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Photo by **GETTY IMAGES**; Text by **PRINCE TYAGI**

A Bharat Petroleum Corporation
oil refinery in Mumbai's Mahul

SOURCE CMIE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, PPAC

CRUDE CALCULUS

THE RECENT SOFTENING OF GLOBAL CRUDE OIL PRICES IS EXPECTED TO NARROW INDIA'S TRADE DEFICIT, OF WHICH OIL ACCOUNTED FOR 42.5 PER CENT (OR ₹9 LAKH CRORE) IN FY23. A LOOK AT THE KEY NUMBERS:

**39****PER CENT**

The decline in Brent crude oil prices in the past year—from \$122.7 a barrel in June 2022 to \$75.1 in June 2023

222.3**MILLION TONNES**

The total consumption of petroleum products in the country in FY23, up 10 per cent from 201.7 million tonnes in FY22

₹16.8**LAKH CRORE**

The value of imported crude and petroleum products in FY23, which is 29 per cent of India's total imports of ₹57.3 lakh crore

Sell stake in stock markets

Government should look at monetising its assets in this boom

The government should quickly move to take advantage of the rising stock markets and complete its divestment programme for FY 2024. So far, it has so far raised only ₹4,235 from the sale of marginal stake in Coal India and the employees' stake in Hindustan Aeronautics. It is true it has listed several Central Public Sector Units for disinvestment.

The Department of Investment and Public Asset Management has listed around nine entities where the transactions have reached stage 2, indicating that expressions of interest were issued and then closed. The nine companies include Shipping Corporation of India, IDBI Bank, BEML, NMDC, Rashtriya Nigam, and Salem Steel of SAIL. While the steel industry's boom is now in the past and this may not be the appropriate time to disinvest Salem Steel or Rashtriya Ispat, the government can explore other opportunities and take a look at other companies.

It is uncertain how long the current rally will last. If the government really wants to meet the disinvestment target of ₹51,000 crore it has set for the current year, it needs to act swiftly. The finance sector is doing well with most banks having already improved their balance sheets. Like several corporates they have also benefitted from increased credit offtake, leading to greater profits. IDBI had been incurring losses for the past 3 years but it has been nursed back to health and has been steadily growing. From a level of ₹35 in July 2022 it is currently changing hands at around ₹58. In the last year, its valuation went up 62 per cent to ₹57,000 crore. The government and LIC together hold around 94.74 per cent equity with the public holding just a little over 5 per cent.

For a considerable period, the government has been seeking a strategic buyer interested in acquiring a controlling stake in the company. EOIR rounds were extended twice. The last bid for strategic investments was invited in October last year. There have reportedly been bids for 61 per cent of the stake despite locking up 40 per cent stake for 5 years and reducing it gradually over the years. The government, especially the RBI, has to give the fit and proper certificate to the final shortlisted

bidder.

If the strategic disinvestment goes through it will create a record of sorts, being the first government sector bank (though technically deemed to be a private sector bank with the government holding below 50 per cent) to be sold to the private sector, Indian or foreign owner. However, the government cannot wait ad infinitum for the process to finally close. Otherwise, it will be another case of a BPCL which somehow failed to attract a buyer.

The government should recognise that the bank has come out of the red with the existing management. If more freedom is given to the present management, it may perform even better. If the government has to monetise its equity stake it could look for an Indian partner from a private sector bank who can accelerate its growth. The root cause of the problem was managing government interference not management.

Banks like HDFC Bank which created one of the largest banks by marketcap currently, has no ownership and is totally professionally run. Deepak Parekh and his team have shown how a totally professionally run organisation can create substantial wealth for shareholders. Given the large number of professionals who will not bow down to the diktats of any owner government. Narendra Modi, as the erstwhile chief minister of Gujarat, has also displayed how state-run Gujarat PSUs were brought on track and run by professionals in an exemplary manner.

In case it wants to ride the upside of the boom the government should look at selling off small quantities through the stock market. Having a larger and wider public ownership will also help it to gradually meet the listing norms in spirit. It can look at selling 15 per cent which will give it a minimum of ₹9,000 crore in FY24. LIC can also do likewise or at least sell 5 per cent to allow public to hold the mandatory 25 per cent stake.

Like in the case of IDBI Bank, the government could look at monetising its stake in other companies also. Raising ₹51,000 crore is not such an insurmountable problem. In some cases, even if its stake goes below 51 per cent.



Adani Total Gas Q1 Net Up 9% to ₹150 crore on Higher Volumes

Our Bureau

Mumbai: Adani Total Gas, the city gas arm of Adani Group, on Tuesday reported a 9% rise in net profit for the quarter ended June 2023. Net profit rose to ₹150 crore in the fiscal first quarter from ₹138.4 crore in the year-ago quarter.

Revenue came in 2% higher at ₹1,135 crore against ₹1,110 crore in the year-ago quarter. Ebitda was up 12% at ₹255 crore on account of higher volume, cost optimisation and a balanced price strategy.

“With the consumer centricity approach, we have expanded our horizons by increasing our reach/footprint in core CGD business and beyond natural gas through setting up EV charging stations, converting waste to CBG and exploring to set up LNG stations for long haul heavy vehicles, offering a wider range of sustainable energy solutions to all our consumers,” said Suresh P Manglani, CEO, Adani Total Gas.

CNG volume increased 18% year-on-year on account of a reduction in CNG prices along with network expansion of CNG stations,



while PNG volume decreased 6% year-on-year due to lower offtake by consumers due to lower alternative fuel prices.

In a statement, the company said despite increase in volume, revenue from operations grew marginally due to a reduction in sales price as Adani Total Gas passed through the reduction in local gas prices as per the revised pricing formula approved by the government effective April 8, 2023. Despite an increase in volume, the cost of gas remained flat due to lower domestic gas prices.

Shares in Adani Total Gas closed 0.29% lower at ₹661.45 on the BSE on Tuesday. The benchmark Sensex ended 0.10% lower.

Adani Total Gas Q1 profit increases 7%

NEW DELHI: , Aug 1 (PTI) Adani Total Gas Ltd, the city gas joint venture of Adani Group and French energy giant TotalEnergies, on Tuesday reported 7 per cent rise in June quarter net profit on the back of higher CNG sales.

Net profit of Rs 148 crore in April-June is compared with Rs 138 crore a year back, the company said in a statement.

Revenue increased 2 per cent to Rs 1,135 crore.

The firm sold 8 per cent more gas at 198 million standard cubic meters in the quarter. Of this, CNG sales rose 18 per cent to 128 mmscm.

It added 7 CNG stations to take the number to 467, and 23,928 users to take the total piped natural gas homes to 7.28 lakh.

Adani Total Gas said 141 EV charging points have been commissioned at 40 locations.

Under bio business, it is building one of India's largest biogas plants in Uttar Pradesh, with phase 1 likely to be commissioned in the fourth quarter of the current fiscal.

"In the beginning of the quarter effective April 2023, the city gas industry saw key support from Government of India notifying the stability of APM prices with floor and cap which helped Adani Total Gas Ltd (ATGL) reduce the prices of piped natural gas (PNG) and CNG making it more affordable for end consumers to opt for cleaner fuel as their preferred choice," said chief executive Suresh P Manglani. AGENCIES



Adani Total Q1 profit up 7% on higher CNG sales

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**ATF price hiked by 8.5%;
LPG rate cut by ₹100**

Jet fuel or ATF price on Tuesday was hiked by a steep 8.5 per cent - the second increase in a month, while commercial cooking gas rate was cut by Rs 100 per cylinder in line with divergent trends in international benchmarks. Aviation turbine fuel (ATF) price was increased by 7,728.38 per kilolitre, or 8.5 per cent, in the national capital to Rs 98,508.26 per kl, according to a price notification of state-owned fuel retailers.



Axe the oil windfall tax: It's outlived its rationale

What should've been a one-off levy at most has settled into on-and-off mode with an air of permanency. Roll it back. Place oil items under GST. Indirect taxes should be less distortive

From Tuesday, India's windfall tax on petroleum crude stands more than doubled to ₹4,250 per tonne from ₹1,600, while diesel now faces a levy of ₹1 per litre (as against nil earlier), according to a new government notification. As crude oil prices—which have hit a three-month high—look set to boost the profits of Indian refiners again, the Centre seems keen to get its pound of flesh. The question, though, is whether the levy should exist at all. When it was imposed on India's oil sector in mid-2022, soon after the Russia-Ukraine war broke out, it was justifiable as a one-off in aid of a fiscal recovery from a pandemic overstretch. The war's disruption of oil supplies had sent prices soaring and yielded oil businesses a bounty. As these extra profits arose from an externality rather than any strategy, it made sense for windfall makers to part with some of it to public coffers. This levy was popular in many countries around the world that had their finances left in bad shape by covid. But even though the war's oil-shock is now in the past and our economic recovery has held its momentum, the tax persists—with on-and-off charges on various items reset every fortnight. Indeed, with multiple tweaks over the past year, it exemplifies tax variability at its worst.

Given how the global oil market has been shaping up, crude trading in a range of \$80-85 per barrel these days—well below early war levels—should be taken as a sign of normalcy. The recent rally can be traced to Saudi Arabia's effort to constrain supply in attempted price support, but it has been too weak for policy attention. Nevertheless, a domestic system of fortnightly tax reviews has acquired an unfortunate air of permanence as a device to

squeeze the sector for revenues. No matter how easily companies can bear the burden, it amounts to excessive state intervention that causes business uncertainty and distorts not just the oil industry's operations, but also India's energy outlook. This is especially troublesome as we embark on a green transition calling for investments that need the assurance of policy stability. It is bad enough that a move to let market forces reshape this sector failed because state control of retail fuel prices still reigns as a prerogative at the service of political expediency. With windfall levies that vary so frequently, the cause of reforms in such an important field seems all but lost.

Taxes tend to be sticky, as seen in the case of various cesses that began as temporary levies but have developed lives of their own. The moment budgets begin to count on add-on collections, their expiry date turns into a can to be kicked down the road. In the case of windfall tax, it has only been a little more than a year. The longer we wait to roll it back, the worse this action's withdrawal pains might be for authorities. It would therefore make sense to axe the tax at the earliest. Not just that, we also need to rescue the hydrocarbon sector from legacy taxation and place it under the GST regime, which was meant to subsume all other indirect levies (and offer clarity). States that were heavily reliant on fuel mop-ups for revenues had resisted this reform in 2017 when GST was being launched. It's time to fix this anomaly. We must also prepare oil players for a system of carbon pricing at some point, as climate action will require, but before we make headway on that front, let's relieve this sector of its current jumble of tax liabilities. The *status quo* is not serving the country well.



Centre raises windfall profit tax on crude oil, diesel

New Delhi: The central government has more than doubled the windfall profit tax on production of crude oil with effect from 1 August. The tax, levied in the form of special additional excise duty has been raised from ₹1,600 a tonne to ₹4,250 a tonne. The special additional excise duty on export of diesel has also been raised from zero to ₹1 a litre from 1 August.

STAFF WRITER

India's Russian oil imports in July touch all-time high

SUKALP SHARMA
New Delhi, August 1

AFTER FALLING SEQUENTIALLY in June, India's Russian oil imports in July recovered to almost touch the all-time high level of 1.93 million barrels per day (bpd) seen in May, thanks to a jump in import volumes of Moscow's flagship Urals crude, data shared by energy cargo tracker Vortexa showed.

Going ahead, however, imports of Russian oil by Indian refiners could see some moderation due to various factors, which include export cuts by Russia and higher demand from Russian refineries, erosion in discounts offered by Moscow on its oil, and Urals breaching the G7 price cap of \$60 per barrel.

In July, Russian oil imported by Indian refiners rose 5.3% over June to 1.92 million bpd. Of this, Urals alone accounted for 83.3%. Import of Urals crude rose 17.9% sequentially in July to 1.60 million bpd. Russian oil accounted for 41.9% of India's overall oil imports of 4.58 million bpd in July, and



dwarfed the cumulative volumes of at least the next four large suppliers—Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the U.S. Urals, which is a medium-sour crude, has been the mainstay of India's Russian oil purchases. However, its price recently breached the price cap imposed by G7 countries and the discounts being offered by Russian oil exporters have eroded substantially, which could have a bearing on India-Russia oil trade, which has been booming since Moscow's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

Russia began offering deep discounts on its oil exports as major Western economies started weaning themselves off Moscow's crude. Indian refiners lapped up the opportunity, snapping up the discounted

barrels in huge quantities, resulting in Russia emerging as India's largest source of crude.

From a share of less than 2% in India's oil imports prior to the war in Ukraine, Russian crude now accounts for over 40% of Delhi's oil import pie.

"With Russia cutting crude production and ramping up its refinery runs to meet domestic demand, the country's crude exports have expectedly reduced. Exports in July are down by almost 650,000 bpd from the peak seen in April/May," said Serena Huang, head of Asia-Pacific analysis at Vortexa. Huang expects Russia's crude exports to decline more in August if its domestic refiners further ramp up production.

According to Huang, while lower Russian oil exports might result in reduced supplies to India, there are ways to prevent a slide in volumes. But that would require Indian refiners as well as Russian oil exporters to work closely and show some flexibility.



Petrol demand rises in July

New Delhi: India's petrol consumption rose in July, but diesel demand fell owing to monsoon rains and floods in some parts of the country, data showed on Tuesday. **PTI**



Petronet LNG: During the current quarter ended 30 th June, 2023, Dahej terminal processed 217 TBTU of LNG as against 172 TBTU during the previous quarter ended 31 st March, 2023 and 196 TBTU during the corresponding quarter ended 30 th June, 2022, witnessing growth of 26% and 11% respectively. The Dahej terminal witnessed a capacity utilization of 96% in the current quarter, as against 76% in the previous quarter and 87% in the corresponding quarter. The overall LNG volume processed by the Company in the current quarter was 230 TBTU, as against the LNG volume processed in the previous and corresponding quarters, which stood at 185 TBTU and 208 TBTU, reporting growth of 24% and 11% respectively.

Russia Crude Imports Up 5% in July

Demand by private refiners rises; 1.92 mbpd crude shipped, nearing record May levels

Sanjeev.Choudhary
@timesgroup.com

New Delhi: Private sector refiners helped boost India's imports of Russian oil in July after a decline in June amid reports of narrowing discounts.

India imported 1.92 million barrels a day of Russian crude in July, almost reaching the record levels of May, according to energy cargo tracker Vortexa.

Imports in July were 5% higher than in June and barely 6,000 barrels per day lower than in May.

Private sector refiners, comprising Reliance Industries and Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy, imported 21.5% more crude from Russia last month compared to June while state-run refiners reduced imports by 2.5%. The private



vate sector accounted for 37% of Russian oil imports in July.

India's imports of Russian flagship grade Urals reached a record-high of 1.6 million barrels per day in July, 18% higher than in June amid reports that its rising prices, which have breached the G7 price cap of \$60/barrel, could dissuade buyers from ordering more.

An Indian oil ministry official

complained last month that narrowing discounts on Russian oil and payment troubles could prompt state-run refiners to reduce imports from Russia.

"(Narrowing discounts) has been a strategic move by Russia given limited alternative medium-sour crude suppliers that Indian refiners can turn to amid OPEC's production cuts," said Serena Huang,

an analyst at Vortexa. "But cognisant that India and China remain key outlets for its crude, Russia will likely keep its crude attractively priced, but narrow the discounts relative to previous months."

Prices are usually linked to the average of international benchmarks in the month of loading and orders are placed at least a month in advance. The effect of higher prices would be clearer in the months ahead.

Russia's overall exports in July are down by 650,000 barrels per day from the peak seen in April/May. "With Russia cutting crude production and ramping up its refinery runs to meet domestic demand, the country's crude exports have expectedly reduced. Russia's crude exports could retreat more in August if its domestic refiners ramp up further," Huang said.

JET FUEL SALES UP 10.3% IN JULY

State-Run Cos Clock Increase in Petrol, Fall in Diesel Sales

Rains, return of private cos impact sales

Our Bureau

New Delhi: State-run oil companies sold 3.8% more petrol and 4.3% less diesel in July compared to the same month last year, with sales being impacted by heavy rains as well as the return of private sector fuel retailers to the market.

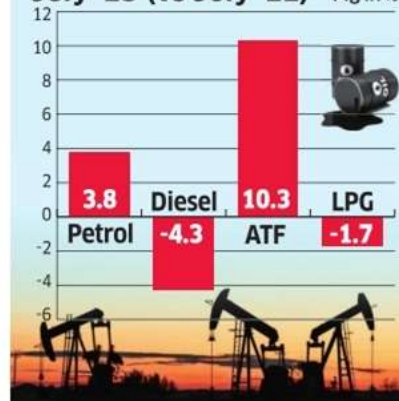
Jet fuel sales rose 10.3% year-on-year in July as airlines flew more passengers, according to the provisional sales data obtained from state-run oil marketing companies. Consumption of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), primarily used for cooking in the country, fell 1.7% in July.

Indian Oil Corp, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum obtained a larger market share last summer as

private refiners slowed sales to avoid selling at below-market prices. As international prices sharply rose last summer, state-run companies froze domestic pump prices, prompting private refiners to reduce their retail sales. Domestic prices have been at the same level since the May of last year while international prices have sharply fallen, allowing retailers to make extraordinary margins of Rs 8-9 on each litre of

Fuel Facts

Fuel Sales Growth in July '23 (vs July '22) Fig in %



Source: State-run oil cos' provisional sales data

petrol and diesel sold at the pumps. This has also brought back private sector fuel retailers who are quickly regaining market share.

Reliance-BP and Nayara Energy nearly tripled their share of the country's diesel sales to 9.4% in June from a year earlier. Private players' share in the retail sales of petrol rose to 7.8% in June from 6.8% a year earlier.

COMMERCIAL LPG PRICE CUT

Oil companies have cut the prices of commercial liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) by ₹100 per cylinder. A 19-kg refill now costs ₹1,680 in Delhi and ₹1,640.50 in Mumbai. Domestic cooking gas prices remain unchanged.

ATUL KUMAR / ANI

Touching a record high, Urals volumes boost India's Russian oil imports in July

SUKALP SHARMA
NEW DELHI, AUGUST 1

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File

large suppliers--Iraq, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the United states.

Urals, which is a medium-sour crude, has been the mainstay of India's Russian oil purchases. However, its price recently breached the price cap imposed by G7 countries and the discounts being offered by Russian oil exporters have eroded substantially, which could have a bearing on India-Russia oil trade, which has been booming since Moscow's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine.

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lapped up the opportunity, snapping up the discounted barrels in huge quantities, resulting in Russia emerging as India's largest source of crude. From a share of less than 2 per cent in India's oil imports prior to the war in Ukraine, Russian crude now accounts for over 40 per cent of Delhi's oil import pie.

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It is worth noting that Russian oil usually takes about a month to be delivered to India, which means that the impact of a fall or increase in Russian oil exports reflects about a month later in India's oil imports. Therefore, lower exports in July would only reflect in India's oil imports in August and even early September.

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अडाणी टोटल गैस का जून तिमाही में शुद्ध लाभ सात प्रतिशत बढ़ा

एजेंसी ■ नई दिल्ली

अडाणी समूह की कंपनी अडाणी टोटल गैस लिमिटेड ने मंगलवार को कहा कि अप्रैल-जून तिमाही में उसका शुद्ध लाभ सात प्रतिशत बढ़कर 148 करोड़ रुपए रहा। कंपनी ने शेयर बाजारों को तिमाही नतीजों की सूचना देते हुए कहा कि एक साल पहले की समान तिमाही में कंपनी का शुद्ध लाभ 138 करोड़ रुपए रहा था। चालू वित्त वर्ष की पहली तिमाही में कंपनी का राजस्व दो प्रतिशत बढ़कर 1,135 करोड़ रुपए हो गया। सीएनजी बिक्री बढ़ने से उसकी आय सुधरी है। इस तिमाही में अडाणी टोटल ने कुल 19.8 करोड़ घन मीटर गैस की बिक्री की। इसमें से सीएनजी की बिक्री 18 प्रतिशत बढ़कर 12.8 करोड़ घन मीटर हो गई। आलोच्य तिमाही में कंपनी के सीएनजी स्टेशनों की संख्या बढ़कर 467 हो गई जबकि वह पाइप से रसोई गैस की आपूर्ति 7.28 लाख घरों तक कर रही है। अडाणी टोटल



गैस के मुख्य कार्यपालक अधिकारी सुरेश पी मंगलानी ने कहा, अप्रैल-जून तिमाही की शुरुआत में ही सरकार ने गैस कीमतों के निर्धारण संबंधी अहम बदलाव किए थे जिससे कंपनी को पीएनजी और सीएनजी की कीमतें घटाने में मदद मिली। उन्होंने कहा कि कंपनी अब गैस वितरण के साथ इलेक्ट्रिक वाहनों की चार्जिंग स्टेशन भी लगाने में जुटी है। इसके अलावा कचरे से बायोगैस बनाने और भारी वाहनों के लिए एलएनजी स्टेशन लगाने की संभावनाएं भी तलाश रही है।

कमर्शियल एलपीजी सिलेंडर सौ रुपए सस्ता, एटीएफ महंगा



नई दिल्ली (भाषा)। विमान ईंधन या एटीएफ की कीमत में मंगलवार को 8.5 प्रतिशत की बढ़ोतरी की गई। वहीं वाणिज्यिक एलपीजी सिलेंडर की कीमत 100 रुपए घटाई गई है। सरकारी ईंधन खुदरा कंपनियों की मूल्य अधिसूचना के अनुसार, दिल्ली में विमान ईंधन या एटीएफ की कीमत प्रति किलोलीटर 7,728.38 रुपए या 8.5 प्रतिशत बढ़कर 98,508.26 रुपए प्रति किलोलीटर हो गई है। इसकी कीमतें विभिन्न राज्यों में स्थानीय चिन्ने कर या मूल्य वर्द्धित कर (वैट) के आधार पर अलग-अलग होती हैं। तेल की वैश्विक कीमतों में वृद्धि के कारण विमान ईंधन महंगा हुआ है। एटीएफ की कीमत में इससे पहले एक जुलाई को 1.65 प्रतिशत की बढ़ोतरी की गई थी। दूसरी ओर होटल और रेस्तरां जैसे प्रतिष्ठानों में इस्तेमाल होने वाले वाणिज्यिक एलपीजी के दाम 100 रुपए प्रति सिलेंडर कम किए गए हैं। दिल्ली में अब 19 किलोग्राम वाले इस सिलेंडर की कीमत 1,680 रुपए है। वाणिज्यिक एलपीजी के दाम अप्रैल से तीन बार कम किए गए हैं, जिससे 19 किलोग्राम वाले सिलेंडर की कीमत में कुल 346.5 रुपए तक की कटौती हुई। वहीं रसोई गैस की कीमत में कोई बदलाव नहीं किया गया है। राष्ट्रीय राजधानी में 14.2 किलोग्राम वाले सिलेंडर की कीमत 1,103 रुपए है। घरेलू गैस सिलेंडर की कीमत में एक मार्च से कोई बदलाव नहीं किया गया है। उस समय प्रति सिलेंडर 50 रुपए बढ़ाए गए थे।

कमर्शियल एलपीजी सिलेंडर 100 रु. सस्ता



नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी): विमान ईंधन या एटीएफ की कीमत में मंगलवार को 8.5 प्रतिशत की बढ़ोतरी की गई। वहीं वाणिज्यिक एलपीजी सिलेंडर की कीमत 100 रुपये घटाई गई है। होटल और रेस्तरां जैसे प्रतिष्ठानों में इस्तेमाल होने वाले वाणिज्यिक एलपीजी के दाम 100 रुपये प्रति सिलेंडर कम किए गए हैं। दिल्ली में अब 19 किलोग्राम वाले इस सिलेंडर की कीमत 1,680 रुपये है। वाणिज्यिक एलपीजी के दाम अप्रैल से तीन बार कम किए गए हैं, जिससे 19 किलोग्राम वाले सिलेंडर की कीमत में कुल 346.5 रुपये तक की कटौती हुई। वहीं रसोई गैस की कीमत में कोई बदलाव नहीं किया गया है।

वाणिज्यिक सिलेंडर 100 रुपये सस्ता

नई दिल्ली, एजेंसी। होटल और रेस्तरां जैसे प्रतिष्ठानों में इस्तेमाल होने वाले वाणिज्यिक एलपीजी के दाम मंगलवार को 100 रुपये प्रति सिलेंडर घटा दिए गए। दिल्ली में अब 19 किलोग्राम वाले इस सिलेंडर की कीमत 1,680 रुपये है। वहीं, रसोई गैस की कीमत में कोई बदलाव नहीं किया गया है।

वाणिज्यिक एलपीजी के दाम अप्रैल से तीन बार कम किए गए हैं, जिससे 19 किलोग्राम वाले सिलेंडर की कीमत में कुल 346.5 रुपये तक की कटौती हुई। वहीं, घरेलू गैस सिलेंडर की कीमत में एक मार्च से कोई बदलाव नहीं किया गया है।