

## EXPANSION OF PRADHAN MANTRI UJJWALA YOJANA

# Govt approves ₹1,650 cr for 75 lakh new PMUY connections over 3 years

SUKALP SHARMA

NEW DELHI, SEPTEMBER 13

THE UNION Cabinet on Wednesday approved the expansion of the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) in order to add 75 lakh poor households to the scheme's beneficiary base over three years at an estimated cost of Rs 1,650 crore. The nod to the PMUY expansion and the scheme of release of grant to public sector oil marketing companies (OMCs) for the same follows the government's August 29 announcement of slashing cooking gas prices for all domestic consumers by Rs 200 per cylinder and expanding the beneficiary base of PMUY to 10.35 crore from 9.60 crore at present.

The price cut and expansion of PMUY, which came ahead of Assembly elections in five states later this year and the Lok Sabha elections next year, was described by the government as its gift to the people on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan and Onam.

The Rs 1,650 crore estimate is only for the cost of connection to the new 75 lakh beneficiaries of the PMUY over 2023-24, 2024-25, and 2025-26, and does not include the targeted subsidy of Rs



The per-cylinder subsidy of Rs 200 is borne by the government. File

200 per 14.2-kg cooking gas cylinder for up to 12 refills per year. Under the PMUY, cooking gas connections are issued to women members of poor households, and the connection, stove, and the first cylinder are given free of charge. The per-cylinder subsidy of Rs 200, which beneficiaries get as a bank transfer from the OMCs, is also borne by the government as the OMCs are reimbursed for it. "Some eligible households still do not have LPG (liquefied petroleum gas) connection. This is due to multiple reasons—new households are formed every year as a

result of rising population, marriages, migration, nuclearisation of families, left over households, extremely remote locations, etc... PMUY has been widely praised as a successful social welfare scheme which has majorly contributed to the increase in LPG penetration in the country from 62% in 2016 to near saturation now," the government said in a release on Wednesday.

As per government data, the average LPG refill rate for PMUY beneficiaries was 3.71 cylinders for financial year 2022-23 in terms of 14.2-kg cylinders. Going by the

current beneficiary base of 9.6 crore, the total number of 14.2-kg cylinders consumed by PMUY consumers comes out to be 35.6 crore per year, resulting in a subsidy outgo of over Rs 7,100 crore per year, calculations show. For the targeted 10.35 crore beneficiary base, the annualised cooking gas subsidy bill, assuming the PMUY refill rate stays at 3.71 cylinders per year and subsidy remains constant Rs 200 per cylinder, would be around Rs 7,700 crore.

The government had stopped providing cooking gas subsidy in the early months of the 2020-21 fiscal, when global oil and fuel prices had crashed. Later, the subsidy was brought back, but only for poor households covered under the PMUY.

While the government will bear the cost of expanding the PMUY beneficiary base and the consequent increase in subsidy outgo, it is unlikely to foot the expense for the price cut and the OMCs are expected to absorb the hit, at least for the time being, according to people in the know.

As per The Indian Express's analysis of current cooking gas refill rates and the total domestic consumer base, the Rs 200-per-cylinder price cut alone could cost over Rs 36,000 crore on an annu-

alised basis, assuming refill rates remain constant and fuel retailers continue to sell LPG to households at a price that is Rs 200 lower than what they would have charged for a cylinder had the price cut not been announced.

The actual cost could be different from this estimate as there are a number of variables in the equation. These include possible over recoveries on LPG sales by fuel retailers, movement in international crude and LPG prices going ahead, and currency fluctuations. On its part, the government has not provided any estimate of the cost of the price cut.

Even as the government was not giving any subsidy to non-PMUY consumers, it did provide a one-time grant of Rs 22,000 crore to the three OMCs last year to compensate them for selling LPG at a loss for the previous two years, which had resulted in accumulated losses of Rs 28,000 crore. The grant came at a time when the OMCs were grappling with significant losses, particularly in the fuel retail segment. However, the companies have now largely recovered from last year's losses and industry insiders do not expect the government to be as eager to help the companies through a special financial grant.

# Cabinet allocates ₹1,650 crore to release 75L free LPG connections



**PIONEER NEWS SERVICE ■**  
NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday allocated Rs 1,650 crore towards the release of an additional 75 lakh free LPG connections under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) over three years ending March 2026. As per the existing modalities of Ujjawala 2.0, the first refill and stove will also be provided free of cost to Ujjwala beneficiaries, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur told reporters after the meeting of the Union Cabinet.

Thakur said Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the extension of PMUY for the release of 75 lakh LPG connections over three years from Financial Year 2023-24 to 2025-26. The total financial

implication will be Rs 1,650 crore. A targeted subsidy of Rs 200 per 14.2 kg LPG cylinder for up to 12 refills per year is being provided to PMUY consumers. With the release of an additional 75 lakh connections, the number of PMUY beneficiaries will go up to 10.35 crore.

The total financial implication will be Rs 1,650 crore. This includes Rs 2,200 per connection (14.2 kg single bottle connection/ 5 kg double bottle connection), and Rs 1,300 per connection (5 kg single bottle connection).

An official release on the Cabinet decision said some eligible households still do not have LPG connections. This is due to multiple reasons – new households are formed every year as a result of rising population, marriages, migration, nuclearisation of families, leftover



households, extremely remote locations etc.

There is demand for 15 lakh PMUY connections as of August 31, 2023. Last month, the Government on Tuesday announced a Rs 200 per cylinder cut in prices of domestic cooking gas to soften the impact of rising inflation on households. A 14.2-kg LPG cylinder in the national capital cost Rs 903. For Ujjwala beneficiaries, the price of an LPG cylinder is Rs 703 after considering the continuing Rs 200 per cylinder subsidy. Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana was launched by the Prime Minister in May 2016 to provide LPG connections to women of below poverty line (BPL) families. PMUY has majorly contributed to increase in LPG penetration in the country from 62 per cent in 2016 to near saturation now, the release said.



# Cabinet clears ₹1,650 cr for free LPG connections, ₹7,210 cr for eCourts proj

*Additional 75 lakh free LPG connections to be released*

## OUR CORRESPONDENT

**NEW DELHI:** In a major decision, the Union Cabinet, which is chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has on Wednesday allocated Rs 1,650 crore towards the release of an additional 75 lakh free LPG connections under the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) over a period of three years from financial year 2023-24 to 2025-26.

In another important decision, the Union Cabinet approved the third phase of eCourts Project as a central sector scheme with a financial outlay of Rs 7,210 crore to be implemented over four years.

While briefing about the Cabinet decisions, Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur said that in case of Ujjwala 2.0, the first refill and stove will be provided free of cost to Ujjwala beneficiaries by the Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) and the cost of refill and two-burner stove, which amounts to Rs 2,200 per beneficiary, will be reimbursed to OMCs by the Central government.

Explaining about the eCourts Mission Mode Project, the union minister said that

the project is the prime mover for improving access to justice using technology in line with the PM's vision of "Sabka Sath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas." With this, all the courts in the country would become digital and paperless, he said.

A targeted subsidy of Rs 200 per 14.2 kg LPG cylinder for up to 12 refills per year is being provided to PMUY consumers. With the release

of an additional 75 lakh connections, the number of PMUY beneficiaries will go up to 10.35 crore.

The decision in this regard has been taken to cover most of the eligible beneficiaries under the PMUY as some eligible households still do not have LPG connections due to multiple reasons such as new households are formed every year as a result of rising population, marriages, migration, nuclearisation of families, leftover households, extremely remote locations, etc.

Phase III of the e-Courts Project, beginning 2023, in India is rooted in the philosophy of "access and inclusion", the minister said, adding that the third phase is aimed at ushering in a regime of maximum ease of



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## Free LPG

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justice by moving towards digital, online and paperless courts through digitisation of the entire court records, including legacy records and by bringing in universalisation of e-filing/e-payments through saturation of all court complexes with e-Sewa Kendras.

It will put in place intelligent smart systems enabling data-based decision-making for judges and registries while scheduling or prioritising cases, the minister said.

The main objective of the Phase-III is to create a unified technology platform for the judiciary which will provide a seamless and paperless interface between the courts, the litigants and other stakeholders.

The allocation of Rs 7,210 crore witnesses a four-fold jump in budget allocation from Rs 1,670 crore allocated in 2015 for the Phase 2 of the project. In the first phase, the government had allocated Rs 639 crore.

The third phase of e-courts also aims to add Artificial Intelligence into the judicial system and introduce features like Optical Character Recognition (OCR) for analysis of case pendency and forecasting future litigation as well.

The third phase of e-courts project will be implemented under the joint partnership of Department of Justice, Ministry of Law & Justice and eCommittee of the Supreme Court of India.

Also, there will be tripartite agreement between the Central government, high courts and state governments.

The upkeep and maintenance of facilities at e-courts would be the responsibility of state governments.



# Delhi concerned over Russia oil output cuts

Indian state-run companies have invested \$16 bn in Russian energy assets

Rituraj Baruah & Utpal Bhaskar  
NEW DELHI

India is concerned about Russia's successive crude production cuts to comply with the Opec+ agreement by curtailing production even from assets where Indian state-run firms are stakeholders, two people close to the matter said.

"The Russians have reduced production as part of Opec+. However, India is not a part of it, yet production is being reduced wherein foreign entities are partners. With Russian production coming down, the volume of oil available in the global market has also come down. With Iranian and Venezuelan oil off the table, the world is being starved of oil. We have raised the issue at several levels," one of the two people said on condition of anonymity.

State-run ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL), Bharat Petroresources Ltd, Indian Oil Corp. Ltd (IOCL) and Oil India Ltd

## CRUDE IMPACT

The country imports more than 80% of its oil requirements, and the production cuts have led to a surge in oil prices.

India's top 5 sources of oil imports in April-June 2023 (in \$ bn)



Source: Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell

Indian crude basket price in 2023-24 (in \$/bbl)



## PAIN POINT

INDIA has voiced concerns about rising oil prices

IT is the world's third-largest oil importer

OIL price rise can raise India's import bill, stoke inflation

SARVESH KUMAR SHARMA/MINT

(OIL) have invested a total of \$16 billion in Russia. While OVL, the overseas unit of Oil and Natural Gas Corp. (ONGC) Ltd, owns a 20% stake in the Sakhalin-I hydrocarbon block, a consortium of OVL, OIL, IOCL and Bharat Petroresources own 49.9% in Rosneft's subsidiary CSJC Vank-

orneft. Also, another consortium comprising OIL, IOCL and Bharat Petroresources owns 29.9% of LLC Taas-Yuryakh.

A second government official, however, said India is not "unduly" worried about the development. "Everybody will cut production because

they want the price to rise, but they also need to sell. We raise it to the Russians all the time," the person said, also on condition of anonymity.

India, the world's third-largest oil importer, has voiced concerns about rising oil prices amid a precarious global economic recovery.

India imports more than 80% of its oil requirements, and the production cuts have contributed to a surge in oil prices. India is particularly vulnerable as any increase in global prices can affect its import bill, stoke inflation and widen trade deficit. India's import of crude oil and petroleum products rose 29.5% to \$209.57 billion in 2022-23.

Queries emailed to the spokespeople for the Russian embassy in New Delhi, India's ministries of external affairs, and petroleum and natural gas, Rosneft, OVL, Bharat Petroresources, IOCL and OIL on 6 September remained unan-

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# Russia oil production cuts worry New Delhi

FROM PAGE 1

swered till press time.

Amid the growing volatility in the energy market and voluntary cuts by major oil producers, India is also considering reducing its dependence on crude oil. The recent launch of the Global Biofuels Alliance with India is seen as a move in that direction. A statement from the petroleum ministry on 11 September said the alliance would help reduce the world's dependence on petrol and diesel.

Oil prices have been elevated for around two months now, with Brent crude trading at \$92.62 a barrel and West Texas Intermediate at \$89.43 a barrel at press time. The cost of the Indian basket of crude, comprising Oman, Dubai and Brent crude, was \$92.65 per barrel on 12 September, according to Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell data.

The discount on Russian crude oil supplies to Indian refiners has also been dwindling. Russia emerged as a major supplier to Indian refiners for the first time in 2022-23 after it started giving oil at discounted rates amid the Ukraine war. According to data from the Union ministry of commerce and industry, oil imports from Russia have continued to rise in this fiscal. During the first quarter of 2023-24, crude oil imports from Russia rose nearly three-fold from a year earlier. The value of imports from Russia in the three months to June stood at \$12.36 billion, almost tripling from a year earlier.

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# Diesel sales fade amid strict norms

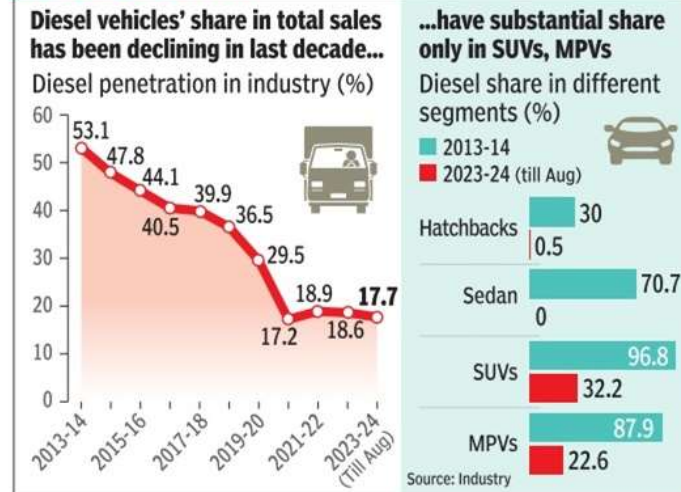
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**New Delhi:** Road transport and highways minister Nitin Gadkari may be making a case to tax diesel cars more as he pitches relatively greener technologies, but a look at the industry's numbers shows that diesel has already lost sway with buyers.

According to data sourced by TOI for April-August 2023 period, the share of diesels has come down to 0.5% for passenger cars and zero for sedans as consumers opted for petrols, CNGs, and to a very small degree for hybrids and electrics. Although diesel models amount to 33% of sales for SUVs, their share has come down from 97% in 2013-14.

Diesels, which once ruled the roost in the Indian passenger vehicle market due to higher fuel efficiency and better torque, have been on a downward spiral over the past decade, following adverse action by courts, regulators, and even

## LOSING SWAY WITH BUYERS



tax authorities, who have blamed it for growing pollution across many cities. While the government has stipulated strict norms for emissions from diesel engines, including in BS6 guidelines, these vehicles have been ordered to have a 10-year lifespan in the Delhi-NCR region even as other vehicles enjoy 15 years.

Shashank Srivastava, director (sales & marketing) at Maruti Suzuki, said the company was among the first ones to have spotted the trend of declining diesel demand, and thus halt production. "Today, petrols, hybrids, and CNGs are much more practical and preferred by car owners. CNG has been growing rapidly and we see it

as the diesel alternative for buyers." For Maruti, the share of CNGs to its total sales is 25% at present, and has been growing fast.

However, many companies who have diesels in their portfolio say it is still useful for their sales, especially SUVs. "As we see it, demand remains strong for our diesels. Consider this: if waiting on our petrols is around four weeks, that on diesels is 10-12 weeks," Tarun Garg, COO of Hyundai in India, said. "In Creta, 42% of total sales are through diesel, and the same is 66% for Alcazar, 61% for Tucson, and 21% for Venue. We will continue to have diesel in our portfolio and get more cars."

Santosh Iyer, MD of Mercedes-Benz India, said sales of diesels is around 55% in the company's portfolio. "We still get significant demand for diesel and will continue to have them, even as we gradually transition to electrics, which are currently 5% of our sales."



**OIL INDIA LIMITED** held its 64 th AGM on 09 th Sept. 2023. Dr Ranjit Rath, CMD in his address to the shareholders, thanked all investors and shareholders for their continuous trust & investment in the company leading OIL to join the league of Maharatna CPSEs of the Country. Dr Rath in his address highlighted the achievements of the OIL on various fronts including the production of Crude Oil and natural gas which recorded a growth of 5.5% (3.18 MMT) & 4.4% (3.18 BCM) respectively. The company registered the highest-ever standalone profit after tax in FY 2022-23 at Rs.6,810 cr, a growth of 75.20% YoY while the consolidated PAT was also the highest ever at 9,854 cr, a growth of 46.66% YoY. Dr Rath mentioned that marching towards fulfilling the vision of Urja Atmnrabharta for a New India, OIL's strategy is to consolidate its position as the leading operator in the country with the long-term vision to supplement the existing domestic reserves portfolio in line with the Government of India's vision to intensify exploration in Indian Sedimentary Basins and increase domestic oil and gas production. The Company has increased its total operating acreage to 62,911 Sq Km. Aggressive exploration of the company led to a new hydrocarbon discovery during the year in the Sesabil area in the Assam Shelf Basin. OIL has 2P reserve base of 191 MMTOE & 51 MMTOE of Oil & Oil Equivalent of Gas respectively in domestic assets and overseas assets.





**ONGC** There is no damage to either farmers or fishermen due to the minor oil spill near Uran beach recently. In the morning hours of 08 September 2023, a minor quantity of oil leaked from one of the crude oil storage tanks at ONGC Uran Plant. Due to heavy rains, the leaked oil entered the storm water drain channel. As the quantity of oil leakage from the plant area was minimal, the leaked oil got trapped between rocks on the beach with only traces reaching the shoreline. Immediately, the Oil Spill Response (OSR) team from ONGC was deployed to avoid ingress of oil into the sea and cleaning of the shore line commenced on war footing. Due to heavy rains on the day of the incident and the beach being a rocky area, the cleaning took a lot of effort. Due to the ONGC team's timely and tireless efforts, the oil did not enter the sea and no damage to marine life is anticipated.



## **LIC ups stake in MGL to 9.03% from 7.02%**

Life Insurance Corp of India increased its stake in Mahanagar Gas Ltd to 9.03% from 7.02% between Jan 4, 2022 and Sep 12, 2023 through open market purchase. Following this, the number of shares held by LIC in Mahanagar Gas has increased to 8.92 mln from 6.93 mln.



# Biofuel alliance can make us SAF export hub: Puri

India looking to mandate the blending of 1% SAF in domestic commercial flights

SUBHAYAN CHAKRABORTY

New Delhi, 13 September

The recently launched Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA) can turn India into a major production and export hub for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) and give the country a chance to set international standards in the sector, Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas Hardeep Singh Puri told *Business Standard*.

"India has the feedstock for producing 19-24 million tonnes of SAF a year. The estimated maximum requirement of SAF in the country, even considering a 50 per cent blend, is 8-10 million tonnes per year by 2030," he said.

However, domestic demand will also be high. India is looking to mandate the blending of 1 per cent SAF in all domestic commercial flights in the next two years.

"Calculated on the basis of litres, India would require around 140 million litres of SAF per annum by 2025 with 1 per cent SAF blending in jet fuel. With a 5 per cent SAF blend, India will require around 700 million litres per annum," the minister said. Aviation contributes 2 per cent of global energy-related greenhouse gas emissions. However, SAF has the potential to reduce such emissions by up to 80 per cent.

"Countries like the United Arab Emirates or Singapore won't be producing because of their geographical position. Here India has the opportunity to establish norms for SAF and benefit from it," he said.

## Changing scenario

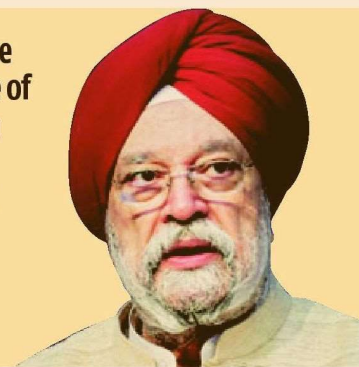
In its bid to reduce the carbon footprint in aviation, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) has adopted an aspirational goal of 2 per cent annual fuel efficiency improvement through 2050. It also wants to hit Carbon Neutral Growth from 2020 onwards, and net zero by 2050.

Countries like the UAE or Singapore won't be producing (SAF) because of their geographical position. India has the opportunity to establish norms for SAF and benefit from it



**HARDEEP SINGH PURI**

Union Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas



## What is sustainable aviation fuel?

Sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) refers to waste-derived aviation fuel. Unlike traditional jet fuels, it is made from various sources such as used cooking oil, agricultural waste, municipal solid waste, fats or non-food crops, and forestry

residue. This gives it the potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 80 per cent. To date, Airbus and Boeing aircraft are capable of flying with up to a 50 per cent blend of SAF. Both manufacturers aim to enable 100 per cent SAF capability by 2030.

Local production of SAF is critical because Indian airlines will have to offset carbon emissions generated from international flights from 2027. This is part of the global Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA), launched by the ICAO. CORSIA is implemented in three phases, with voluntary participation allowed in the first two phases (2021-26).

While India has decided not to participate in these phases, local carriers would need to follow their international counterparts after that date. In May, Puri had inaugurated the first domestic flight powered by a 1 per cent blend of indigenously produced SAF.

Domestic companies are producing SAF. State-owned Indian Oil Corporation has inked a joint venture with industrial biotechnology company Praj Industries, which had produced the SAF for this

flight. The Mumbai-based company has developed a breakthrough in alcohol-to-jet technology, using bio-based feedstock.

Indian Oil Corporation is also in the process of establishing a plant in Panipat, Haryana, to make SAF in a partnership with US-based cleantech company LanzaJet. To come up at its Panipat refinery at ₹3,000 crore over two and a half years, it will convert corn-based cellulose, or sugar-based ethanol, into SAF, officials have said. It would have an initial capacity to produce 85,000 tonnes of fuel annually.

The segment also has large financial implications for the farming sector. "1 per cent SAF blending can benefit more than 500,000 farmers, who can supply sugarcane as feedstock. Additionally, more than 100,000 green jobs will be generated," the minister said.



# Delhi worried over Russia oil output cut

Indian state-run companies have invested \$16 bn in Russian energy assets

Utpal Bhaskar & Rituraj Baruah

utpal.b@livemint.com

**NEW DELHI:** India has raised concerns about Russia's successive crude production cuts to comply with the Opec+ agreement by curtailing production from assets where Indian state-run firms are stakeholders, two people close to the matter said.

The concerns were voiced during Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov's visit to India to attend the G20 Summit in New Delhi over the weekend. Lavrov led the Russian delegation as President Vladimir Putin skipped the meeting.

"The Russians have reduced production as part of Opec+. However, India is not a part of it, yet production is being reduced wherein foreign entities are partners. With Russian production coming down, the volume of oil available in the



State-run ONGC Videsh Ltd, BPCL, IOC and Oil India Ltd invested a total of \$16 bn in Russia. REUTERS

global market has also come down. With Iranian and Venezuelan oil off the table, the world is being starved of oil. We have raised the issue at several levels," one of the two people cited above said, requesting anonymity.

State-run ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL), Bharat Petroresources Ltd, Indian Oil Corp and Oil India Ltd (OIL) have invested a

total of \$16 billion in Russia. While OVL, the overseas unit of ONGC, owns a 20% stake in the Sakhalin-1 hydrocarbon block, a consortium of OVL, OIL, IOC and Bharat PetroResources own 49.9% in Rosneft's subsidiary CSJC Vankorneft.

Also, another consortium comprising OIL, IOC and Bharat Petroresources owns 29.9% of LLC Taas-Yuryakh.

A second government official, however, said India is not "unduly worried about the development. "Everybody will cut production because they want the price to rise, but they also need to sell. We raise it to the Russians all the time," the person said, also requesting anonymity.

India, the world's third-largest oil importer, has voiced

concerns about rising oil prices and advocated a gradual reduction in output amid a precarious global economic recovery.

India imports more than 80% of its oil requirements, and the production cuts have contributed to a surge in oil prices. India is particularly vulnerable as any increase in global prices can affect its import bill, stoke inflation and widen trade deficit. India's import of crude oil and petroleum products rose 29.5% to \$209.57 billion in FY23.

Queries emailed to the spokespeople for the Russian embassy in New Delhi, India's ministries of external affairs, and petroleum and natural gas, Rosneft, OVL, Bharat Petroresources, Indian Oil Corp., and Oil India on 6 September remained unanswered till press time. Amid the growing volatility in the energy market and voluntary cuts by major oil producers, India is also considering reducing its dependence on crude oil. The recent launch of the Global Biofuels Alliance with India is seen as a move in that direction. A statement from the petroleum ministry on September 11 said the

alliance would help reduce the world's dependence on petrol and diesel.

Oil prices have been elevated for around two months now, with Brent crude trading at \$92.62 a barrel and West Texas Intermediate at \$89.43 a barrel at press time.

The cost of the Indian basket of crude, comprising Oman, Dubai and Brent crude, was \$92.65 per barrel on September 12, according to Petroleum Planning & Analysis Cell data.

The discount on Russian crude oil supplies to Indian refiners has also been dwindling. Russia emerged as a major supplier to Indian refiners for the first time in FY23 after it started giving oil at discounted rates amid the Ukraine war. According to data from the Union ministry of commerce and industry, oil imports from Russia have continued to rise in this fiscal.

During the first quarter of FY24, crude oil imports from Russia rose nearly three-fold from a year earlier. The value of imports from Russia in the three months to June stood at \$12.36 billion, almost tripling from a year earlier.



## THE COMPASS

# Strong growth outlook for city gas distributors

DEVANGSHU DATTA

The city gas distribution (CGD) companies are optimistic about long-term growth prospects as their robust balance sheets are capable of handling investments through low or zero leverage, given the strong operating cash flow. Several positive factors are driving the CGD business at the moment. One is that domestic gas prices (APM gas) have been frozen, or rather a ceiling set, reducing volatility. There is no real alternative to cooking gas for most households and gas is an attractive alternative to petrol and diesel for transport.

There's investment in geographical expansion, regulatory support due to the pollution control policy, and gas imports are not a problem.

CGD companies are also investing to digitise customer services and improve their tech infra.

The bigger players are also looking at consolidation by merger and acquisition of small players and examining renewables (solar, hydrogen).

The current environment does not allow for much CGD pricing power

however, and any significant price hikes in liquefied natural gas (LNG) would have to be absorbed rather than passed on.

Roughly speaking, every \$1 /mmbtu increase in blended gas cost for the domestic and CNG segment leads to a negative impact of ₹3/scm on the margins for compressed natural gas (CNG), and needs a price hike of about ₹4.4/kg or so for CNG and ₹3.2/scm to cover the impact.

Since April, CGD companies have reduced prices to pass on the \$2/mmbtu dip in priority sector gas prices. This leaves gas at a serious price discount compared to petrol and diesel.

The CGD companies will probably not hike to compensate for short-term spikes. Any increase in blended gas costs for FY24E will constrain profitability.

Demand for gas is likely to revive given improved availability at a reasonable cost.

There is a focus on incentives and promotions to drive light commercial vehicle (LCV) conversion and OEM sales of gas vehicles.

Higher gas-driven LCV would result in a jump in volumes since each LCV consumes 15-17 kg of CNG per fill vs 8-9 kg for passenger vehicles.

Investments into LNG fuelling stations would add to the convenience for trucks, apart from the cost-cum-environmental benefits of switching to LNG.

The sector's return on equity (ROE) is around 17-20 per cent and

this seems attractive since return on capital employed is also at the higher end of the same range.

By using internal accruals to invest, CGD players could push up the

ROE by reducing the equity component and pushing up revenues.

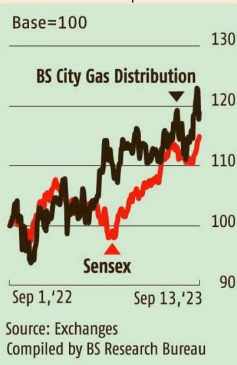
The government is looking to push up the share of natural gas to around 15 per cent in the energy mix from the current 6 per cent.

The regulator, PNGRB, has been active in issuing new CGD licenses, which have a footprint of 75-80 per cent of India's population. Import facilities (terminals, evacuation infrastructure) for LNG are also being developed. Each of the companies is looking to add 60-100 CNG stations per year, accompanied by pipeline connectivity.

Pressurised natural gas (PNG) expansion is also on the cards. They are also eyeing green hydrogen blending into PNG.

Among the key players, Gujarat Gas is uniquely positioned with exposure to industrial gas usage in Morbi, whereas other companies primarily focus on transport and households.

This makes it subject to market re-rating based on fluctuating industrial demand, while other companies benefit from more stable consumer bases.





## Oil rises as supply cuts offset inflation worries



Oil prices traded higher on Wednesday as expected tight crude supply for the rest of the year offset inflation concerns. Saudi Arabia and Russia's extension of 1.3 million barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil production cuts to the end of this year will lock in a substantial market deficit through the fourth quarter, the International Energy Agency (IEA) said on Wednesday.

The continuing supply cuts could lift Brent futures above the \$100 a barrel threshold before the end of the year, Bank of America analysts said on Wednesday.

US consumer prices rose in August by their most in more than a year, the Bureau of Labour Statistics said on Wednesday, driven by a 10.6 per cent increase in retail gasoline prices. Excluding volatile food and energy components, the consumer price index rose by 0.3 per cent.

Benchmark Brent futures rose 40 cents, or 0.43 per cent, to \$92.46 a barrel by 1252 GMT while US West Texas Intermediate (WTI) crude gained 41 cents, or 0.46 per cent, to \$89.25. **REUTERS**

# Economic indicators, need to cut imports call for petchem investments: BPCL CMD

**Lalatendu Mishra**

MUMBAI

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd.'s (BPCL) investment in the petrochemical sector is driven by the synergistic advantages of integrating petrochemicals business with refinery operations, and the business upsides arising out of diversification of the product portfolio, Chairman and Managing Director G. Krishnakumar said in an e-mail interview.

Recently, BPCL had announced plans to invest ₹49,000 crore to set up a petrochemicals complex at its Bina Refinery in Madhya Pradesh and to increase



G. Krishnakumar

the refinery capacity from 7.8 MMTPA to 11 MMTPA. Prime Minister Narendra Modi will lay the foundation stone of the project at the site on Thursday. Stating that petrochemical penetration in India was significantly below the global average, with per capita consumption at just 12 kg,

in contrast with the global average of 35 kg, Mr. Krishnakumar said there was a potential to add \$55 billion of domestic production over the next 5 years across all manufacturing sectors. "The Indian demand for polymers is expected to grow 5% CAGR until 2040.

"These economic indicators and the need for reducing imports makes investments in petrochemicals an essential contribution towards nation building and a prudent commercial decision," he said. The Bina petrochemicals complex has the added advantage of synergies with the refinery operations, including the

sourcing of feedstock from both the Bina and Mumbai refineries, he added.

"Importantly, petrochemicals offer a strategic diversification opportunity in the face of a changing global energy basket," he said, explaining the rationale behind the investment. The project's key component would be an ethylene cracker which would come up with associated downstream petchem units. "BPCL's share of petrochemicals in its product portfolio is expected to increase to approximately 8% with an expanded product portfolio including polypropylene" HDPE, LLDPE and BTX, he said.



# The complex path to biofuel sustainability

Until a few years ago, working on biofuels called for constant justification in the face of electric vehicles (EVs) taking over the world. Today, while there is no doubt that EV adoption has amplified over the years, there is growing awareness of the fact that no decarbonisation strategy is trade-off-free. For instance, for a transition to EVs, existing internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles and the supporting infrastructure need to be replaced entirely, which is capital intensive. Further, the required batteries and critical minerals used in them need to be imported, adding to environmental concerns on how these minerals are mined, among other issues. Biofuels, on the other hand, can be used in existing ICE engines and infrastructure with little to no modifications (depending on the blending rates) and offer import independence.

However, 'biofuel' is a blanket term that includes both sustainable and unsustainable fuels, and an understanding of their difference will be essential to drive effective decarbonisation action.

## The challenges in India

In India, biofuel is synonymous with first-generation (1G) ethanol, which is primarily sourced from food crops. The policy target in India of achieving 20% ethanol blending with petrol (E20) by 2025-26 is expected to be met almost entirely by 1G ethanol made from sugar cane and foodgrains. Second-generation (2G) ethanol, which is made from crop wastes and residues, is unlikely to contribute much to achieving this target due to several challenges related to feedstock supply chain and scaling up.

The groundwater depletion implications of growing sugar cane are well known, but the food security implications of groundwater depletion and of using foodgrains for ethanol production are harder to imagine because India is currently a



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Any strategy needs to be carefully examined in the context of the larger ecosystem to avoid negative consequences

surplus food producer. But there are several reasons why diverting the surplus produce towards energy or specifically growing a crop for energy may not be a sustainable strategy.

First, India's crop yields have already stagnated, and global warming is expected to reduce yields, which means that the same area under cultivation (arable land) will produce less with time but will need to suffice for a growing population. So, our strategy to meet blending targets cannot depend on surplus crop production.

Second, a recent study led by the University of Michigan projected that the rates of groundwater depletion could triple during 2040-81 compared with the current rate. This is again attributable to temperature rise and the resultant increase in crop water requirements. With such limited resources, be it groundwater or arable land, food production should be prioritised over fuel.

Third, the agriculture sector is one of the hardest-to-abate in terms of direct greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. So, increasing GHG emissions from this sector for motor fuel production in order to decrease GHG emissions from the transport sector is an unnecessary balancing loop that would achieve little net benefit.

In India, the ethanol blending policy has been a good strategy to deal with the surplus sugar production. Another good strategy to deal with the surplus sugar production would be to reduce surplus sugar cane cultivation. Increasing farmer income is often waved as a white flag in response to this argument, but sugar cane being a remunerative crop has more to do with government intervention than anything else. This means that any unassuming crop could be made as remunerative as sugar cane if so desired.

'Sustainable' biofuels are produced from crop residues and other wastes, with low water and GHG footprint. The Global Biofuels Alliance that

was formed at the G-20 Summit in New Delhi last week is expected to strengthen the development of sustainable biofuels, in addition to promoting ethanol uptake. It is, therefore, a historic moment for India, demonstrating its commitment to climate action with global cooperation.

## Sustainable biomass use

The Energy Transitions Commission, in its report on 'Bioresources within a Net-Zero Emissions Economy', recommended that biomass should be prioritised for use in sectors where there are limited low-carbon alternatives. Long-haul aviation and road freight segments, wherein complete electrification might take longer to achieve, could make the cut, whereas petrol vehicles (for which ethanol blending is currently being targeted) would probably not.

According to the International Energy Agency, to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 globally, sustainable biofuel production needs to triple by 2030 to fuel modes that have few other mitigation options. Although 1G ethanol is unlikely to fit the bill, 2G ethanol could be counted as a sustainable fuel, especially if the production is decentralised, i.e., crop residues do not have to be transported large distances to a central manufacturing plant. But this might affect achieving economies of scale for the 2G plant.

Balancing economies of scale with the energy needs (and costs) of biomass collection and transport across large distances is a major challenge. The Global Biofuels Alliance could help drive innovation and technology development in establishing an efficient biomass supply chain and smaller-scale decentralised biofuel production units.

Achieving true sustainability is complex, especially with respect to biofuels. Therefore, any strategy should be carefully examined in the context of the larger ecosystem to avoid unintended negative consequences.



# Cabinet approves 75 lakh more free Ujjwala LPG connections

**STATESMAN NEWS SERVICE**

NEW DELHI, 13 SEPTEMBER

The Government on Wednesday approved extension of the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) for release of 75 lakh more free LPG connections for eligible beneficiaries over three years from 2023-24 to 2025-26.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the Union Cabinet held under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The total financial implication of the extended scheme will be Rs 1650 crore.

There will be a subsidy of Rs 2200 per connection for 14.2 kg single bottle connection; Rs 2200 per connection for 5 kg double bottle connection; and Rs 1300 per connection for 5 kg single bottle connection.

Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur told newsmen that as per the existing modalities of Ujjwala 2.0, the first refill and stove will also be provided free of cost to Ujjwala beneficiar-



ies. Recently, the government on the occasion of Raksha Bhandhan, reduced the price of a LPG cylinder for all consumers by Rs 200, brought down to Rs 900 from Rs 1100. The Ujjwala beneficiaries received an additional subsidy of Rs 200 per cylinder, Mr Thakur said.

Under the PMUY, 9.60 lakh connections have been given so far, and the Cabinet decision on Wednesday will provide these free connections to 75 lakh more eligible beneficiaries. The decision has been taken on the basis of demand, Mr Thakur said.

The PMUY extension will provide a targeted subsidy of Rs 200 per 14.2 kg LPG cylin-

der, up to 12 refills per year. The continuation of the PMUY was required so that eligible poor households get their due benefit under the scheme.

The deposit-free LPG connections to poor households provide access to clean cooking fuel and help in addressing health problems caused by the use of traditional sources of cooking fuel such as firewood, coal and cow-dung.

The LPG use will enhance productivity of women, raise quality of their life by removing drudgery associated with collection of wood and insure them against non-availability of cooking fuel, at times.

Some eligible households still do not have LPG connections. This is due to multiple reasons—new households are formed every year as a result of rising population, marriages, migration, nuclearisation of families, left-over households, extremely remote locations etc. There is a demand for 15 lakh PMUY connections as on 31 August, 2023.

## **‘Saudi, Russian oil cuts to cause big supply shortfall’**



**Paris:** Oil cuts by Saudi Arabia and Russia will cause a significant global supply shortfall through the end of the year, raising the risk of further market volatility, said the International Energy Agency on Wednesday. The warning in the IEA's monthly market report comes a day after oil prices jumped following OPEC's own update showed that the gap between global supply and demand would be the widest since 2007. "The Saudi-Russian alliance is proving a formidable challenge for oil markets," said the IEA. Oil prices had been slumping in recent months after surging following Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year. AFP

## Crude oil gains on supply cut worries



**New York:** Oil prices rose on Wednesday, hitting a 10-month high, as a surprise build in US crude inventories did not dampen expectations of tight crude supply for the rest of the year. International benchmark Brent futures rose 39 cents to \$92.45 a barrel by 10:49 a.m. EDT (1449 GMT). Its session high of \$92.84 a barrel was the highest since November. REUTERS



## Over 6,300 petrol pumps remain shut in Raj due to strike against high VAT



**JAIPUR:** More than 6,300 petrol pumps in Rajasthan remained closed from 10 am to 6 pm on Wednesday as part of a strike by operators against high VAT on diesel and petrol.

The petrol pumps will remain closed for the same duration on Thursday as well.

Rajendra Singh Bhati, State President of the Rajasthan Petroleum Dealers' Association — which called the strike — said the protest was against high VAT on fuel in the state.

If the state government does not fulfil our demands of reducing VAT, a decision would be taken on Friday to go on an indefinite strike, Bhati said.

Former state president of the association Sunit Bagai said VAT in Rajasthan is higher than neighbouring states like Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat, and people in border areas go to these states to get fuel. "Several petrol pumps in Hanumangarh and other bordering areas in Rajasthan have been shut in the last few years because of losses. People go to neighbouring states for buying petrol and diesel, causing losses to petrol pumps in Rajasthan," he said. It also causes revenue loss to the state government, he said.

Bagai said the association has been raising the demand for a long time but there has been no response from the state government.

PTI

# Govt to incur ₹2,200 per connection for 75 lakh Ujjwala beneficiaries

**GREEN SIGNAL.** Phase-3 of e-court scheme, ₹9,500-crore FDI in Suven Pharma get Cabinet nod

**Shishir Sinha**  
New Delhi

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday approved ₹1,650 crore for providing 75 lakh connections under the Ujjwala scheme. It also gave nod to the third phase of the e-court mission with an outlay of ₹7,210 crore.

Meanwhile, in a separate decision, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) cleared the proposal for foreign direct investment in Suven Pharmaceuticals Ltd worth over ₹9,500 crore.

## UJJWALA SCHEME

To implement the August 29 decision for 75 lakh new connections under Ujjwala, the Cabinet approved budgetary provision of ₹1,650 crore to be spent over three years (2023-24 to 2025-26). Giving details of the decision, Information & Broadcasting Minister Anurag Singh Thakur said initial expenditure of ₹2,200 per connection, which covers a two-burner stove and the first cylinder, will be borne by oil marketing companies and it will be reimbursed by the government.

"The beneficiary will not have to give any deposit. The connection will be totally free," Thakur said. At this moment, there are



**LIGHTING UP LIVES.** Union Minister for Information and Broadcasting Anurag Thakur addressing the media on the Cabinet decisions in New Delhi, on Wednesday PTI

9.6 crore connections under the Ujjwala Scheme. As on date, a consumer gets a subsidy of ₹200 per cylinder. Since the price has been lowered by ₹200, a Ujjwala connection will get a benefit of ₹400.

Giving reasons behind the expansion of the scheme, Thakur said that some eligible households still do not have LPG connection. This is due to multiple reasons – new households are formed every year as a result of rising population, marriages, migration, nuclearisation of families.

There is a demand for 15 lakh PMUY connections as on August 31, added a government statement.

## E-COURT PROJECT

In another decision, the Cabinet approved third phase of e-court project at the cost of ₹7,210 crore. Phase III of the e-courts project focusses on adopting technology by users, a robust governance framework and a judicial system that is more accessible, efficient, and equitable for every individual who seeks justice or is part of the de-

livery of justice in India. "This phase aims to usher in a regime of maximum ease of justice by moving towards digital, online and paperless courts through digitisation of the entire court records including legacy records and by bringing in universalisation of e-filing/ e-payments," a government statement said.

The government spent ₹640 crore in Phase I to provide laptop and other hardware to over 14,200 districts and subordinate courts. In Phase II, over ₹1,600 crore spent to cover

another over 18,700 courts to enable them use technology for faster delivery of justice.

The statement also said that main objective of e-courts Phase-III is to create a unified technology platform for the judiciary, which will provide a seamless and paperless interface between the courts, the litigants and other stakeholders. "Emphasis on automated delivery of court summons by further expanding the NSTEP (National Serving and Tracking of Electronic Processes) to drastically reduce the delays in trials," it said.

## FDI IN SUVEN PHARMA

Meanwhile, the CCEA approved the FDI proposal for foreign investment of up to ₹9,589 crore in Suven Pharmaceuticals by Cyprus-based Berhyanda Ltd, Cyprus for acquiring over 75 per cent shares. With this, the company will have over 90 per cent equity by foreign investors.

As per the FDI policy, 100 per cent foreign investment is allowed under automatic route in greenfield pharmaceutical projects.

In brownfield pharmaceutical projects, FDI up to 74 per cent are allowed under the automatic route and government approval is required for investment beyond 74 per cent.

## उज्ज्वला योजना में 75 लाख नए गैस कनेक्शन देने के लिए 1,650 करोड़ मंजूर

### विशेष प्रतिनिधि

नई दिल्ली। सरकार ने प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत तीन साल में महिलाओं को 75 लाख नए एलपीजी कनेक्शन देने के लिए सरकारी पेट्रोलियम कंपनियों को 1,650 करोड़ रुपये जारी करने की बुधवार को मंजूरी दे दी।

सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्री अनुराग ठाकुर ने प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की अगुवाई में हुई केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल की बैठक में लिए गए इस फैसले की जानकारी दी। ठाकुर ने प्रेस ब्रीफिंग में कहा कि मंत्रिमंडल ने उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत वित्त वर्ष 2025-26 तक तीन वर्षों में 75 लाख नए रसोई गैस कनेक्शन देने पर सहमति जताई। इसके साथ ही इस योजना के तहत लाभान्वित होने वाली कुल महिलाओं की संख्या बढ़कर 10.35 करोड़ हो जाएगी। इस पर कुल 1,650 करोड़ रुपये का खर्च आएगा जिसका बोझ केंद्र सरकार उठाएगी। यह राशि सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की पेट्रोलियम विपणन कंपनियों को जारी की जाएगी। प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी ने इस फैसले पर कहा कि उनकी सरकार प्रदूषण-मुक्त रसोई और महिलाओं की बढ़िया सेहत सुनिश्चित करने को सर्वोच्च प्राथमिकता देती है। प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने सोशल मीडिया मंच एक्स पर कहा, देश भर में हर परिवार को प्रदूषण-

मुक्त रसोई सुनिश्चित करना हमारी सरकार की प्राथमिकता रही है। हम इस दिशा में मजबूती से कदम उठा रहे हैं ताकि हमारी माताओं और बहनों के अच्छे स्वास्थ्य के साथ-साथ उनका जीवन स्तर और भी बेहतर हो सके। सरकार उज्ज्वला योजना के लाभार्थियों को पहले से ही 14.2 किलो के गैस सिलेंडर पर 200 रुपये की सब्सिडी दे रही है।



# 75 लाख नए गैस कनेक्शन मिलेंगे

## कैबिनेट फैसले

नई दिल्ली, विशेष संवाददाता। केंद्र सरकार ने प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत महिलाओं को मुफ्त में 75 लाख नए एलपीजी कनेक्शन के लिए 1650 करोड़ रुपये के प्रस्ताव को मंजूरी दी है। इन 75 लाख नए कनेक्शन के बाद उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत कनेक्शन की संख्या 10 करोड़ 35 लाख हो जाएगी। अभी यह संख्या 9 करोड़ 60 लाख है।

प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी की अध्यक्षता में हुई केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल की बैठक के बाद मीडिया से बात करते हुए सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्री अनुराग ठाकुर ने कहा कि उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत 75 लाख नए रसोई गैस कनेक्शन देने पर सहमति जताई। इन कनेक्शन के लिए पेट्रोलियम कंपनियों को 1650 करोड़ रुपये दिए जाएंगे। इससे पहले सरकार ने रक्षाबंधन और ओणम के मौके पर एलपीजी सिलेंडर पर दो सौ रुपये की कटौती का ऐलान किया था। इसके बाद रसोई गैस

## भारत और आर्मेनिया के बीच समझौता ज्ञापन को मंजूरी

नई दिल्ली। भारत के इलेक्ट्रॉनिक्स और सूचना प्रौद्योगिकी मंत्रालय और आर्मेनिया के उच्च तकनीक मंत्रालय के बीच 12 जून 2023 को हस्ताक्षरित समझौता ज्ञापन (एमओयू) को मंजूरी दे दी गई। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल की बैठक की अध्यक्षता की थी। सरकार की प्रेस विज्ञप्ति में बताया गया कि एमओयू का उद्देश्य डिजिटल परिवर्तन के लिए जनसंख्या पैमाने पर कार्यान्वित सफल डिजिटल समाधानों को साझा करने के क्षेत्र में सहयोग करना था। इसमें आईटी के क्षेत्र में रोजगार को बढ़ावा देने वाले बेहतर सहयोग की परिकल्पना की गई है।

सिलेंडर की कीमत 1100 रुपये से घटकर 900 रुपये हो गई है। वहीं उज्ज्वला लाभार्थियों को चार सौ का फायदा होगा। क्योंकि उन्हें दो सौ रुपये की सब्सिडी मिलती है। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी ने एक मई 2016 को उज्ज्वला योजना की शुरुआत की थी। इस योजना के तहत गरीबी रेखा के नीचे रहने वाले परिवारों की महिलाओं को मुफ्त में गैस कनेक्शन दिए जाते हैं। इसके साथ उन्हें दो सौ रुपये प्रति सिलेंडर की सब्सिडी मिलती है।

जी 20 की सफलता पर बधाई दी : जी 20 सम्मेलन के सफल आयोजन के लिए केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल ने प्रधानमंत्री मोदी को दी बधाई है। बैठक में एक

प्रस्ताव पारित कर इसके लिए प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के कुशल नेतृत्व की सराहना की गई और देशवासियों की ओर से उन्हें बधाई दी गई। यह प्रस्ताव रक्षा मंत्री राजनाथ सिंह ने रखा, जिसका सभी सदस्यों ने समर्थन किया।

मोदी बोले, न्याय वितरण के नए युग की शुरुआत : प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने कहा कि उन्नत प्रौद्योगिकी को एकीकृत करने से हमारी न्यायिक प्रणाली अधिक सुलभ और पारदर्शी हो जाएगी। उन्होंने एक्स पर पोस्ट किया, ई-कोर्ट प्रोजेक्ट के तृतीय चरण को कैबिनेट की मंजूरी के साथ, हम देश में न्याय वितरण के नए युग की शुरुआत कर रहे हैं।

# कैबिनेट बैठक : योजना के लिए 1650 करोड़ उज्ज्वला पार्ट-2 : मिलेंगे 75 लाख नए कनेक्शन

नई दिल्ली 13 सितम्बर (एजेंसी) : केंद्र सरकार ने प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना के विस्तार के लिए 1650 करोड़ रुपये की स्वीकृति दी है जिससे अगले तीन वर्ष में 75 लाख नये रसोई गैस - एलपीजी कनेक्शन दिए जाएंगे। पीएम मोदी की अध्यक्षता में बुधवार को हुई केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल की बैठक में इस आशय के प्रस्ताव का अनुमोदन किया गया। उज्ज्वला लाभार्थियों को पहला सिलेंडर और चूल्हा भी मुफ्त मिलेगा।

बैठक के बाद सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्री अनुराग ठाकुर ने बताया कि केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल ने वित्त वर्ष 2023-24 से वित्त वर्ष 2025-26 तक तीन वर्षों में 75 लाख एलपीजी कनेक्शन जारी करने के लिए प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना (पीएमयूवाई) के विस्तार को मंजूरी दे दी है। इसका कुल व्यय 1650

करोड़ रुपये होगा। गरीब परिवारों को एलपीजी कनेक्शन से स्वच्छ खाना पकाने के ईंधन तक पहुंच मिलेगी,

जिससे लकड़ी, कोयला, गोबर आदि जैसे खाना पकाने के ईंधन के पारंपरिक स्रोतों के उपयोग के कारण होने वाली स्वास्थ्य समस्याओं का समाधान हो सकेगा। इससे महिलाओं की कार्य क्षमता में वृद्धि होगी। 31 अगस्त 2023 तक 15 लाख पीएमयूवाई

कनेक्शन की मांग थी। पीएमयूवाई से देश में एलपीजी की पहुंच बढ़ाने में प्रमुख योगदान दिया है। उज्ज्वला योजना में 14.2 किलोग्राम एक सिलेंडर के लिए 2200 रुपये प्रति कनेक्शन, पांच किलोग्राम के दो सिलेंडर के लिए 2200 रुपये प्रति कनेक्शन और पांच किलोग्राम सिलेंडर 1300 रुपये प्रति कनेक्शन व्यय किये जाते हैं।

**पहला सिलेंडर और चूल्हा मुफ्त मिलेगा**





# 75 लाख नए गैस कनेक्शन के लिए 1,650 करोड़ मंजूर

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी): सरकार ने प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत महिलाओं को 75 लाख नए एलपीजी कनेक्शन देने के लिए सरकारी पेट्रोलियम कंपनियों को 1,650 करोड़ रुपये जारी करने के प्रस्ताव को बुधवार को मंजूरी दे दी। सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्री अनुराग ठाकुर ने प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की अगुवाई में हुई केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल की बैठक में लिए गए इस फैसले की जानकारी दी। ठाकुर ने कहा कि मंत्रिमंडल ने उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत 75 लाख नए रसोई गैस कनेक्शन देने पर सहमति जताई। इसके साथ ही इस योजना के तहत लाभान्वित होने वाली कुल महिलाओं की संख्या बढ़कर 10.35 करोड़ हो जाएगी। इसपर कुल 1,650 करोड़ रुपये का खर्च आएगा जिसका बोझ केंद्र सरकार उठाएगी। यह राशि सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की पेट्रोलियम विपणन कंपनियों को जारी की जाएगी। प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना की शुरुआत मई, 2016 में प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने की थी। इस योजना के तहत गरीबी रेखा के नीचे रहने वाले परिवारों की महिलाओं को मुफ्त में गैस कनेक्शन दिए जाते हैं।



**ई-अदालत परियोजना के तीसरे चरण को मंजूरी :** केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल ने केंद्रीय क्षेत्र की योजना के तहत ई-अदालत परियोजना के तीसरे चरण को बुधवार को अपनी मंजूरी प्रदान की। परियोजना के इस चरण पर करीब चार वर्षों में 7,210 करोड़ रुपये की लागत आएगी। अनुराग ने बताया कि प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की अध्यक्षता में हुई केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल की बैठक में इस आशय के प्रस्ताव को मंजूरी दी गई। ई-अदालत मिशन प्रारूप परियोजना प्रधानमंत्री के 'सबका साथ, सबका विकास और सबका विश्वास' की दृष्टि के अनुरूप प्रौद्योगिकी का उपयोग कर न्याय को सुगम एवं सुलभ बनाने की एक पहल है।

## जी20 के सफल आयोजन पर प्रधानमंत्री को बधाई देने वाला प्रस्ताव पारित किया

केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल ने बुधवार को एक प्रस्ताव पारित किया जिसमें हाल ही में सम्पन्न हुए जी20 शिखर सम्मेलन की बड़ी सफलता के लिए प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के कुशल नेतृत्व की सराहना की गई और देशवासियों की ओर से उन्हें बधाई दी गई। केंद्रीय मंत्री अनुराग ठाकुर ने यह जानकारी दी। बैठक के बाद सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्री अनुराग ठाकुर ने बताया कि केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल की बैठक में रक्षा मंत्री राजनाथ सिंह ने यह प्रस्ताव पेश किया। उन्होंने बताया कि इस प्रस्ताव में प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की अध्यक्षता और भारत के नेतृत्व में जी20 शिखर सम्मेलन के सफल आयोजन पर देशवासियों की ओर से उन्हें (प्रधानमंत्री को) बधाई दी गई।

## सुवेन फार्मास्युटिकल्स को बड़ी राहत

सरकार ने बुधवार को साइप्रस की बेरहायन्दा लि. के सुवेन फार्मास्युटिकल्स में 9,589 करोड़ रुपये तक के प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश (एफडीआई) को मंजूरी दे दी। कंपनी इस राशि का इस्तेमाल क्षमता विस्तार पर करेगी जिससे रोजगार के नए अवसरों का सृजन होगा। मंत्रिमंडल की आर्थिक मामलों की समिति (सीसीईए) की बैठक के बाद जारी आधिकारिक बयान में कहा गया है कि यह मंजूरी अनिवार्य खुली पेशकश के माध्यम से मौजूदा प्रवर्तक शेयरधारकों और सार्वजनिक शेयरधारकों से शेयरों के हस्तांतरण के माध्यम से बेरहायन्दा लि. द्वारा सुवेन फार्मास्युटिकल्स के 76.1 प्रतिशत शेयर के अधिग्रहण के लिये है। प्रस्ताव का आकलन बाजार नियामक भारतीय प्रतिभूति एवं विनियम बोर्ड (सेबी), भारतीय रिजर्व बैंक (आरबीआई), भारतीय प्रतिस्पर्धा आयोग और अन्य संबंधित एजेंसियां कर चुकी हैं। बयान के अनुसार, सुवेन में कुल विदेशी निवेश 90.1 प्रतिशत तक बढ़ाया जा सकता है।



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## UJJWALA 3.0 APPROVED BY UNION CABINET AT ₹1,650 CRORE

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**Rajeev Jayaswal**

letters@hindustantimes.com

**NEW DELHI:** A fortnight after slashing cooking gas rates by ₹200 per cylinder for 330 million customers ahead of crucial elections, the government on Wednesday launched the third phase of its popular Ujjwala scheme to provide free gas connections along with a stove and a refill to 7.5 million poor households for three years. This phase takes the total coverage under the scheme to 103.5 million households, potentially covering around 465 million people.

Briefing the media about decisions taken by the Cabinet under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union information and broadcasting minister Anurag Thakur said the government has approved extension of Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY) to provide 7.5 million free liquefied petroleum gas (cooking

continued on →6



TABLE 1

mated to cost ₹1,650 crore.

Thakur said the scheme has been extended to include those eligible households that do not have LPG connections for various reasons such as formation of new nuclear family.

Experts said that the move will certainly benefit the ruling BJP in forthcoming assembly polls and the general election in 2024.

"Upliftment of the poor is the purpose of any democracy and polls catalyse this process. The move will certainly benefit the poor, creating political dividend for the ruling party," said Keshav Mishra, professor at the Banaras Hindu University (BHU). Mishra sought to distinguish the scheme from other freebies or sops. "This scheme was well conceived, targeted, and has so far benefited 96 million poor families, and is hence different from untargeted freebies offered by some parties only to win polls."

According to official data, Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY or Ujjwala 1.0) was launched in Ballia (Uttar Pradesh) by PM Modi on May 1, 2016, to provide clean cooking fuel to about 80 million poor households across the country. The target was achieved in September 2019. Later, PMUY phase-2 (or Ujjwala 2.0) was launched from Mahoba district of poll-bound UP in August 2021 with an initial target of 10 million connections, which was achieved by January 2022. Subsequently, the government released 6 million more connections under Ujjwala 2.0 till December 2022. Now the government has announced a third phase of the scheme.

Last month, on August 29, the Cabinet announced slashing the price of cooking gas by ₹200 per 14.2kg cylinder for all 330 million users to ease the strain on household finances hit by soaring retail inflation that came in at a 15-month high of 7.44% in July; this fell to 6.83% in August, but still above the Reserve Bank of India's tolerance band of 6%. Experts expect an impact of the subsidy to reflect in lower inflation in September. The move made LPG cylinders cheaper by ₹400 per refill for 96 million Ujjwala beneficiaries, who were already receiving a subsidy of ₹200. The other 234 million users, who were previously not eligible for a subsidy – the government scrapped subsidies on LPG in 2020 – now stand to benefit from a subsidy of ₹200 a cylinder.

### UJJWALA 3.0

gas) connections up to March 31, 2026.

Under the scheme, beneficiaries will receive a deposit-free gas connection, including one stove and the first 14.2kg cylinder free of cost, he said. One such connection would cost ₹2,200 to the exchequer, a cost which will be initially borne by state-run oil marketing companies, with the government reimbursing them later. According to Thakur, the scheme is esti-

एलपीजी कनेक्शन देने के लिए सरकार ने पेट्रोलियम कंपनियों को 1,650 करोड़ रुपए जारी करने का प्रस्ताव किया मंजूर

## 75 लाख नए एलपीजी कनेक्शन मुफ्त मिलेंगे

एजेसी ॥ नई दिल्ली

मोदी सरकार ने प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत महिलाओं को 75 लाख नए एलपीजी कनेक्शन देने के लिए सरकारी पेट्रोलियम कंपनियों को 1,650 करोड़ रुपए जारी करने के प्रस्ताव को बुधवार को मंजूरी दे दी। सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्री अनुराग ठाकुर ने प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी की अगुवाई में हुई केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल की बैठक में लिए गए इस फैसले की जानकारी दी। ठाकुर ने कहा कि मंत्रिमंडल ने उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत 75 लाख नए रसोई गैस कनेक्शन देने पर सहमति जताई। इसके साथ ही इस योजना के तहत लाभान्वित होने वाली कुल महिलाओं की संख्या बढ़कर 10.35 करोड़ हो जाएगी। इसपर कुल 1,650 करोड़ रु. का खर्च आएगा जिसका बोझ केंद्र सरकार उठाएगी। यह राशि सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की पेट्रोलियम विपणन कंपनियों को जारी की जाएगी।

॥ केंद्रीय मंत्री अनुराग ठाकुर ने बताया- जी20 की सफलता पर प्रस्ताव भी पारित किया गया



ई-कोर्ट पर केंद्र सरकार का मोह

ठाकुर ने बताया कि कैबिनेट का एक महत्वपूर्ण निर्णय यह है कि 7,210 करोड़ रुपए की ई-कोर्ट मिशन मोड परियोजना चरण 3 को मंजूरी दे दी गई है। इसका लक्ष्य ऑनलाइन और पेपरलेस अदालतों की स्थापना करना है। इससे न्यायिक प्रणाली और अधिक पारदर्शी हो जाएगी। कागज रहित अदालतों के लिए, ई-फाइलिंग और ई-शुगतान प्रणाली को सार्वभौमिक बनाया जाएगा। डेटा संग्रहीत करने के लिए क्लाउड स्टोरेज बनाया जाएगा। सभी अदालत परिसरों में, 4,400 ई-सेवा केंद्र स्थापित किए जाएंगे।



# 75 lakh more consumers to get LPG connections

**The Hindu Bureau**

NEW DELHI

The Union Cabinet on Wednesday decided to extend the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana to 75 lakh more consumers by providing them LPG connections over three years from 2023-24 to 2025-26.

A meeting of the Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, allocated ₹1,650 crore to implement the decision. The total number of beneficiaries will now be 10.35 crore. Union Minister Anurag Thakur stated that a subsidy of ₹200 per 14.2-kg LPG cylinder for up to 12 refills per year will be provided to PMUY consumers.

The subsidy includes ₹2,200 per connection for a 14.2-kg single-bottle connection, and ₹1,300 for a 5-kg single-bottle connection.

## उज्ज्वला 75 लाख कनेक्शन के लिए 1650 करोड़ मंजूर

नयी दिल्ली, 13 सितंबर (एजेंसी)

सरकार ने प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत महिलाओं को 75 लाख नए एलपीजी कनेक्शन देने के लिए सरकारी पेट्रोलियम कंपनियों को 1,650 करोड़ रुपये जारी करने के प्रस्ताव को बुधवार को मंजूरी दे दी। सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्री अनुराग ठाकुर ने प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की अगुवाई में हुई केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल की बैठक में लिए गए इस फैसले की जानकारी दी। ठाकुर ने कहा कि

मंत्रिमंडल ने उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत 75 लाख नए रसोई गैस कनेक्शन देने पर सहमति जताई। इसके साथ ही इस योजना के तहत लाभान्वित होने वाली कुल महिलाओं की संख्या बढ़कर 10.35 करोड़ हो जाएगी। इसपर कुल खर्च होने वाले 1,650 करोड़ रुपये सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की पेट्रोलियम विपणन कंपनियों को



केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल ने ई-अदालत परियोजना के तीसरे चरण को भी दी मंजूरी

दिए जाएंगे। प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना की शुरुआत मई, 2016 में प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने की थी। इस योजना

के तहत गरीबी रेखा के नीचे रहने वाले परिवारों की महिलाओं को मुफ्त में गैस कनेक्शन दिए जाते हैं। इसके साथ ही, मंत्रिमंडल ने केंद्रीय क्षेत्र की योजना के तहत ई-अदालत परियोजना के तीसरे चरण को बुधवार को अपनी मंजूरी प्रदान की। परियोजना के इस चरण पर करीब चार वर्षों में 7,210 करोड़ रुपये की लागत आयेगी। ई-अदालत का उद्देश्य ऑनलाइन और कागजरहित अदालतों की स्थापना करना है, ताकि न्यायिक व्यवस्था को सुलभ व पारदर्शी बनाया जा सके। इसके तहत अदालत

परिसरों में 4400 ई-सेवा केंद्रों की स्थापना की जाएगी।

**जी20 के सफल आयोजन के लिए पीएम को बधाई :** मंत्रिमंडल बैठक में जी20 शिखर सम्मेलन की बड़ी सफलता के लिए प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी के नेतृत्व की सराहना की गई और देशवासियों की ओर से उन्हें बधाई दी गई।

मंत्रिमंडल ने नए गैस कनेक्शन के लिए 1,650 करोड़ रुपए मंजूर किए

# उज्ज्वला योजना में 75 लाख नए गैस कनेक्शन मिलेंगे

एजेंसी ■ नई दिल्ली

सरकार ने प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत तीन साल में महिलाओं को 75 लाख नए एलपीजी कनेक्शन देने के लिए सरकारी पेट्रोलियम कंपनियों को 1,650 करोड़ रुपए जारी करने की बुधवार को मंजूरी दे दी। सूचना एवं प्रसारण मंत्री अनुराग ठाकुर ने प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी की अगुवाई में हुई केंद्रीय मंत्रिमंडल की बैठक में लिए गए इस फैसले की जानकारी दी। ठाकुर ने कहा कि मंत्रिमंडल ने उज्ज्वला योजना के तहत वित्त वर्ष 2025-26 तक तीन वर्षों में 75 लाख नए रसोई गैस कनेक्शन देने पर सहमति जताई। इसके साथ ही इस योजना के तहत लाभान्वित होने वाली कुल महिलाओं की संख्या बढ़कर 10.35 करोड़ हो जाएगी। इसपर कुल 1,650 करोड़ रुपए का खर्च आएगा जिसका बोझ केंद्र सरकार उठाएगी। यह राशि सार्वजनिक क्षेत्र की पेट्रोलियम विपणन कंपनियों को जारी की



जाएगी। सरकार उज्ज्वला योजना के लाभार्थियों को पहले से ही 14.2 किलो के गैस सिलेंडर पर 200 रुपए की सब्सिडी दे रही है। उन्हें यह लाभ सालभर में अधिकतम 12 बार मिलेगा। प्रधानमंत्री उज्ज्वला योजना की शुरुआत मई, 2016 में प्रधानमंत्री मोदी ने की थी। इस योजना के तहत गरीबी रेखा के नीचे के परिवारों की महिलाओं को मुफ्त में गैस कनेक्शन दिए जाते हैं। लाभार्थियों को पहली बार गैस सिलेंडर और एक गैस चूल्हा मुफ्त में दिया जाता है।

सुवेन फार्मास्युटिकल्स में 9,589 करोड़ रुपए के एफडीआई को भी मिली मंजूरी

सरकार ने बुधवार को साइप्रस की बेरहायन्दा लि. के सुवेन फार्मास्युटिकल्स में 9,589 करोड़ रुपए तक के प्रत्यक्ष विदेशी निवेश (एफडीआई) को मंजूरी दे दी। कंपनी इस राशि का इस्तेमाल क्षमता विस्तार पर करेगी जिससे रोजगार के नए अवसरों का सृजन होगा। मंत्रिमंडल की आर्थिक मामलों की समिति (सीसीईए) की बैठक के बाद जारी आधिकारिक बयान में कहा गया है कि यह मंजूरी अनिवार्य खुली पेशकश के माध्यम से मौजूदा प्रवर्तक शेयरधारकों और सार्वजनिक शेयरधारकों से शेयरों के हस्तांतरण के माध्यम से बेरहायन्दा लि. द्वारा सुवेन फार्मास्युटिकल्स के 76.1 प्रतिशत शेयर के अधिग्रहण के लिए है।



## प्रधानमंत्री आज मध्य प्रदेश व छत्तीसगढ़ का दौरा करेंगे

### विशेष प्रतिनिधि

नई दिल्ली। प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी बृहस्पतिवार को मध्य प्रदेश और छत्तीसगढ़ का दौरा करेंगे। इस दौरान, वह दोनों चुनावी राज्यों में 57 हजार करोड़ रुपये से अधिक की विभिन्न परियोजनाओं का उद्घाटन एवं शिलान्यास करेंगे। प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय (पीएमओ) ने बुधवार को एक बयान जारी कर बताया कि मध्य प्रदेश में मोदी जहां बीना रिफाइनरी में पेट्रोकेमिकल परिसर सहित 50,700 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक की परियोजनाओं और राज्यभर में

10 नई औद्योगिक परियोजनाओं का शिलान्यास करेंगे। वहीं, छत्तीसगढ़ में वह रेल क्षेत्र की कुछ महत्वपूर्ण परियोजनाओं को राष्ट्र को समर्पित करेंगे। पीएमओ ने कहा कि प्रधानमंत्री मध्य प्रदेश में बीपीसीएल के बीना रिफाइनरी में पेट्रोकेमिकल परिसर, नर्मदापुरम में बिजली और नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा विनिर्माण क्षेत्र और रतलाम में मेगा औद्योगिक पार्क की आधारशिला रखेंगे। पीएमओ के अनुसार, इंदौर में प्रधानमंत्री दो आईटी पार्क और राज्यभर में छह नये औद्योगिक पार्क की आधारशिला रखेंगे।

## पीएम मोदी आज मध्य प्रदेश व छत्तीसगढ़ को देंगे 57,000 करोड़ रुपये की सौगातें

नई दिल्ली। प्रधानमंत्री नरेंद्र मोदी बृहस्पतिवार को मध्यप्रदेश और छत्तीसगढ़ का दौरा करेंगे। वह दोनों चुनावी राज्यों में 57,000 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक की विभिन्न परियोजनाओं का उद्घाटन एवं शिलान्यास करेंगे।

प्रधानमंत्री कार्यालय (पीएमओ) ने बुधवार को जारी बयान में बताया कि

पीएम मोदी मध्य प्रदेश की बीना रिफाइनरी में पेट्रोकेमिकल परिसर सहित 50,700 करोड़ से अधिक की परियोजनाओं समेत प्रदेश में 10 नई औद्योगिक परियोजनाओं का शिलान्यास करेंगे। वहीं, छत्तीसगढ़ में वह रेल क्षेत्र की कुछ महत्वपूर्ण परियोजनाओं को राष्ट्र को समर्पित करेंगे। पीएमओ ने कहा कि प्रधानमंत्री प्रदेश में



**छत्तीसगढ़ में 6,350 करोड़ की परियोजनाओं का करेंगे उद्घाटन व शिलान्यास**

भारत पेट्रोलियम कॉर्पोरेशन लिमिटेड (बीपीसीएल) के बीना रिफाइनरी परिसर में 'विजली और नवीकरणीय ऊर्जा विनिर्माण क्षेत्र' और रतलम में मेगा औद्योगिक पार्क की आधारशिला रखेंगे। इंदौर में दो आईटी पार्क और राज्यभर में छह नये औद्योगिक पार्क की आधारशिला रखेंगे। इसके

बाद वह छत्तीसगढ़ के रायगढ़ के लिए खाना हो जाएंगे। जहां प्रधानमंत्री लगभग 6,350 करोड़ की कई रेल परियोजनाओं को राष्ट्र को समर्पित करेंगे। पीएम मोदी नौ जिलों में 'क्रिटिकल केयर ब्लॉक' की आधारशिला भी रखेंगे और एक लाख सिकल सेल परामर्श कार्ड वितरित करेंगे। व्यूरो

## प्रधानमंत्री मध्य प्रदेश में 50,700 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक की परियोजनाओं की आधारशिला रखेंगे

नई दिल्ली। प्रधानमंत्री नरेन्द्र मोदी 14 सितंबर, 2023 को मध्य प्रदेश और छत्तीसगढ़ का दौरा करेंगे। प्रधानमंत्री सुबह करीब सवा ग्यारह बजे मध्य प्रदेश के बीना पहुंचेंगे, जहां वह 'बीना रिफाइनरी में पेट्रोकेमिकल कॉम्प्लेक्स' और राज्य भर में दस नई औद्योगिक परियोजनाओं सहित 50,700 करोड़ रुपये से अधिक की परियोजनाओं का शिलान्यास करेंगे। दोपहर करीब सवा तीन बजे वह छत्तीसगढ़ के रायगढ़ पहुंचेंगे, जहां वह रेल क्षेत्र की महत्वपूर्ण परियोजनाएं राष्ट्र को समर्पित करेंगे। कार्यक्रम के दौरान, प्रधानमंत्री छत्तीसगढ़ के नौ जिलों में 'क्रिटिकल केयर ब्लॉक' की आधारशिला भी रखेंगे और एक लाख सिकल सेल परामर्श कार्डों का वितरण करेंगे। मध्य प्रदेश में प्रधानमंत्री राज्य में औद्योगिक विकास को एक प्रमुख प्रोत्साहन प्रदान करने की पहल के अंतर्गत, प्रधानमंत्री भारत पेट्रोलियम कॉर्पोरेशन लिमिटेड (बीपीसीएल) की बीना रिफाइनरी में पेट्रोकेमिकल कॉम्प्लेक्स की आधारशिला रखेंगे। इस अत्याधुनिक रिफाइनरी को लगभग 49,000 करोड़ रुपये की लागत से विकसित किया जाएगा। यह लगभग 1200 केटीपीए (किलो-टन प्रति वर्ष) एथिलीन और प्रोपलीन का उत्पादन करेगी, जो कपड़ा, पैकेजिंग, फार्मा जैसे विभिन्न क्षेत्रों के लिए एक महत्वपूर्ण घटक है। इससे देश की आयात निर्भरता कम होगी और यह प्रधानमंत्री के 'आत्मनिर्भर भारत' के दृष्टिकोण को साकार करने की दिशा में एक महत्वपूर्ण कदम होगा। इस व्यापक परियोजना से रोजगार के अवसरों का भी सृजन होगा।



# एसएएफ का केंद्र बनेगा भारत

शुभायन चक्रवर्ती  
नई दिल्ली, 13 सितंबर

## एसएएफ क्या है

पर्यावरण के अनुकूल विमान ईंधन (एसएएफ) अपशिष्ट से बना विमान ईंधन होता है। यह पारंपरिक जेट ईंधन के विपरीत होता है। यह विभिन्न स्रोतों से बनाया जाता है, जिसमें इस्तेमाल हो चुका खाना पकाने वाला तेल, कृषि अपशिष्ट, नगरपालिका का ठोस कचरा, वसा या गैर खाद्य फसलें और वानिकी अवशेष शामिल हैं। इनमें ग्रीन हाउस गैस उत्सर्जन को 80 प्रतिशत कम करने की क्षमता है। इस समय एयरबस और बोइंग एयरक्राफ्ट 50 प्रतिशत एसएएफ मिलाकर चलाए जा सकते हैं। दोनों ही विनिर्माताओं का लक्ष्य है कि 2030 तक 100 प्रतिशत एसएएफ से विमान उड़ाए जा सकें।

के करीब एसएएफ की जरूरत होगी, अगर जेट ईंधन में 1 प्रतिशत एसएएफ मिलाया जाए। वहीं अगर 5 प्रतिशत एसएएफ मिलाया जाए तो भारत को करीब 7,000 लाख लीटर सालाना जरूरत होगी। ऊर्जा संबंधी ग्रीन हाउस गैस उत्सर्जन में विमान ईंधन की हिस्सेदारी वैश्विक रूप से 2 प्रतिशत है। बहरहाल परंपरागत जेट ईंधन की तुलना में एसएएफ में इस तरह का उत्सर्जन 80 प्रतिशत तक कम कर देने की क्षमता है। उन्होंने कहा, 'अपनी भौगोलिक स्थिति के कारण यूएई और सिंगापुर जैसे देश उत्पादन नहीं



## फायदा होगा

■ पेट्रोलियम एवं प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री हरदीप सिंह पुरी का कहना है कि वैश्विक जैव ईंधन गठजोड़ से भारत के उत्पादन व निर्यात का केंद्र बनने की संभावना

■ भारत के पास पर्याप्त कच्चा माल, 1 प्रतिशत मिलाने से 5 लाख किसानों को होगा फायदा

पेट्रोलियम एवं प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री हरदीप सिंह पुरी ने बिजनेस स्टैंडर्ड से बातचीत में कहा कि हाल में हुआ वैश्विक जैव ईंधन गठजोड़ (जीबीए) भारत को पर्यावरण के अनुकूल विमान ईंधन (एसएएफ) के उत्पादन और निर्यात का केंद्र बना सकता है और यह भारत को इस सेक्टर के लिए अंतरराष्ट्रीय मानक तय करने का मौका दे सकता है।

उन्होंने कहा, 'भारत के पास सालाना 190 से 240 लाख टन एसएएफ उत्पादन के लिए कच्चा माल है। अगर 50 प्रतिशत मिश्रण के हिसाब से देखा जाए तो देश में एसएएफ की अनुमानित रूप से अधिकतम जरूरत 2030 तक करीब 80 से 100 लाख टन सालाना होगी।'

बहरहाल घरेलू मांग भी ज्यादा होगी। भारत सभी घरेलू वाणिज्यिक वाहनों की उड़ान में अगले 2 साल में 1 प्रतिशत एसएएफ मिलाना अनिवार्य करने पर विचार कर रहा है। मंत्री ने कहा, 'लीटर के आधार पर गणना करने पर भारत को 2025 तक सालाना 1,400 लाख लीटर

करेंगे। ऐसे में भारत के पास एसएएफ के मानक स्थापित करने का अवसर है और इसका लाभ लिया जा सकता है।'

## बदलता परिदृश्य

विमानन उद्योग में कार्बन फुटप्रिंट घटाने की कवायद के तहत अंतरराष्ट्रीय नागरिक उड्डयन संगठन (आईसीओ) ने 2050 तक सालाना ईंधन कुशलता में 2 प्रतिशत सुधार करने के लक्ष्य को स्वीकार किया है। संगठन यह भी चाहता है कि 2020 और उसके बाद कार्बन न्यूट्रल वृद्धि और

2050 तक नेट जीरो का लक्ष्य हासिल किया जा सके। एसएएफ का स्थानीय उत्पादन अहम है क्योंकि भारत की एयरलाइंस को 2027 से अंतरराष्ट्रीय उड़ानों से उत्पन्न कार्बन उत्सर्जन की भरपाई करनी होगी। यह आईसीओ द्वारा शुरू की गई ग्लोबल ऑफसेटिंग ऐंड रिडक्शन स्कीम फॉर इंटरनैशनल एविएशन (सीओआरएसआईए) योजना का हिस्सा है।

इस योजना को 3 चरणों में लागू किया जाना है। पहले 2 चरणों में 2021 से 2026 के बीच स्वैच्छिक भागीदारी की अनुमति दी गई है।

भारत ने इन चरणों में हिस्सा नहीं लेने का फैसला किया है। स्थानीय कैरियरों को उस तिथि के बाद अपने अंतरराष्ट्रीय प्रतिस्पर्धियों का अनुसरण करना होगा।

मई में पुरी ने स्वदेश उत्पादित एसएएफ 1 प्रतिशत मिलाकर पहली घरेलू उड़ान का उद्घाटन किया था। घरेलू कंपनियां पहले से ही एसएएफ का उत्पादन कर रही हैं।

सरकारी कंपनी आईओसीएल ने औद्योगिक बायोटेक्नोलॉजी कंपनी प्राज इंडस्ट्रीज के साथ समझौता किया है, जिसने इस उड़ान के लिए एसएएफ का उत्पादन किया था।