Iranian officials that produced "major

Japan to tap stockpiles

JAPAN WILL TAP joint oil stockpiles held by producing nations in the country by the end of March, Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi said on Tuesday, as Tokyo ramps up emergency measures to offset supply losses from West Asia.

Japan's contribution to a record oil stockpile release coordinated by the International Energy Agency will total nearly 80 million barrels, consisting mainly of crude oil, according to the IEA.

REUTERS

points of agreement." Brent futures rose \$4.19, or 4.19%, to \$104.13 a barrel at 12.06 pm ET (16.06 GMT) on Tues-

day. US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) climbed \$4.24, or 4.81%, to \$92.37.

The war has all but halted

shipments of about one-fifth of the world's oil and liquefied natural gas through the Strait of Hormuz, causing what the International Energy Agency has called the biggest-ever oil supply disruption.

"The reality on the ground is unchanged," said Nikos Tzabouras, analyst at Jefferies-owned Tradu.com. "The Strait of Hormuz remains effectively closed and supply disruptions linger, tightening the market."

If the strait remains effectively shut until the end of April, Brent could still reach \$150 a barrel, Macquarie said.



No LPG supply to PNG connection holders

DEEPENDER DESWAL

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

HISAR, MARCH 24

The Haryana Government has taken measures to transit domestic and commercial gas consumers from LPG to piped natural gas (PNG) in various towns of the state.

A high-level meeting chaired by the Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister and held in Chandigarh on March 23 reviewed the status of LPG and PNG connectivity and the steps required for the transition of domestic consumers from LPG to PNG in areas where PNG infrastructure was already available.

According to an official communication from the Directorate of Food, Civil Supplies and Consumer Affairs, directions were issued by the government to the department and officials concerned, mandating that no person having a PNG connection as well as a domestic LPG connection shall retain a domestic LPG connection, or take refills of LPG cylinders from any government oil company.

It directed all such consumers to immediately surrender their domestic LPG connections. The communi-

cation also makes it clear that individuals with PNG access will not be allowed to obtain new LPG connections or refills.

Taking a stern stand, the letter stated that if consumers did not accept PNG, "domestic LPG connection will be suspended and consumers will start taking PNG supply". It also directed the gas distribution companies to stop the supply of domestic LPG to such consumers immediately.

The government has directed the DCs to coordinate with oil marketing companies and city gas distribution firms to facilitate the expansion of PNG infrastructure.

They have been asked to resolve issues related to Right of Way (RoW) and other permissions. The Department of Urban Local Bodies has been requested to grant deemed permissions in cases of delays, particularly for road-cutting approvals for laying the pipelines.

The move is part of the state's push to promote PNG usage and streamline energy distribution, while reducing dependence on LPG in areas where piped gas infrastructure is in place.

Govt cracks down on black marketing of LPG cylinders

One detained, 32 cylinders seized from vehicle at parking lot

OUR CORRESPONDENT

GURUGRAM, MARCH 24

Acting tough against black marketing of domestic LPG cylinders, a team of the Food and Civil Supplies Department conducted a raid at a parking lot in Sector 12 and seized 32 cylinders from a vehicle.

It also detained a person red-handed while transferring LPG from large cylinders into smaller ones in the parking lot.

Acting on a tip-off about the black marketing of domestic LPG cylinders, a joint team comprising AFSSO Sunil Kumar, Inspector Jitendra Kumar, District Food and Supplies Department and officials from the Sector 14 police station, conducted a raid at a parking lot opposite Vivekanand Arogya Kendra, Sector 12, today.

The team found gas being transferred into smaller



The gas cylinders that were by seized by Food and Civil Supplies Dept.

cylinders from larger ones in the parking lot and confiscated all cylinders. The team apprehended

Niranjan, a resident of Laxman Vihar, Phase 2, and handed him over to the police. Based on a complaint from Sunil Kumar, Assistant Secretary of the Food and Supplies Department, a case was registered against Niranjan at the Sector 14 police station.

"Black marketing of domestic gas cylinders will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Such illegal activities not only violate the law but also infringe on the rights of ordinary citizens. Constant monitoring is being done to ensure that black marketing does not flourish at any level," said Ashok Rawat, Controller, District Food and Supplies Department.

Investigating officer Sub-Inspector Dharmbir Singh said: "A case has been registered and the accused have been detained. We are questioning the accused and further probe is underway".

Centre notifies new policy to boost PNG, cut LPG reliance

ADITH TANDON

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

NEW DELHI, MARCH 24

Hours after Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged “serious side effects” of the West Asia war and announced seven empowered groups to mount a national response, the Centre today notified a new policy to boost piped natural gas (PNG) supplies across India.

The policy simplifies approvals, enforces accountability and encourages PNG adoption to cut dependence on LPG and secure energy distribution ecosystem as the West Asia war looms.

Notified by the Ministry of Petroleum tonight, The Natural Gas and Petroleum Products Distribution (Through Laying, Building, Operation and

Housing societies must grant access for pipeline within 3 days of application

Expansion of Pipelines and Other Facilities) Order, 2026, removes bottlenecks in pipeline infrastructure and sets new norms to expand PNG access.

In a major move, the order mandates that housing societies and residential areas (many are known to resist PNG) must grant access for pipeline installation within three working days of the application.

“If access is denied, the authorised entity can escalate the matter and issue public notices. In such cases, LPG supply to households may be discontinued within three

months if they do not opt for the PNG, unless technical infeasibility is certified,” the order states. This provision is expected to accelerate PNG adoption in urban and semi-urban areas. Also, the new rules create a uniform national framework governing permissions, right of way, and operational procedures for laying pipelines will be created. The order prescribes strict timelines for pipeline permissions.

“The public authorities must process applications within time limits ranging from 10 to 60 working days, depending on the project type,” states the notification. If the authorities don’t comply in this time, approval will be treated as “deemed granted”, allowing projects to move hurdles.



Reliance buys 5 mn barrels of Iranian oil after US waiver

India's Reliance Industries, operator of the world's biggest refining complex, has purchased 5 million barrels of Iranian crude, days after the US temporarily removed sanctions on the oil, three sources familiar with the matter said on Tuesday.

The Indian refiner bought the oil from the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), two of the sources said. One of them said the crude was priced at a premium of about \$7 a barrel to ICE Brent futures. It was not immediately clear when the oil would be delivered.

Iranian oil, which in recent years has mainly been bought by Chinese independent refiners, is often re-branded as originating from another country.

Reliance did not respond to emails seeking comment. NIOC could not be reached for comment.

The Trump administration on Friday issued a 30-day sanctions waiver for the purchase of Iranian oil already at sea. The waiver applies to oil loaded on any vessel, including tankers under sanctions, on or before March 20 and discharged by April 19.

REUTERS

Gas shortage hits dhaba belt in Murthal, big units shift to PNG

MUKESH TANDON

TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICE

SONEPAT, MARCH 24

The suspension of commercial gas supply to eateries, hotels and restaurants in Murthal — considered India's biggest dhaba hub — located along NH-44 in Sonapat.

Though food prices remain unchanged, the shortage of commercial LPG cylinders has started impacting daily functioning. The situation has coincided with a dip in footfall, which has reduced to nearly 50 per cent due to ongoing school examinations and disruptions in travel linked to the Iran-Israel-US conflict.

Over 100 small and large dhabas operate along the Murthal-Gannaur stretch. While around 20 major establishments have shifted to



Murthal in Sonapat is considered India's biggest dhaba hub.

pipled natural gas (PNG), nearly 80 units continue to depend on LPG cylinders.

"At present, no major crisis has been seen in the hotel business, but we have been informed that if dhabas use 100 per cent PNG, then only 80 per cent will be supplied at normal rates, while the remaining 20 per cent will be charged at

revised rates," said Manoj Kumar, owner of Gulshan Dhaba and general secretary of the GT Road Dhaba Association.

Manjeet Singh, president of the association and owner of Jhilmil Dhaba, said while bigger establishments are managing, smaller dhabas have started facing difficulties. "They are having a tough time and are

gradually shifting to electric chulhas," he said, adding that prices of food items have not been increased so far.

He noted that the current period is typically off-season, with daily footfall dropping to around 20,000-25,000 visitors — nearly half of peak season numbers. "Every year, business slows down in February and March due to exams. It picks up from April to June and dips again in monsoon," he said.

Resham Singh, another dhaba owner, said establishments without PNG connections are under pressure. "Many dhabas have been forced to shift to electric induction or chulhas due to the shortage of commercial gas cylinders. The government should ensure at least 50 per cent supply of commercial cylinders so that dhaba owners can survive," he said.

Centre Fast-tracks Nat Gas Infra to Push PNG Shift

New Delhi: The Centre issued a notification on Tuesday to expedite the rollout of natural gas infrastructure, aiming to shift more liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) consumers to piped natural gas (PNG) as it anticipates prolonged supply constraints in both LPG and natural gas due to the Iran war.



The order, issued under the Essential Commodities Act, seeks to move LPG users in areas served by gas pipelines to PNG, thereby freeing up LPG supplies for regions without pipeline access, the notification said.

“Constraints are being faced and are expected to be faced for long time in relation to the supply and distribution of both LPG and natural gas on account of extensive damage to and suspension of operations of the liquefaction facilities in the Gulf region that supply liquefied natural gas to India and the continued blockage of the Strait of Hormuz as such events require fuel diversification as a mitigation for long term energy security,” the government said.

The order sets a 10–60 day timeline for state governments and local bodies to grant approvals for laying various types of gas pipelines, and prescribes uniform charges for such infrastructure. Authorities must approve or reject applications from city gas companies within this time frame.

“Approvals from various authorities, imposition of very high fee and charges and at times denial of access to land or residential areas” have been cited as key impediments to pipeline rollout.

—Our Bureau

Decoding The Hormuz Shock

Transmission mechanism is broader, harsher. Higher freight, insurance costs, plus rerouting & precautionary buying, will keep energy prices high even when flows improve. It's worse for gas than for oil. Major countries must create crisis-resilient energy hubs

Nataliia Katser-Buchkovska



Fellow, Atlantic Council

The Iran war-linked energy crisis is different from previous shocks. Oil and gas markets are not simply rising, they are repricing violently, around disruption risk. On March 20, Brent settled at \$112.19 per barrel, its highest since July 2022, after roughly 440mn barrels were removed from global supply over 22 days. By March 24, after a sharp selloff on hopes of de-escalation, Brent had rebounded to about \$101 per barrel, because markets reassessed the risk of prolonged disruption.

European gas prices have reacted even more sharply: they've doubled from the start of the war on Feb 28, to a peak around €74/MWh, on March 19. This is how an energy crisis now begins: not with an abstract geopolitical headline, but with a rapid repricing of oil, gas, freight, insurance, and strategic risk across the global economy.

An additional layer of volatility came from politics itself. On March 23, Trump postponed planned US strikes on Iran's energy infra for five days, citing what he described as "productive" contacts with Iranian officials. Markets initially treated that as a possible off-ramp. But the relief proved brief. Iran denied that any such talks were taking place. Prices rebounded. Markets are reacting not only to physical disruption, but also to rapidly shifting signals from political leaders.

This crisis is not about one dominant supplier, weaponising pipeline dependence, like Russia did with Europe, in 2022. It is a route shock, centred on the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most critical maritime chokepoints. That means, the present crisis hits oil and LNG markets globally from day one, rather than radiating outward from one place.

So, the transmission mechanism is harsher, and broader. In 2022, Europe was the main victim, while Asia felt the shock mostly through LNG competition and higher import prices. Today, Europe and Asia are exposed simultaneously.

India, in particular, is vulnerable. Reports say that Qatar supplied 41% of India's LNG imports in 2024/25. West Asia accounted for 59% of India's crude imports

in Feb 2026, the highest share since Aug 2022. India depends on imports for more than 90% of its oil, and about half of its gas needs. That means the Iran crisis is not just an energy issue for India; it is a macroeconomic one, affecting inflation, freight, fertiliser, industrial costs, and trade balances.

The market backdrop makes this even more dangerous. The global gas market was already tight before the conflict escalated, and the present shock is proving harsher for gas, than for oil. LNG is far less flexible to reroute, harder to store, and more dependent on fixed infrastructure. Oil cargoes can often be redirected; gas cannot. That means a route disruption in the Gulf, transmits more quickly, and more stubbornly, into gas markets, especially in Europe and Asia.



Europe is less vulnerable than it was in 2022, but not safe. It has reduced dependence on Russian gas dramatically, yet its new vulnerability is greater exposure to global LNG competition, and maritime disruption. In other words, Europe is no longer overdependent on one pipeline supplier; it is more exposed to a global shipping-cum-LNG price shock. This is a strategic improvement, but not immunity.

But there is a deeper shift underway. Russia demonstrated that energy dependence can be exploited for geopolitical coercion. The Iran shock shows that routes, chokepoints, and maritime energy flows can also be weaponised.

Remember, even armies depend on energy, just as societies do. Military readiness relies on secure access to fuel, electricity, logistics corridors, ports, rail, and

resilient supply chains. Tanks, aircraft, naval fleets, air defence systems, communications infra, and military-industrial production all depend on uninterrupted energy supply.

A country or an alliance with weak energy resilience, is strategically vulnerable not only in its economy, but in its defence posture. Energy, therefore, is not only the object of conflict; it is one of the foundations of deterrence and defence capability. The current crisis is demonstrating, in real time, that energy infra is part of the battlespace.

So, how is the situation evolving? The risk now has two layers. The first is physical: attacks on Gulf infrastructure, and disruption in Hormuz, have already constrained flows. Per reports, around 17% of Qatar's LNG export capacity is offline, potentially for years.

The second risk is commercial: even where physical flows are not fully interrupted, higher freight rates, insurance costs, rerouting, and precautionary buying keep prices elevated.

That is why the market is reacting not only to barrels of oil and cargoes of gas already lost, but to the fear that the disruption will stretch into the next refill and procurement cycle.

The strategic answer is not just "find another supplier". Countries have to think bigger – create energy hubs. The future of energy security lies not in isolated assets, but in clustered systems. A terminal on its own improves import capacity. But a hub that combines LNG, storage, interconnectors, power generation, batteries, industrial demand, and logistics, creates something much more valuable: optionality.

Gas can be imported, stored, redirected, converted into power or industrial output, and moved onward through pipelines, grids and ports. That is the difference between infrastructure that functions in normal times, and infrastructure that survives crises.

The larger conclusion is clear. The 2022 Ukraine shock taught the world to diversify suppliers. The 2026 Iran shock is teaching it to diversify routes, reinforce infrastructure, and build resilient energy hubs.

Energy security is no longer only about molecules. It is about systems that can move, store, convert, and protect them under stress. Energy now underpins not just economies, but defence readiness itself. So, resilience in energy infra is proof of your strategic power.



Govt steps helped ease LPG shortage: Vaishnaw

Sukalp Sharma
& Sandeep Singh
New Delhi, March 24

EVEN AS the West Asia war has created a serious energy crisis across the world, measures taken by the Centre such as enhanced refinery output, extended LPG booking intervals, prioritisation of household consumers, and promotion of alternative fuels have contributed significantly in managing the LPG crisis so far, Minister for Information & Broadcasting Ashwini Vaishnaw said on Tuesday.

Separately, the Petroleum Ministry said that while LPG supply to the country has been hit due to the war — given India's high dependence on West Asia for the fuel — a number of cargoes have been lined up to augment supplies.

The effective halt in vessel movements through the Strait of Hormuz has hit India's energy supplies, particularly those of LPG.

Around 54% of India's LPG supplies are effectively disrupted, which has forced the government to heavily cut supplies to commercial and industrial consumers in an effort to ensure uninterrupted supplies to households.

Apart from prioritising LPG supplies to households over commercial and industrial consumers, the government ordered refiners to maximise LPG production, and directed them to divert propane, butane, and other streams from petrochemical manufacturing to LPG production. These measures have led to an increase of 40% in domestic LPG production vis-à-vis pre-West

Asia conflict levels. The Centre has also increased waiting times between cylinder bookings by households from 21 days to 25 days in urban areas and 45 days in rural areas to check hoarding. It has also activated alternative fuel streams like kerosene, fuel oil, biomass, and even coal for commercial consumers.

The government has also appealed consumers to switch to piped natural gas (PNG), if available in their vicinity to take some pressure off of LPG supplies. Some city gas distribution (CGD) companies have also announced incentives like some volumes of free gas and waiver of connection charges to encourage consumers to sign up for PNG connections. The Centre has also urged states to help expedite PNG network expansion.

Vaishnaw said in the first three weeks of March, CGD companies have activated over 3.5 lakh PNG connections — domestic as well as commercial — and can activate another 15 lakh over the next 10 days. "This should further reduce the average demand for domestic LPG and it should come down to around 50 lakh cylinders a day," Vaishnaw said.

Data shows that panic bookings for LPG cylinders by households has reduced, with daily booking levels now around the pre-conflict average of 55.7 lakh cylinders a day. Vaishnaw said the average daily demand had come down to 55 lakh per day (as on March 19) from a peak of 89 lakh that it hit on March 13.

The Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board has directed CGD entities to prioritise

Centre takes steps to firm up retail gas service delivery

New Delhi: The government on Tuesday introduced measures to strengthen consumer-centric gas service delivery while ensuring that the transition to piped natural gas (PNG) does not impose an excessive financial burden on users.

The framework mandates time-bound provision of PNG connections, aiming to improve service standards and facilitate a gradual shift from LPG in areas with existing pipeline infrastructure, according to a statement issued by the oil ministry. It also allows flexibility in regions where connectivity remains technically unfeasible. To safeguard public interest, the policy seeks to prevent arbitrary denial of access for pipeline development by local authorities or private entities. It further establishes a transparent dispute resolution mechanism through designated authorities, balancing consumer convenience with national priorities, such as energy security and clean energy transition. PTI

PNG connections for residential schools, colleges, hostels, community kitchens within five days where pipelines are available, Petroleum Ministry Joint Secretary Sujata Sharma said Tuesday.

FULL REPORT ON

WWW.INDIANEXPRESS.COM



ONGC Floats \$20 B Global Tender for Deepwater Rigs

Kalpana Pathak

Mumbai: Oil and Natural Gas Corp is likely to spend as much as \$18-20 billion to hire deep-water drilling rigs for what would be its biggest ever oil exploration programme, people familiar with the matter said.

ONGC last month issued a tender for the rigs, as the state-run company seeks to step up hydrocarbon exploration as part of the government's Samudra Manthan mission that aims to boost the country's energy security. A dozen domestic and international drilling companies attended a pre-bid meeting that ONGC held in Mumbai on March 20, the people said.

"The tender seeks a mix of drill ships and semi-submersible rigs for up to five years. This programme will cost ONGC around \$18-20 billion," said a senior industry official whose



Deepwater Push

150 exploration wells planned across offshore blocks

Focus on KG Basin, Andaman & Kerala-Konkan basin

Ultra-deepwater drilling already underway in Andaman

Tie-ups pursued with BP, ExxonMobil, Total Energies, Petrobras

DAILY RIG COSTS PEGGED AT \$400,000-500,000 PER DAY

company participated in the pre-bid meeting. "ONGC is seeking mobilisation of the rigs within 80 days, which highlights ONGC's urgency to scale up deep-water activity," he said.

ONGC did not respond to an email seeking comment till press time Tuesday. In addition to working on the KG Basin block off the east coast, ONGC has also commenced ultra-deep-water drilling operations in

the Andamans. It is also pursuing deep-water collaborations with energy companies including BP, EXxonMobil, Total Energies and Petrobras as part of a strategic initiative to mitigate risks associated with exploration in high-cost frontier regions. The tender floated in February seeks bids from experienced offshore drilling contractors under an international competitive bidding process.

Drop Extra VAT on Regasified LNG: Industry

Shilpa Samant

New Delhi: The renewable energy industry has sought urgent government intervention to stop additional VAT being charged on regasified liquefied natural gas (RLNG) supplied from Gujarat to industrial consumers in other states amid supply disruptions.

In a letter to the ministry of petroleum and natural gas, a copy of which ET has seen, the National Solar Energy Federation of India (NSEFI) has called for waiver or neutralisation of this additional interstate value added tax (VAT), flagging concerns over operational viability of gas-dependent industries outside Gujarat. One of these industries is solar glass manufacturing.

"We... request your kind intervention for issuance of suitable directions to the concerned ministries/authorities for waiver, reimbursement... of the additional interstate VAT burden on RLNG supplied from Gujarat to industrial consumers located outside Gujarat," the industry body said.

While intra-state gas supplies within Gujarat attract a VAT of around 6%, interstate supplies face a

significantly higher levy of about 15%, NSEFI said. This effectively imposes an additional 9% tax burden on industries located outside Gujarat.

NSEFI noted that domestic natural gas supplies to industrial users have been curtailed due to supply disruptions caused by the West Asia war, leading companies to rely more on RLNG—or LNG converted back into gas—to manage operations. As a high portion of India's LNG import and regasification infrastructure is in Gujarat,



industries across the country are dependent on supplies routed through the state.

While intra-state gas supplies within Gujarat attract a VAT of around 6%, interstate supplies face a significantly higher levy of about 15%. This effectively imposes an additional 9% tax burden on industries located outside Gujarat despite operating under identical national conditions, NSEFI said.

The higher cost burden is expected to strain working capital cycles, disrupt production continuity and impact downstream supply chains, it said.

Govt invokes ECA to expedite laying of gas pipelines

Rajeev Jayaswal

letters@hindustantimes.com

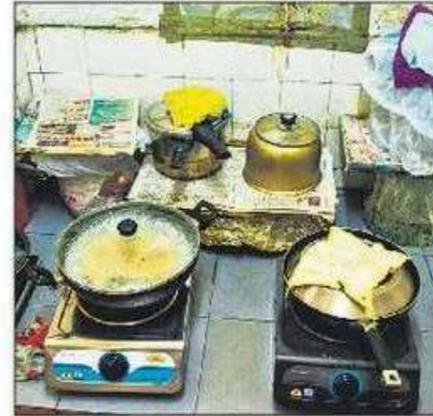
NEW DELHI: The government on Tuesday notified a new legal framework by invoking the Essential Commodities Act (ECA), making it mandatory for landowners to grant “right of way” for time-bound laying of gas pipelines, as part of efforts to reduce dependence on any single fuel, particularly imported liquefied petroleum gas (LPG).

Elaborating on “right of way” as a key element, the notification said, “The Central Government considers it necessary in public interest for a uniform

framework to address issues that hinder the laying of such pipelines including denial of access to land, delay in approvals, delay in grant of right of way or right of user in the land, high fee and charges, to enable entities to undertake the laying of pipelines for transportation of natural gas and petroleum products in a time bound manner and increase the number of piped natural gas users across India.”

The order covers both private and government landowners, including housing societies.

The move is significant as gas infrastructure projects often



Move aims to reduce excessive dependence on LPG. AFP

face delays due to gas utilities’ inability to secure land rights. State governments, too, have at times slowed gas grid projects

by denying “right of way” to pipeline companies.

“The order comes into immediate effect and establishes a comprehensive, transparent, and investor-friendly framework for efficient gas distribution,” the petroleum ministry said in a statement on Tuesday night. The move is aimed at improving the ease of doing business by simplifying procedures, reducing regulatory bottlenecks, and creating a predictable and transparent environment for stakeholders, it added.

The order includes a uniform framework for laying, building, operating, and expanding pipe-

line infrastructure, standardized processes and timelines to reduce ambiguity and administrative discretion, time-bound approvals with deemed approval provisions to eliminate procedural delays, elimination of arbitrary levies and charges to ensure transparency and cost predictability.

These measure will help both public and private investors keen on developing gas infrastructure and marketing a cleaner fuel, and will ensure a faster rollout of city gas distribution networks and trunk pipelines, and reduce excessive dependence on LPG.

No dry outs, poor getting LPG on priority, says govt

Rajeev Jayaswal

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NEW DELHI: The government on Tuesday reaffirmed that adequate stocks of petrol and diesel are available in all 100,000 petrol pumps across the country and the 1.1 million migrant workers having gas connection under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana are getting fuel on priority with other 105.6 million Ujjwala beneficiaries.

Giving update on fuel supply situation, Sujata Sharma, joint secretary in the petroleum ministry said while all petrol pumps in the country are sufficiently stocked with auto fuels, availabilities of LPG for priority consumers are ensured by ramping up its production in refineries at the cost of petrochemicals output so that priority customers do not suffer.

India is the fourth largest refining hub of the world with over 258 million tonnes per annum refining capacity. By changing refining configuration, refiners can ramp-up output of any particular product to some extent. Apart from domestic LPG, India also imports LPG from various sources to meet domestic demands. India imports 60% of its LPG requirements.

Briefing about the movements of LPG cargos from West Asia, shipping secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh said two carriers Pine Gas (carrying 45,000 metric tonne of LPG) and Jag Vasant (about 47,600 MT) crossed the Strait of Hormuz on Monday evening. To be sure, five more loaded carriers (with 2.3 lakh MT of LPG), and one in the process of loading, are expected to start from the west of the strait to India soon.

In order to reduce load on LPG supply, the government is promoting use of piped natural gas (PNG). Petroleum sector regulator Petroleum and Natural Gas Regulatory Board (PNGRB) on Monday issued an order, directing all city gas distribution (CGD) companies to provide PNG connections in residential schools, collages, hostels, community kitchens and Anganwadi kitchens located in the vicinity of pipeline infrastructure, Sharma said. There are over 330 million domestic LPG connections in the country. She said there are 6 mil-

Navy escorting two LPG carriers out of Gulf of Oman

NEW DELHI: The Indian Navy is escorting two India-bound LPG carriers out of the Gulf of Oman after they crossed the Strait of Hormuz on Monday amid military tensions due to the America-Israel war with Iran, officials aware of the matter said on Tuesday.

The two India-flagged vessels, Jag Vasant and Pine Gas, are carrying 92,612.59 MT of LPG, with 33 and 27 Indian seafarers on board, respectively. The LPG carriers are headed to Indian ports under the watchful eyes of the navy, the officials said.

Jag Vasant is expected to reach Kandla port on March 26 and Pine Gas will pull into New Mangalore on March 28.

India recently deployed more warships to the Gulf of Oman to ensure the safe passage of its fuel carriers, as HT previously reported. This deployment comes as it expects Iran to allow passage through the Strait of Hormuz, which is at the centre of military tensions amid the war in West Asia.

The Indian naval presence in the Gulf of Oman is maintained under Operation Sankalp, which predates the current military tensions in the region. **HTC**

No permission needed to navigate Strait of Hormuz'

NEW DELHI: Sailing through the Strait of Hormuz does not require permission from any country, a senior government official said as more Indian vessels prepared to sail through the war-hit zone.

Rejecting talks of stranded Indian vessels in the Persian Gulf being allowed to sail through the strait only after reaching some kind of an agreement with Iran, which controls the narrow shipping lane, Rajesh Kumar Singh, Special Secretary at the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways, said the movement through strait is taken by shipping companies and their contracting entities after considering safety and other conditions.

Movement of ships through the strait had come to a near halt after the US and Israel launched military strikes against Iran, and Tehran's sweeping retaliation that hit US bases in the Gulf regions as well as Israel.

"No permission is required to sail through the strait. It is covered by international navigation conventions," Sinha said at the media briefing on the developments in West Asia. **PTI**

lion households where PNG connections could be provided immediately, and they have been requested to avail the facility. "Yesterday, just in a day, about 7,500 domestic and commercial connections have been provided to such people in the top 110 geographical areas," she added.

Giving details of the commercial LPG supply, she said the government on March 21 raised supply of LPG to commercial consumers to about 50% of their total requirements. She said preference supply is allocated to restaurants, dhabas, hotels, industrial canteens, food processing industries, dairy, subsidised canteens and kitchens run by state govern-

ments, local bodies, communities for the poor and migrants.

Under Ujjwala, about 1.1 million migrant workers have taken LPG connections and in the last few months, about 73,000 connections have been given to them. Yesterday, more than 25,000 connections of 5kg LPG have been given to them, she said, adding that these supplies are ensured by state-run oil marketing companies in coordination with states. Orders have been issued by 24 states and union territories for the distribution of commercial LPG. In other places, state-run OMCs are distributing LPG. About 18,700 tonnes commercial LPG has been lifted so far.

राज्य में घरेलू गैस सप्लाई की कोई किल्लत नहीं, नागरिक आश्वस्त रहें : राज्य मंत्री राजेश नागर

वैभव न्यूज ■ चंडीगढ़/फरीदाबाद

हरियाणा के खाद्य, नागरिक आपूर्ति एवं उपभोक्ता मामले राज्य मंत्री राजेश नागर ने कहा कि एलपीजी से जुड़ी कोई भी अनियमितता सामने आती है तो उस पर तुरंत एक्शन लिया जा रहा है। उन्होंने कहा कि एलपीजी सिलेंडर को लेकर राज्य में स्थिति सामान्य है, नागरिकों को किसी भी तरह के पैनिक की आवश्यकता नहीं है। उन्होंने बताया कि हरियाणा में एलपीजी सिलेंडर की कालाबाजारी और अवैध उपयोग के खिलाफ सरकार ने सख्त कार्रवाई करते हुए अब तक 8 सख्त कार्रवाई की गई हैं, 52



आरोपियों की सलिसता पाई गई और 825 सिलेंडर जब्त किए गए हैं। राज्य मंत्री श्री राजेश नागर ने कहा है कि सिलेंडर की कालाबाजारी और अवैध उपयोग के प्रति सरकार का रुख कड़ा है। उन्होंने कहा कि राज्य

में पेट्रोल, डीजल एवं घरेलू एलपीजी गैस की आपूर्ति पूरी तरह से सामान्य है। मिडिल ईस्ट में उत्पन्न युद्ध जैसी परिस्थितियों में भी जो शरारती एवं षड्यंत्रकारी तत्व अफवाह फैला रहे हैं, सरकार उनके खिलाफ सख्त कार्रवाई करेगी। खाद्य, नागरिक आपूर्ति एवं उपभोक्ता मामले विभाग के एक प्रवक्ता ने बताया कि जूब्त किये कुल 825 घरेलू एलपीजी में झज्जर जिले से 131, महेंद्रगढ़ जिले से 109 सिलेंडर, अम्बाला से 86, भिवानी से 21, फरीदाबाद से 2, फतेहाबाद से 71, सोनीपत से 12 और यमुनानगर से 17 एलपीजी सिलेंडर जब्त किये जा चुके हैं।

स्ट्रेट ऑफ हॉर्मुज पर टोल की बात बेबुनियाद, हमारे 6 एलपीजी जहाज रवानगी को तैयार : भारत सरकार

वैभव न्यूज ■ नई दिल्ली

स्ट्रेट ऑफ होर्मुज से भारत के 6 एलपीजी जहाज रवानगी को तैयार हैं। भारत सरकार घरेलू और वैश्विक स्तर पर बातचीत के जरिए समस्याओं को हल करने की कोशिश कर रही है। पश्चिम एशिया में हाल के घटनाक्रमों पर अंतर-मंत्रालयी ब्रीफिंग में इसकी जानकारी दी गई।

मंगलवार को विदेश मंत्रालय के प्रवक्ता रणधीर जायसवाल ने जानकारी दी कि विदेश मंत्री एस. जयशंकर ने अमेरिकी विदेश मंत्री और श्रीलंका के विदेश मंत्री से बातचीत कर क्षेत्र की स्थिति, उसके वैश्विक आर्थिक प्रभाव और ऊर्जा सुरक्षा पर चर्चा की। इस दौरान भारत ने 'नेबरहुड फर्सट' और मिशन सागर को लेकर अपनी प्रतिबद्धता दोहराई और नई दिल्ली में खाड़ी देशों के राजदूतों के साथ भी हालात पर विचार-विमर्श किया।

ऊर्जा आपूर्ति को लेकर भी सरकार ने स्थिति साफ की है। पेट्रोलियम एवं प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय में संयुक्त सचिव सुजाता शर्मा ने बताया कि देश की रिफाइनरियां पूरी क्षमता पर



चल रही हैं और कच्चा तेल, पेट्रोल, डीजल और एलपीजी की पर्याप्त उपलब्धता बनी हुई है। उन्होंने कहा कि सभी रिटेल आउटलेट सामान्य रूप से काम कर रहे हैं और कहीं भी ईंधन की कमी नहीं है। अफवाहों के चलते हुई पैनिक बाइंग पर अब नियंत्रण पा लिया गया है और लोगों से अपील की गई है कि वे केवल आधिकारिक सूचनाओं पर भरोसा करें। साथ ही पीएनजी कनेक्शन के विस्तार को तेज किया गया है और जरूरी संस्थानों को प्राथमिकता दी जा रही है, जबकि वाणिज्यिक एलपीजी की आपूर्ति भी बढ़ाई गई है। जमाखोरी रोकने के लिए सख्त कार्रवाई जारी है। समुद्री सुरक्षा को लेकर भी स्थिति

सामान्य बनी हुई है। पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्रालय के सचिव राजेश सिन्हा ने जानकारी दी कि खाड़ी क्षेत्र में सभी भारतीय जहाज और नाविक सुरक्षित हैं और पिछले 24 घंटों में कोई भी समुद्री घटना सामने नहीं आई है। रणनीतिक रूप से अहम स्ट्रेट ऑफ होर्मुज से गुजरते हुए दो भारतीय एलपीजी वाहक जहाज—पाइन गैस और जग वसंत—सुरक्षित रूप से भारत की ओर बढ़ रहे हैं। इनमें से एक जहाज 45,000 मीट्रिक टन एलपीजी लेकर न्यू मंगलौर पोर्ट की ओर आ रहा है, जबकि दूसरा लगभग 47,600 मीट्रिक टन एलपीजी के साथ कांडला बंदरगाह पहुंचने वाला है।

युद्ध के बाद से साढ़े तीन लाख नए एलपीजी उपभोक्ता हुए सक्रिय

सर्वश कुमार

प

विषम एशिया में जारी संघर्ष का असर, दुनिया के तमाम देशों के साथ कमोबेश भारत पर भी पड़ रहा है। खास तौर पर ऊर्जा संबंधी जरूरतों को पूरा करने के लिए खाड़ी देशों पर निर्भरता कम करने के लिए अन्य देशों से वैकल्पिक मागों

के जरिए तेल और गैस की खेप पहुंचाने का सिलसिला भी जारी है। वैकल्पिक ऊर्जा स्रोतों को अपनाने पर सरकार की तरफ से लगातार प्रोत्साहन के असर के तौर पर पिछले तीन हफ्ते में करीब 3.5 लाख नए पीएनजी कनेक्शन जारी या सक्रिय किए गए।

एलपीजी पर बंधन करने के लिए रसोई में एलपीजी के इस्तेमाल के बजाय पीएनजी, सौर ऊर्जा, बायोगैस को प्रोत्साहित किया जा रहा है ताकि आवात पर निर्भरता धीरे धीरे कम हो सके। ऊर्जा मामलों के विशेषज्ञ देवाजीत पालित ने बताया कि फिलहाल एलपीजी पर निर्भरता कम करने के लिए पीएनजी को सरकार की तरफ लगातार प्रोत्साहित किया जा रहा है। पीएनजी को देश में पर्याप्त उपलब्धता है, इसलिए लोगों को आसुरति में किसी तरह की दिक्कत नहीं होगी। देश में एलपीजी के करीब 33 करोड़ उपभोक्ता हैं जबकि पीएनजी धारकों की संख्या करीब 1.6 करोड़ है। अलग अलग शहरों में आईजीएल, अहमगी टोटल सहित अन्य कंपनियां पीएनजी की आपूर्ति कर रही हैं। देश में करीब करीब 50 फीसद पीएनजी का उत्पादन होता है। एलपीजी की तुलना में दिल्ली में पीएनजी किफायती है, हालांकि अलग अलग राज्यों में कीमतों में अंतर है। पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय के मुताबिक पिछले तीन हफ्तों के दौरान 3.5 लाख से अधिक घरेलू और वाणिज्यिक पीएनजी कनेक्शन जारी या सक्रिय किए गए हैं। सरकार ने पीएनजी विस्तार के लिए राज्यों और केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों को अतिरिक्त वाणिज्यिक एलपीजी आबंटन को स्वीकृति दी।

ऊर्जा विशेषज्ञ नरेंद्र तनेजा ने कहा, चीन के बाद भारत प्राकृतिक गैसों का दूसरा सबसे बड़ा उपभोक्ता है और करीब 56 फीसद प्राकृतिक गैस का आयात किया जाता है। वैकल्पिक ऊर्जा स्रोतों



देश में एलपीजी के करीब 33 करोड़ उपभोक्ता हैं जबकि पीएनजी धारकों की संख्या 1.6 करोड़ है। सरकार ने पीएनजी विस्तार के लिए राज्यों और केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों को अतिरिक्त वाणिज्यिक एलपीजी आबंटन को स्वीकृति दी।

असर

सीबीजी सम्मिश्रण भी बन सकता है अच्छा विकल्प

ऊर्जा विशेषज्ञ ने बताया, कंप्रेसड बायोगैस (सीबीजी) के सम्मिश्रण से उत्पादन में बढ़ोतरी से लोगों के लिए सखुलिकर्षों काफी बड़ सकती हैं। कृषि अवशेषों से तैयार किए जाने वाले बायो गैस का पीएनजी में सम्मिश्रण एक और बेहतर ऊर्जा विकल्प बन सकता है।

को बढ़ावा दिया जा रहा है और एलपीजी के विकल्प के तौर पर पीएनजी की भूमिका और अहम हो गई है। सरकार की तरफ से पीएनजी प्रोत्साहन के लिए किए जा रहे उपयों से एलपीजी के कारण पैदा हुई स्थिति में धीरे धीरे और सुधार होने की उम्मीद है।

माओवादी कमांडर पापा राव ने 17 सहयोगियों संग किया आत्मसमर्पण

कवर्धा/रायपुर, 24 मार्च (भाषा)।

छत्तीसगढ़ में नक्सलियों के वरिष्ठ कमांडर पापा राव ने मंगलवार को अपने दल के 17 सदस्यों के साथ सुरक्षाबलों के सामने आत्मसमर्पण कर दिया। अधिकारियों ने यह जानकारी दी। अधिकारियों के मुताबिक पापा राव का समर्पण छत्तीसगढ़ में वामपंथी उग्रवाद के खिलाफ लड़ाई में एक अहम पड़ाव है। उन्होंने बताया कि यह समर्पण देश के सबसे लंबे समय से चल रहे उग्रवादों में से एक के कमजोर होने का स्पष्ट संकेत है।

बरतार रेंज के पुलिस महानिरीक्षक सुंदरराज पी ने कहा कि नक्सली संगठन में दंडकारण्य स्पेशल जोनल कमेटी (डीकेएसजेडसी) सदस्य तथा साठथ सब जोनल ब्यूरो के इंचार्ज

पापा राव का 17 अन्य साथियों के साथ पुनर्वास, क्षेत्र में वामपंथी उग्रवाद को समाप्त करने के हमारे सतत प्रयासों में एक निर्णायक सफलता का प्रतीक है। सुंदरराज ने बताया कि पापा राव, डिविजनल कमेटी सदस्य प्रकाश मड़वी, अनिल ताती सहित कुल 18 माओवादियों के इस समूह ने हिंसा का मार्ग छोड़कर मुख्यधारा में शामिल होने की इच्छा के साथ आत्मसमर्पण किया है। इनमें सात महिला नक्सली भी शामिल हैं।

उन्होंने बताया कि नक्सलियों ने आत्मसमर्पण के दौरान एके-47 राइफलें तथा अन्य हथियार भी सौंपे। उन्होंने कहा कि दंडकारण्य क्षेत्र में माओवादी आंदोलन के इतिहास में पहली बार नक्सल संगठन प्रभावी रूप से नेतृत्व विहीन हो गया है।

पीएम ने राज्यसभा में कहा-लंबे समय तक रहेंगे युद्ध के दुष्प्रभाव, हर चुनौती के लिए रहना होगा तैयार तेल-गैस की निर्बाध आपूर्ति हमारा लक्ष्य : मोदी

जामरुण ब्यूरो, नई दिल्ली: संसद में पश्चिम एशिया संकट पर राज्यसभा में वक्तव्य देते हुए प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी ने मंगलवार को कहा कि इस युद्ध ने पूरे विश्व में गंभीर ऊर्जा संकट पैदा कर दिया है। भारत के लिए भी यह स्थिति चिंताजनक है। हमारे व्यापार के रास्ते प्रभावित हो रहे हैं। इससे पेट्रोल, डीजल, गैस और फर्टिलाइजर जैसे जरूरी सामान की निर्यात आपूर्ति प्रभावित हो रही है। युद्ध के दुष्प्रभाव लंबे समय तक रहने की आशंका जताते हुए उन्होंने कहा कि हमें हर चुनौती के लिए तैयार रहना होगा। उन्होंने कहा कि इन विपरीत परिस्थितियों के बावजूद सरकार ने संवाद और कूटनीति के जरिये वैकल्पिक मार्ग खोजने का प्रयास किया है, जिसका एकमात्र लक्ष्य यह सुनिश्चित करना है कि जहां से भी संभव हो, भारत को तेल और गैस की आपूर्ति निर्बाध रूप से प्राप्त हो सके। देश ऐसे प्रत्येक प्रयास के सकारात्मक परिणामों का साक्षी बन रहा है। प्रधानमंत्री ने देशवासियों को आश्वस्त किया कि सरकार सतर्क है, तत्पर है और पूरी गंभीरता से रणनीति बना रही है, हर निर्णय ले रही है। देश की जनता का हित सरकार के लिए सर्वोपरि है। राज्यों से कोरोना काल की तरह टीम इंडिया के रूप में काम करने का आग्रह भी किया।

प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि युद्ध के बाद से होर्मुज स्ट्रेट में जहाजों का आना-जाना बहुत चुनौतीपूर्ण हो गया है, इसके बावजूद सरकार ने रास्ता बनाने का प्रयास किया है। बीते कुछ दिनों में दुनिया के अनेक देशों से कच्चा तेल और एलपीजी से भरे जहाज भारत आए हैं। इस दिशा में सरकार के प्रयास आने वाले दिनों में भी जारी रहेंगे। संकट से निपटने की भारत की तैयारियों का ब्योरा देते हुए प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि देश ऐसे संकटों का बेहतर तरीके से सामना कर सके, इसके लिए बीते 11 वर्षों में निरंतर निर्णय लिए गए हैं। ऊर्जा आयात का विविधीकरण ऐसे ही

- सरकार सतर्क और तत्पर, राज्यों से आग्रह- कोरोना काल की तरह टीम इंडिया के रूप में करें काम
- कहा- होर्मुज स्ट्रेट से जहाजों का आना चुनौतीपूर्ण, वार्ता के जरिये समाधान की कर रहे कोशिश

राज्यसभा में मंगलवार को जानकारी >> देते पीएम नरेन्द्र मोदी ● आरएनएस



● भारत का प्रयास है कि तेल, गैस हो या फर्टिलाइजर हो; ऐसे हर जरूरी सामान से जुड़े जहाज भारत तक सुरक्षित पहुंचें। लेकिन इस युद्ध से बनी वैश्विक परिस्थितियां अगर लंबे समय तक बनी रहती हैं तो गंभीर दुष्परिणाम तय हैं। इसलिए भारत जो भी प्रयास बीते वर्षों में किए हैं, उनको और गति दे रहा है। - नरेन्द्र मोदी, प्रधानमंत्री

एकजुटता बनाने के लिए सर्वदलीय बैठक आज

नई दिल्ली, जामरुण ब्यूरो : पश्चिम एशिया में युद्ध से उत्पन्न संकट का एकजुट होकर सामना करने पर सहमति बनाने के लिए सरकार ने बुधवार को सर्वदलीय बैठक बुलाई है। प्रधानमंत्री ने राज्यसभा में इस संकट से निपटने के लिए एकजुट प्रयास की अपील भी की। रक्षा मंत्री राजनाथ सिंह इसकी अध्यक्षता कर सकते हैं।

अब रसाई-गैस का विकल्प बनेगा एथनाल

नई दिल्ली, प्रेटर: आने वाले समय में कृषि उत्पादों से बनने वाला एथनाल रसाई गैस (एलपीजी) का विकल्प बन सकता है। इसके लिए विभिन्न संस्थानों में एथनाल से चलने वाले कुकिंग स्टोव विकसित करने पर काम चल रहा है। मंगलवार को फेडरेशन आफ इंडियन पेट्रोलियम इंजिनियर्स (एफआईपीआई) के निदेशक आरएस रवि ने बताया कि एलपीजी इन्विवर्पमेंट रिसर्च सेंटर (एलईआरसी) और विभिन्न आइआईटी की मदद से एथनाल से चलने वाले कुकिंग स्टोव के प्रोटोटाइप (नमूने) जल्द तैयार हो सकते हैं। आल इंडिया डिस्टिलर्स

प्रयासों का हिस्सा है। पहले कच्चा तेल, एलएनजी और एलपीजी का 27 देशों से आयात किया जाता था, जबकि आज 41 देशों से आयात हो रहा है। प्रधानमंत्री ने दावा किया कि बीते दशक में भारत ने संकट के ऐसे ही समय के लिए कच्चे तेल के भंडारों को भी प्राथमिकता दी है। बीते 11 वर्षों में 53 लाख मीट्रिक टन से अधिक तेल स्ट्रेटेंजिक पेट्रोलियम रिजर्व विकसित किया गया है और 65 लाख मीट्रिक टन से अधिक रिजर्व की व्यवस्था पर देश काम कर रहा है। उन्होंने आश्वस्त किया कि भारत के पास कच्चे तेल के पर्याप्त भंडारण के

एसोसिएशन (एआइडीए) को संबोधित करते हुए रवि ने कहा, 'यह एक बिल्कुल अलग तरह का काम है। अभी तक, आप जिस तरह से तेल उद्योग का समर्थन कर रहे थे, लेकिन अब इसमें बदलाव की जरूरत है। खाद्य सचिव संजीव चोपड़ा ने कहा कि केंद्र सरकार सार्वजनिक वितरण प्रणाली के तहत वितरित अनाज में टूटे चावल के आक्टन को 25 प्रतिशत से घटाकर 10 प्रतिशत करने का प्रस्ताव मंत्रिमंडल के समक्ष रखेगी। इससे एथनाल सेक्टर के लिए सालाना लगभग 90 लाख टन टूटा चावल उपलब्ध हो सकेगा।

और निरंतर आपूर्ति की व्यवस्थाएं हैं। प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि भारत का 90 प्रतिशत से अधिक तेल आयात विदेशी जहाजों पर होता है। सरकार ने मेड इन इंडिया जहाज बनाने के लिए करीब 70,000 करोड़ रुपये का अभियान शुरू किया है। उन्होंने किसानों को भी आश्वस्त किया कि सरकार यह भी प्रयास कर रही है कि आने वाले बोआई सीजन में किसानों को पर्याप्त खाद मिलती रहे।
गैस, ऊर्जा, महंगाई आदि के लिए बनाए सात अधिकार प्राप्त समूह: प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि वर्तमान संकट ने पूरी दुनिया की अर्थव्यवस्था को हिला दिया है। अभी तक जो

राहुल-खरगे ने पश्चिम एशिया पर पीएम के बयान को बताया रणनीतिक दृष्टि विहीन

जामरुण ब्यूरो, नई दिल्ली : संसद में दोनों सदनों के विपक्षी नेताओं राहुल गांधी तथा मल्लिकार्जुन खरगे ने पश्चिम एशिया संकट पर प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के बयान में किसी तरह का रणनीतिक दृष्टिकोण नहीं होने का आरोप लगाया। लोकसभा में नेता प्रतिपक्ष राहुल गांधी ने आरोप लगाया कि मोदी सिर्फ वही करते हैं जो अमेरिका तथा इजरायल करवाना चाहते हैं और वे भारत के हित के फैसले ले ही नहीं सकते। संसद भवन परिसर में पत्रकारों से बातचीत में राहुल ने फिर से आरोप

नुकसान हुआ है, उससे उबरने में भी दुनिया को बहुत समय लगेगा। भारत में इसका कम से कम दुष्प्रभाव हो, इसके लिए निरंतर प्रयास किए जा रहे हैं। सरकार ने एक अंतर मंत्रालयी समूह भी बनाया है। जैसे कोरोना के समय में अलग-अलग सेक्टर की चुनौतियों से निपटने के लिए विशेषज्ञों और अधिकारियों के अधिकार प्राप्त समूह बने थे, वैसे ही सात नए अधिकार प्राप्त समूहों का भी गठन किया गया है जिनमें अधिकारी और संबंधित विशेषज्ञ शामिल किए गए हैं।
राज्यों को संदेश, देश की बड़ी परीक्षा लेने वाला है यह संकट: मोदी

लगाया कि भारत की विदेश नीति आज 'कंप्रोमाइज्ड' है क्योंकि पीएम मोदी खुद 'कंप्रोमाइज्ड' हैं। पश्चिम एशिया पर सरकार के सर्वदलीय बैठक बुलाने पर कहा कि यह ठीक है चर्चा होनी चाहिए मगर वे पहले से तय कार्यक्रम के तहत बुधवार को दिल्ली से बाहर के दौरे पर रहेंगे। कांग्रेस अध्यक्ष खरगे ने पूछा कि संसद और देश को विश्वास में क्यों नहीं लिया गया? होर्मुज स्ट्रेट में फंसे जहाजों के लिए सुरक्षित मार्ग सुनिश्चित करने में सरकार क्यों विफल रही है।

ने कहा कि आने वाले समय में यह संकट हमारे देश की बड़ी परीक्षा लेने वाला है और इस परीक्षा में सफलता के लिए राज्यों का सहयोग बहुत आवश्यक है। उन्होंने नागरिकों से आग्रह किया कि वे आने वाली हर चुनौती के लिए तैयार रहें। प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि पश्चिम एशिया भारत के लिए महत्वपूर्ण है क्योंकि खाड़ी देशों में लगभग एक करोड़ भारतीय रहते और काम करते हैं। भारत की चिंताएं स्वाभाविक रूप से अधिक हैं। इसलिए यह आवश्यक है कि इस संकट पर भारत की संसद की एक सर्वसम्मत और एकजुट आवाज दुनिया तक पहुंचे।

एलपीजी कंट्रोल के लिए मोदी ने गठित किए 7 समूह

युद्ध लम्बा चला तो बढ़ेगी परेशानी

राज्यसभा में मंगलवार को प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी ने कहा कि पश्चिम एशिया में छिड़े वर्तमान संघर्ष के कारण उत्पन्न स्थिति से निबटने के लिए अधिकार संपन्न रात नये समूहों का गठन किया



गया है जो एलपीजी, आवश्यक सेवाओं एवं वस्तुओं की आपूर्ति एवं विभिन्न क्षेत्रों से जुड़े अन्य विषयों का नियमित आकलन कर सुझाव देगे। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने पश्चिम एशिया में जारी संघर्ष और इसके कारण भारत के सामने आई चुनौतियों पर राज्यसभा में अपनी ओर से वक्तव्य देते हुए कहा कि तीन सप्ताह से अधिक समय से युद्ध है तथा इस युद्ध ने विश्व में गंभीर ऊर्जा संकट पैदा कर दिया है। उन्होंने कहा कि भारत के लिए भी यह स्थिति चिंताजनक है। इस युद्ध से हमारे व्यापार के तत्ते प्रभावित हो रहे हैं। इससे पेट्रोल, डीजल, गैस और अर्बक जैसे जल्दी सामान की

नियमित आपूर्ति प्रभावित हो रही है। उन्होंने कहा, 'हमारी अर्थव्यवस्था के आधारभूत स्तंभ मजबूत हैं तथा सरकार पल पल बदलते खलात पर नजर रखे हुए है। सरकार इसके अल्पकालिक, मध्य कालिक एवं

दीर्घकालिक प्रभावों पर नजर रखने के लिए एक रणनीति के तहत काम कर रही है। मोदी ने कहा कि सरकार ने एक अंतर मंत्रालयी समूह बनाया है जो नियमित बैठक कर आयात-निर्यात में आने वाली बाधाओं का आकलन करता है। उन्होंने कहा कि जैसे कोरेना महामारी के दौरान अलग अलग क्षेत्रों की चुनौतियों का सामना करने के लिए विशेषज्ञों एवं अधिकारियों के विभिन्न अधिकार संपन्न समूह बने थे, वैसे ही कल रात नये अधिकार संपन्न समूहों का गठन किया गया है। प्रधानमंत्री ने कहा कि ये समूह गैस, महंगाई आदि विषयों पर विचार कर समाधान के लिए काम करेंगे।

ईरान पर हमला जारी, तेल में भी उबाल

भारत ने होर्मुज स्ट्रेट से गुजरने के लिए ईरान को किसी रकम के भुगतान की खबर से इनकार किया

शुभांगी माथुर

कच्चे तेल के दाम कम होने का नाम नहीं ले रहे हैं। मंगलवार को कच्चा तेल 100 डॉलर प्रति बैरल के इर्द-गिर्द रहा। राष्ट्रपति डॉनल्ड ट्रंप द्वारा पांच दिन के लिए ईरान के बिजली संयंत्रों पर हमले टालने की घोषणा के बावजूद अमेरिका और इजरायल ने हमले जारी रखे जिससे तेल के दाम ऊंचे स्तरों पर बने रहे।

बेंचमार्क ब्रेंट क्रूड की कीमत भारतीय मानक समय के अनुसार शाम 5 बजे तीन प्रतिशत बढ़कर 98.57 डॉलर प्रति बैरल हो गई जबकि 23 मार्च को यह 95.96 डॉलर प्रति बैरल थी।

इस बीच, एक वरिष्ठ भारतीय अधिकारी ने होर्मुज स्ट्रेट से टैंकरों के गुजरने के लिए ईरान को भुगतान करने की बात से इनकार किया। होर्मुज एक महत्वपूर्ण समुद्री मार्ग है जिससे वैश्विक कच्चे तेल का 20 प्रतिशत हिस्सा गुजरता है।

पत्तन, पोत परिवहन एवं जलमार्ग मंत्रालय के विशेष सचिव राजेश कुमार सिन्हा ने कहा, 'होर्मुज स्ट्रेट अंतरराष्ट्रीय जल क्षेत्र है। इसे पार करने के लिए कोई शुल्क नहीं दिया जाता है। भुगतान करने से जुड़ी खबरें बेबुनियाद हैं।' यह टिप्पणी उन खबरों के

बीच आई है जिनमें दावा किया गया है कि भारत ने अपने जहाजों की सुरक्षित आवाजाही के लिए ईरान को 20 लाख डॉलर रकम का भुगतान किया है।

भारतीय ध्वज वाले दो तरलीकृत पेट्रोलियम गैस (एलपीजी) टैंकर पाइन गैस और जग वसंत 23 मार्च को होर्मुज स्ट्रेट से गुजरे और अब भारतीय तटों की ओर बढ़ रहे हैं। लगभग 45,000 टन एलपीजी लेकर आ रहा पाइन गैस टैंकर 27 मार्च को न्यू मंगलूर बंदरगाह के लिए रवाना होगा।

लगभग 47,612.59 टन एलपीजी लेकर आ रहा जग वसंत टैंकर 26 मार्च को कांडला बंदरगाह के लिए निकलेगा। सरकार ने बताया कि इन जहाजों की सुरक्षित आवाजाही के बाद पश्चिमी फारस की खाड़ी क्षेत्र में लगभग 540 भारतीय नाविकों वाले 20 भारतीय ध्वज वाले जहाज मौजूद हैं।

प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने कहा कि पश्चिम एशिया में चल रहे युद्ध के बीच देश में ऊर्जा आपूर्ति की कमी देखते हुए सरकार सभी उपलब्ध स्रोतों से गैस और कच्चे तेल की खरीद के लिए लगातार प्रयास कर रही है।

राज्य सभा में दिए गए एक बयान में मोदी ने कहा कि पश्चिम एशिया में चल रहा युद्ध चिंता का विषय है और भारत संवाद और कूटनीति के माध्यम से इस क्षेत्र में शांति



एक पाइन गैस एलपीजी टैंकर मंगलवार को होर्मुज स्ट्रेट मार्ग को पार करते देखा गया

चाहता है। एलपीजी की कमी के बीच भारत सरकार उपयोगकर्ताओं को 500 रुपये की मुफ्त गैस जैसे प्रोत्साहन देकर पाइपलाइन प्राकृतिक गैस (पीएनजी) अपनाने के लिए

प्रोत्साहित कर रही है। सरकार ने कहा कि 23 मार्च को 110 भौगोलिक क्षेत्रों में 7,500 से अधिक घरेलू और वाणिज्यिक पीएनजी कनेक्शन जारी या सक्रिय किए गए।

ईंधन पर्याप्त, न करें घबराहट में खरीदारी

सरकार ने मंगलवार को कहा कि भारत में पेट्रोल, डीजल और तरलीकृत पेट्रोलियम गैस (एलपीजी) का पर्याप्त भंडार है और होर्मुज स्ट्रेट मार्ग की स्थिति से जुड़ी बाधाओं के बावजूद सभी रिफाइनरियां पूरी क्षमता से काम कर रही हैं। पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय की संयुक्त सचिव सुजाता शर्मा ने कहा कि देशभर में पेट्रोल पंप पूरी तरह से चालू हैं। हालांकि, अफवाहों के कारण घबराहट में खरीदारी से कुछ क्षेत्रों में असामान्य रूप से अधिक बिक्री हुई है। उन्होंने नागरिकों से जमाखोरी न करने और आधिकारिक जानकारी पर भरोसा करने का आग्रह किया। शर्मा ने कहा कि घरेलू एलपीजी उत्पादन बढ़ाया गया है और वितरकों के पास किसी भी तरह की कमी की सूचना नहीं है। हालांकि, वैश्विक स्तर पर मौजूदा स्थिति के कारण आपूर्ति पर दबाव बना हुआ है। डिलिवरी सामान्य रूप से जारी है। घरेलू पीएनजी और सीएनजी परिवहन जैसे प्राथमिकता वाले क्षेत्रों को प्राकृतिक गैस की आपूर्ति पूरी तरह से सुरक्षित है। सरकार ने नागरिकों से आग्रह किया है कि वे घबराकर खरीदारी न करें, ईंधन का सूझ-बूझ के साथ उपयोग करें और पीएनजी और इलेक्ट्रिक चूल्हे जैसे विकल्पों पर विचार करें।

पीएनजी कनेक्शन पर छूट दे रही एमजीएल

सुधीर पाल सिंह

सिटी गैस वितरण
कंपनी महानगर गैस
लिमिटेड (एमजीएल)
ने मंगलवार को पाइपड
नैचुरल गैस



(पीएनजी) के उपयोग को बढ़ावा देने के लिए ग्राहकों के लिए कई प्रोत्साहनों की घोषणा की। यह कदम सरकार के उस निर्देश के अनुरूप है, जिसमें परिवहन क्षेत्र के लिए घरेलू पीएनजी और सीएनजी के उपयोग को बढ़ाने पर जोर दिया गया है।

कंपनी के अनुसार घरेलू ग्राहकों के लिए 16 मार्च से 30 अप्रैल तक नए रजिस्ट्रेशन पर 500 रुपये तक की मुफ्त गैस दी जा रही है। इसके अलावा उन नई

इमारतों में जहां पीएनजी की पैठ 60 प्रतिशत से अधिक है, प्रति ग्राहक गैस बिल में 1,000 रुपये तक का समायोजन किया जाएगा। एमजीएल वेब रजिस्ट्रेशन करने वाले ग्राहकों को प्रति ग्राहक 500 रुपये का तत्काल डिस्काउंट भी दे रही है।

जमाखोरों-ब्लैक करने वालों पर 33 हजार रेड एलपीजी बुकिंग 55 लाख पर, घरेलू उत्पादन 40% बढ़ा: वैष्णव

भास्कर न्यूज़ | नई दिल्ली

केंद्रीय रेल व सूचना प्रसारण मंत्री अश्विनी वैष्णव ने बताया है कि देश की सभी रिफाइनरी उच्च क्षमता के साथ काम कर



रही हैं। इससे देश में पेट्रोल और डीजल का पर्याप्त स्टॉक है, कहीं कोई समस्या नहीं है। एलपीजी सिलेंडर की बुकिंग जो 13 मार्च को 89 लाख थी वह 19 मार्च को 3.4 लाख घटकर 55 लाख प्रतिदिन पर आ गई है। घरेलू एलपीजी सप्लाई धीरे-धीरे सामान्य हो रही है।

वैष्णव ने कहा, अमेरिका और ईरान युद्ध के पहले से अगर तुलना करें तो वर्तमान में घरेलू एलपीजी का उत्पादन रिफाइनरी में 40% बढ़ गया है। उन्होंने कहा, जमाखोरों और ब्लैक करने वालों पर सरकार सखी कर रही है। देश में 33 हजार रेड हुई हैं। इनमें 550 एफआईआर और 150 लोगों को अरेस्ट किया गया है। लगातार निगरानी के लिए 32 राज्यों में कंट्रोल रूम बनाए गए हैं। वैष्णव ने बताया, अभी कर्मशियल यूज में थोड़ी समस्या है, 20% कमी है। कर्मशियल सिलेंडर की औसत डिमांड 4.5 से 5 लाख सिलेंडर की बनी हुई है।

मार्च में 3.5 लाख नए पीएनजी कनेक्शन,

- नेचुरल गैस (पीएनजी) की कमी नहीं है। मार्च में हमने 3.5 लाख घरेलू और कर्मशियल कनेक्शन दिए। 10 लाख कनेक्शन देने पर काम कर रहे हैं। पाइप लाइन से कनेक्शन के लिए हर बाधा दूर कर रहे हैं।
- वैष्णव ने कहा, युद्ध के बावजूद सरकार स्थिति सामान्य रख रही है। 28 फरवरी से अब तक खाड़ी देशों से 3.75 लाख लोगों को सुरक्षित वापस लाया गया है।

'घरेलू LPG उत्पादन 40% बढ़ा, युद्ध से पहले के स्तर से ज्यादा'

■ NBT रिपोर्ट, नई दिल्ली

पश्चिम एशिया में जारी तनाव के बीच सरकार ने भरोसा दिलाया है कि देश में ईंधन की आपूर्ति सुरक्षित है और हालात पर लगातार नजर रखी जा रही है। सरकारी सूत्रों के अनुसार, सभी रिफाइनरियां उच्च क्षमता पर काम कर रही हैं और कच्चे तेल का पर्याप्त भंडार उपलब्ध है। देशभर के पेट्रोल पंपों पर कहीं भी ड्राई-आउट की स्थिति नहीं है और पेट्रोल-डीजल का स्टॉक पर्याप्त स्तर पर बनाए रखा गया है।

ऑनलाइन बुकिंग 84% से बढ़कर 93% तक पहुंची

घरेलू एलपीजी सिलेंडर की औसत मांग करीब 55 लाख प्रतिदिन है। ऑनलाइन बुकिंग 84% से बढ़कर 93% तक पहुंच गई है, जबकि पैनिक बुकिंग 13 मार्च को 89 लाख के उच्च स्तर से घटकर 19 मार्च को 55 लाख रह गई। पश्चिम एशिया संकट के बीच रिफाइनरियों से घरेलू एलपीजी उत्पादन में 40% की बढ़ोतरी की गई है। कमर्शियल एलपीजी की औसत मांग 4.5 से 5 लाख सिलेंडर प्रतिदिन है। सरकार ने यह भी बताया, युद्ध शुरू होने के बाद रिफाइनरियों को नें निर्देश दिए गए थे, उनके चलते देश में एलपीजी का उत्पादन बढ़ा है। अब वे युद्ध के पहले के स्तर से भी ज्यादा हो गया है।



मुंबई में मंगलवार को रिफिल के लिए खाली सिलेंडर लेकर जाते लोग।

कालाबाजारी रोकने को 33,000 छापे

सरकार के मुताबिक, जमाखोरी और कालाबाजारी रोकने पर कड़ी कर्तव्य जारी है। आवश्यक वस्तु अधिनियम के तहत अब तक 33,000 से अधिक छापे और निरीक्षण किए गए हैं, करीब 550 एफआईआर दर्ज हुई हैं और 150 लोगों को गिरफ्तार किया गया है। 32 राज्यों और केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों में कंट्रोल रूम बनाए गए हैं और निगरानी समितियां सक्रिय की गई हैं।

दो जहाज 92,600 टन एलपीजी ला रहे

होर्मुज स्ट्रेट के उस पर फारस की खाड़ी में 20 भारतीय जहाज मौजूद हैं, जिन पर 540 भारतीय नाविक सुरक्षित हैं। इनमें से 5 जहाजों पर करीब 2.33 लाख टन LPG है। भारतीय ध्वज वाले दो जहाज-पाइन गैस (45000 टन) और जग वसंत (47600 टन)- भारत आ रहे हैं, जो 26 और 27 मार्च को कांडला और न्यू मैंगलोर पोर्ट पहुंचेंगे।

सरकार का LPG सप्लाई बढ़ाने का नया इंतजाम

■ NBT रिपोर्ट, नई दिल्ली

जिन इलाकों में PNG नेटवर्क है, वहां सिटी गैस डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन कंपनियां दो अखबारों में सूचना के जरिए लोगों को जानकारी देंगी कि उनके घर में PNG कनेक्शन देना संभव है और सूचना के 3 महीनों के भीतर संबंधित परिवारों ने PNG कनेक्शन नहीं लिया, तो उनके घर LPG सिलेंडर की आपूर्ति बंद कर दी जाएगी। हालांकि



सिलीगुड़ी में गोबाइल ऐप से गैस सिलेंडर बुक करती महिला।

60 लाख घरों में PNG पाइपलाइन मौजूद है; सरकार

इलाके में PNG की पाइपलाइन बिछी होने पर भी अगर किसी घर पर तकनीकी वजह से कनेक्शन देना संभव न हो, तो उसके मामले में मंत्रालय की ओर से जारी अधिसूचना में यह बात कही गई। जिनके घरों के करीब PNG पाइपलाइन होगी, उनको उनके LPG डिस्ट्रीब्यूटर या ऑयल मार्केटिंग कंपनी की ओर से टेक्स्ट मैसेज, फोन से जानकारी दी जाएगी कि उनके यहां PNG कनेक्शन दिया जा सकता है। सरकार के मुताबिक, देश में ऐसे करीब

60 लाख घर हैं, जिनके करीब PNG पाइपलाइन मौजूद है और उन्हें आसानी से कनेक्शन दिया जा सकता है।

मंत्रालय ने कहा कि प्राकृतिक गैस और पेट्रोलियम उत्पाद वितरण (पाइपलाइनों और अन्य सुविधाओं को बिछाने, निर्माण, संचालन और विस्तार के लिए आदेश) 2026 जारी किया गया है। आदेश के मुताबिक, संबंधित इलाके के सभी घरों तक PNG पाइपलाइन बिछाने के लिए सिटी गैस डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन कंपनी के आवेदन को 48 घंटों के भीतर मंजूरी दी जाएगी। किसी घर तक कनेक्शन देने की इजाजत न मिले, तो कंपनी सार्वजनिक नोटिस जारी करेगी।

सरकार की बड़ी तैयारी : 10 लाख और पीएनजी कनेक्शन देंगे, एलपीजी उत्पादन 40% बढ़ा

एलपीजी आपूर्ति स्थिर, कालाबाजारी पर सख्ती जारी रखने और वैकल्पिक ईंधन को बढ़ावा देने पर जोर

नई दिल्ली। पश्चिम एशिया में जारी संकट के बीच देश में ईंधन आपूर्ति को सुचारु बनाए रखने के लिए केंद्र सरकार ने व्यापक कदम उठाए हैं। सरकार ने अब शहरी क्षेत्रों में एलपीजी पर निर्भरता कम करने के लिए 10 लाख नए पीएनजी कनेक्शन देने का लक्ष्य तय किया है, ताकि घरेलू और व्यावसायिक मांग का दबाव कम किया जा सके। सरकारी आंकड़ों के मुताबिक, देश में सभी रिफाइनरियां उच्च क्षमता पर काम कर रही हैं और कच्चे तेल का पर्याप्त भंडार उपलब्ध है। पेट्रोल और डीजल की आपूर्ति भी सामान्य बनी हुई है और कहीं से भी कमी या ड्राई-आउट की सूचना नहीं है। सरकार ने बड़े शहरों और शहरी इलाकों में व्यावसायिक एलपीजी उपभोक्ताओं से पीएनजी में शिफ्ट होने की अपील की है। इसी दिशा में मार्च 2026 के पहले तीन



ऑनलाइन बुकिंग में भी तेजी आई है। जहां पहले करीब 84% बुकिंग ऑनलाइन होती थी, अब यह बढ़कर लगभग 93% हो गई है। वहीं, घबराहट में की जाने वाली बुकिंग (पैनिक बुकिंग) में कमी आई है, जो 13 मार्च को 89 लाख के स्तर से घटकर 19 मार्च को 55 लाख रह गई। हालांकि व्यावसायिक एलपीजी की औसत मांग फिलहाल 4.5 से 5 लाख सिलेंडर प्रतिदिन के बीच है। इसकी आपूर्ति को चरणबद्ध तरीके से बहाल किया जा रहा है और राज्यों व केंद्र शासित प्रदेशों को 50% आवंटन दिया गया है। प्राथमिकता ढाबों, रेस्टोरेंट, होटल, सामुदायिक रसोई, अस्पताल और शैक्षणिक संस्थानों जैसे जरूरी क्षेत्रों को दी जा रही है।

ऑनलाइन बुकिंग में आई तेजी

हफ्तों में ही 3.5 लाख से अधिक पीएनजी कनेक्शन जारी किए जा चुके हैं। सिटी गैस डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन कंपनियों को रेस्टोरेंट, होटल और कैटीन जैसे प्रतिष्ठानों को प्राथमिकता से पीएनजी कनेक्शन देने के निर्देश दिए गए हैं। पीएनजी और सीएनजी सेक्टर को प्राथमिकता देते हुए घरेलू उपभोक्ताओं और परिवहन क्षेत्र को

100% सप्लाई सुनिश्चित की जा रही है, जबकि औद्योगिक और व्यावसायिक उपभोक्ताओं के लिए आपूर्ति को करीब 80% तक नियंत्रित किया गया है। सरकार ने राज्यों को सीजीडी विस्तार की मंजूरी तेजी से देने और पेट्रोलियम एवं विस्फोटक सुरक्षा संगठन (पीईएसओ) को 10 दिनों के भीतर आवेदन निपटाने के निर्देश दिए

हैं। एलपीजी के मोर्चे पर स्थिति नियंत्रण में है आंकड़ों के अनुसार एलपीजी के मोर्चे पर भी स्थिति नियंत्रण में है। घरेलू गैस सिलेंडर की औसत मांग करीब 55 लाख प्रतिदिन बनी हुई है, जबकि रिफाइनरियों से एलपीजी उत्पादन में पश्चिम एशिया संकट से पहले के मुकाबले लगभग 40% की बढ़ोतरी की गई है। ब्यूरो

केरोसिन-कोयले की आपूर्ति भी बढ़ाई गई

सरकार की ओर से केरोसिन और कोयले की आपूर्ति भी बढ़ाई गई है। राज्यों को 48,000 किलोलीटर अतिरिक्त केरोसिन आवंटित किया गया है, जबकि कोयला मंत्रालय ने भी आवंटन में वृद्धि की है।
 ■ कालाबाजारी और जमाखोरी पर लगाम लगाने के लिए सख्त कार्रवाई की जा रही है। अब तक 33,000 से अधिक छापे मारे गए, 550 एफआईआर और 150 गिरफ्तारियां हो चुकी हैं।
 ■ देशभर में कंट्रोल रूम और जिला मॉनिटरिंग समितियां भी सक्रिय कर दी गई हैं। समुद्री सुरक्षा के मोर्चे पर सरकार सतर्क समुद्री सुरक्षा के मोर्चे पर भी सरकार सतर्क है। 28 फरवरी के बाद से करीब 3.75 लाख भारतीय नागरिक प्रभावित क्षेत्रों से वापस लौट चुके हैं।

खाद का रिकॉर्ड स्टॉक, समय से आयात और कड़ी निगरानी

खरीफ सीजन 2026 से पहले उर्वरकों की उपलब्धता को लेकर सरकार ने पूरी तैयारी कर ली है। रिकॉर्ड स्तर के स्टॉक, समय से पहले आयात और सख्त निगरानी व्यवस्था के जरिये यह सुनिश्चित करने की कोशिश की जा रही है कि किसानों को किसी तरह की कमी का सामना न करना पड़े। ताजा आंकड़ों के अनुसार देश में इस समय यूरिया, डीएपी और एनपीके का भरपूर भंडार मौजूद है। 24 मार्च तक यूरिया का स्टॉक 62.40 लाख टन है, जो पिछले साल की तुलना में 5 लाख टन अधिक है।
 ■ वहीं डीएपी का भंडार 23.75 लाख टन तक पहुंच गया है, जो लगभग दोगुना है। सरकार ने मांग बढ़ने से पहले उत्पादन और आपूर्ति को संतुलित करने की रणनीति अपनाई है। रबी सीजन के बाद अप्रैल में मांग कम रहने की संभावना है, लेकिन मई से खरीफ की शुरुआत के साथ इसमें तेजी आएगी।
 ■ सामान्य परिस्थितियों में हर महीने करीब 25 लाख टन यूरिया का उत्पादन होता है, जबकि मार्च में यह लगभग 17 लाख टन रहने का अनुमान है। आगे उत्पादन बाधित न हो, इसके लिए उर्वरक संयंत्रों को मटेनेंस पहले ही मार्च में कर ली गई है।



गैस पाइपलाइन बिछाने के नियमों में बड़ा बदलाव

नई दिल्ली। देशभर में प्राकृतिक गैस आपूर्ति के बुनियादी ढांचे को नई रफ्तार देने के लिए केंद्र सरकार ने ऐतिहासिक कदम उठाया है। पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्रालय ने आवश्यक वस्तु अधिनियम, 1955 के तहत एक नया आदेश (2026) अधिसूचित किया है।

इस सुधार का मुख्य उद्देश्य पाइपलाइन बिछाने की प्रक्रिया में होने वाली देरी को खत्म करना और व्यापार करने में सहूलियत को बढ़ावा देना है। अब पाइपलाइन बिछाने के लिए आवेदन करने पर निर्धारित समय सीमा के भीतर मंजूरी नहीं मिलती तो उसे स्वतः स्वीकृत मान लिया जाएगा। दरअसल, सरकार का लक्ष्य एलपीजी से पीएनजी की ओर बदलाव को सुगम बनाना है, जिससे उपभोक्ताओं को सस्ती और निरंतर स्वच्छ ऊर्जा मिल सके। केंद्रीय पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री हरदीप सिंह पुरी ने कहा कि यह आदेश भारत को गैस आधारित अर्थव्यवस्था बनाने की दिशा में एक मील का पत्थर है। एजेंसी