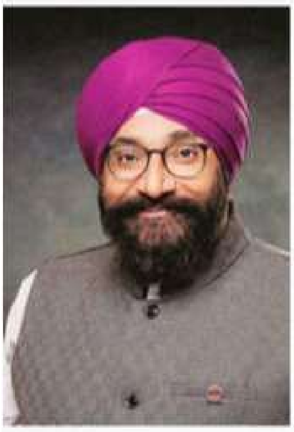
INDIAN EXPRESS, Delhi, 16.2.2025
Page No. 15, Size:(12.50)cms X (11.69)cms.

FREIGHT A KEY FACTOR IN STEPPING UP OIL IMPORTS FROM US

‘More than happy to buy more US gas; can buy Russian oil via clean channel’

INDIA'S LARGEST refiner and fuel retailer Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) is optimistic about the prospects of higher energy imports from the US, particularly natural gas imports amid rising gas consumption in the country. And while IOC is also keen to step up purchases of American crude, volume growth shall be contingent upon how competitively it is priced, since high freight charges remain a concern, according to the company's Chairman **ARVINDER SINGH SAHNEY**. Regarding the outlook on oil imports from Russia in the wake of the sweeping US sanctions against Moscow's oil trade, IOC is willing to buy Russian crude as long as the transactions are "clean" and do not carry sanctions-related risk. In an interview with SUKALP SHARMA, Sahney delves into IOC's and India's oil and gas trade, energy supply security, fuel prices, energy transition and evolution path, and more. Edited excerpts:



THE EXPRESS
INTERVIEW
WITH
ARVINDER SINGH SAHNEY
CHAIRMAN, INDIANOIL CORPORATION

Likelihood of a ramp-up in purchases of American oil and gas by India was a key takeaway from the Prime Minister's recent visit to Washington. How are IOC's energy imports from the US likely to shape up?

India already imports 20 per cent of its LNG requirement from the US anyway, and around 5-6 per cent of our crude requirement comes from US companies. We will be more than happy to have more US LNG coming to India. If it goes up from 20 per cent to 30-35 per cent, it will give us flexibility in sourcing... significant gas liquefaction capacity is likely to come up in the US.

LNG is growing by leaps and bounds in India. In the last one year, Indian Oil has doubled its LNG business from 4-4.5 million tonnes (mt) to 7.5-8 mt, and by 2030, we plan to go up to 18 mt. The appetite is there, and we are always in discussion with different parties for supply of long-term LNG... I don't want to name any supplier since discussions have not reached a stage that would allow me to talk about them publicly.

There is also potential to increase imports of American crude, especially for Indian Oil, as our refineries are very versatile. We have 10 refineries and they have different feed (crude oil) requirements. So, whatever kind of feed comes to India, Indian Oil can take it. We will be happy to have more American crude, but it has to be commercially viable.

What is the main challenge with importing US crude? Is it the high freight vis-à-vis India's traditional suppliers that are geographically much closer to us?

Is it essentially the high cost of transportation. For US LNG also, high transportation cost is an issue, but still it is competitive (with LNG from other suppliers) on a landed price basis. In the case of oil, some commercial arrangement may be needed to overcome the negative of the high freight cost... it (US crude) should be competitive on a landed price basis. That is what matters ultimately...We have to supply fuels and (petroleum) products to customers at a reasonable rate, so we need the price of crude to be globally competitive.

Last month, the US imposed sweeping sanctions on Russia's oil trade. How feasible will it be now to import large quantities of Russian crude, particularly in the short term?

Russian oil and gas themselves are not under sanction. Yes, some of the entities, a couple of their insurance companies, and 180-odd ships have come under sanctions recently. Indian Oil and India are ready to import Russian oil, provided that all the three components of the trade—supplier, insurer, and shipping fleet—are not sanctioned. If Russian oil is delivered to our ports through a clean mechanism and the (price) cap is honoured, we are ready and willing to take it.

Since Russia is India's largest supplier of oil, how big an impact of the recent US sanctions do you foresee on oil supplies to India?

All of it (Russia's oil trade) is still not under sanctions. So, the non-sanctioned portion will continue to flow into the market. For Russia, only 1-2 million barrels per day (bpd) (of oil exports) may be impacted. Of the over 10 million bpd they produce, some is consumed inside Russia, while the rest is exported. The impact will be even less significant for India, as China is also a major buyer of Russian oil. And we have enough sources outside of Russia to compensate for any volume loss. Also, OPEC has some capped (oil production) capacities, which they can easily uncap within 50 to 60 days. OPEC-plus can also produce more, Venezuela might also come into the picture, and the US is also ready to increase production. Guyana, Argentina, and Brazil are also coming into the picture... we are very well protected on the supply front.

Regular revisions in petrol and diesel prices have completely stopped over the past few years. Are you and other oil marketing companies (OMCs) looking to revert to routine price revisions?

If I talk as a customer myself, I am very happy in this situation. In the last three years, crude prices have been volatile. At one point, they were at $115 (per barrel), but they went down to $65 as well. At $115, had we continued with the routine price revisions, we would have sold the fuels at something like Rs 250 per litre. You can imagine the kind of volatility that would be brought into the economy.

Prices of essential commodities would have gone haywire. And then when oil falls to $65, it goes haywire on the other side. So, the OMCs have taken a decision that we will try to insulate the customer from these vagaries to the extent that it doesn't start affecting our balance sheets.

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Mumbai kebabs may lose smoky charm as tandoors face HC heat

Chittaranjan Tembhekar & Mohua Das | TNN

Restaurateurs argue that artificial smoke and gas tandoors simply cannot replace the flavours of traditional charcoal cooking

Mumbai: Mumbai's iconic smoky tandoori flavours may soon face an existential crisis as the city's restaurants scramble to comply with an impending ban on charcoal and wood-fired ovens. While the move is aimed at tackling the city's worsening air quality, restaurateurs argue that without traditional tandoors, kebabs might lose their smoky depth and naans may not puff up quite the same way.

Civic officials confirmed that notices are now being sent to all commercial eateries including hotels, restaurants, roadside stalls, open-air kitchens, and tandoor establishments urging them to comply with the Bombay HC order issued on Jan 9. BMC's environment department followed up with a circular on Jan 17, formalising the ban.

HC has instructed that all establishments must shift to cleaner alternatives by July 8, or risk having their trade licenses marked 'Not to Renew' (NTR) in the civic system until they discontinue the use of wood, coal, or any other conventional fuel. "Such establishments can contact medical officer of health (MOH) for assistance in ensuring compliance and seeking guidance for conversion to cleaner fuels," said a civic official.

The industry, however, is struggling to make the switch. AHAR president Sudhakar Shetty, owner of Gopalkrishna restaurant in Andheri, said replacing existing tandoors with ecofriendly alternatives is not as easy. "We are consulting experts on how to implement the order, as replacing tandoors with costly, ecofriendly ovens will take time especially with the July deadline looming," he said.

According to Shetty, around 15% of over 15,000 restaurants in Mumbai have switched over to PNG versions of tandoor but since they are not readily available, the whole replacement exercise will take a longer time.

A senior BMC official admitted that until now, there was no legal basis to act against eateries using conventional fuels. "Without a formal directive, we had no grounds to take action," the official explained, adding, "Now that we have clear court instructions, we can ensure compliance."

Restaurateurs argue that artificial smoke and gas tandoors simply cannot replace the flavours of traditional charcoal cooking. Former AHAR president Sukesh Shetty, owner of Hindmata restaurant in Tardeo, pointed out that while some ovens use stones and artificial smoke flavours, customers can detect the difference.

While some restaurants are already experimenting with substitutes, early results have been mixed. Sannat Ahuja, who runs Sindhful in Khar and several SadakChaap outlets, has ordered a large stock of lava stones to see if they can mimic charcoal tandoor.

For restaurants that rely on tandoor cooking, the transition isn't just about taste but about cost. Sudhakar estimates that PNG ovens cost around Rs 75,000, while a charcoal tandoor costs about Rs 45,000. "The electric versions are even costlier," he adds.

The bigger question, however, is whether banning charcoal tandoors will make a significant dent in Mumbai's pollution levels. Studies show burning ranks only third among pollution sources after vehicle emissions and dust from unpaved roads, construction, and industries.

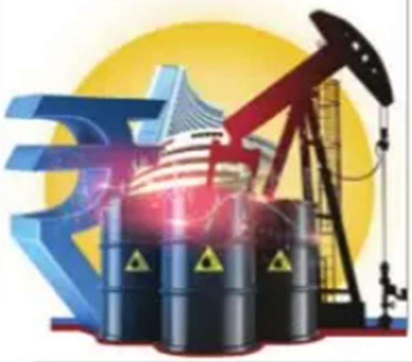
FINANCIAL EXPRESS, Delhi, 16.2.2025
Page No. 1, Size:(18.08)cms X (23.49)cms.

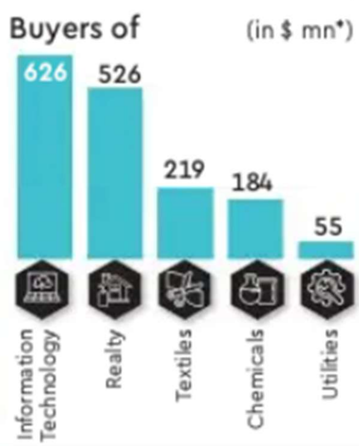
Oil & gas, financials, auto face intense FPI selling

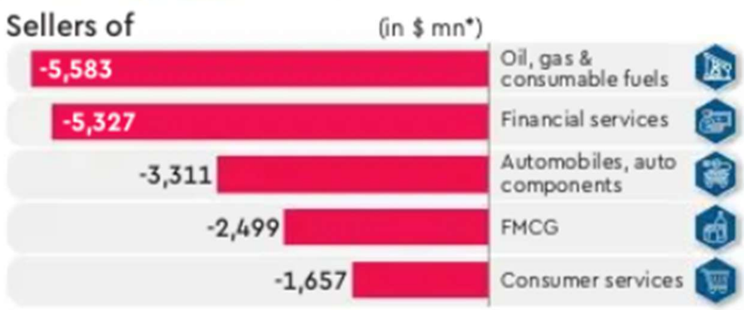
FOREIGN PORTFOLIO INVESTORS (FPIs) offloaded shares worth $24 billion across oil & gas, financials, auto, FMCG, consumer, and ten other sectors between October 2024 and January 2025, according to data from NSDL. At the same time, they purchased shares worth $3 billion in IT, realty, textiles, and four other sectors.

Over these four months, FPIs were net sellers of equities amounting to $21 billion. During this period, Sensex and Nifty declined by up to 9%, while the broader BSE Midcap and BSE Smallcap indices fell by up to 13%.

Compiled by Kishor Kadam







Source: NSDL

*between October 2024 and January 2025

ECONOMIC TIMES, Delhi, 16.2.2025
Page No. 02, Size:(4.29)cms X (16.36)cms.

Qatar Emir to Arrive Tommorow on 2-day Visit

Energy cooperation and West Asia high on the agenda

Dipanjan Roy Chaudhury

New Delhi: Qatar's Emir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani will visit India on February 17-18, marking his first trip in nearly a decade, with energy cooperation and West Asian geopolitics high on the agenda.

Emir's visit follows Modi's Feb 2024 trip to Doha after the release of eight Indian Navy personnel

At PM Narendra Modi's invitation, the Emir will arrive with a high-level delegation, including ministers and business leaders, to strengthen India-Qatar ties across trade, investment, and technology, the MEA announced.

Qatar remains India's largest LNG supplier, and the visit follows Modi's February 2024 trip to Doha after the release of eight Indian Navy personnel detained in Qatar. India's 8.4 lakh-strong expatriate community in Qatar continues to play a vital role in the country's development.

PUNJAB KESARI, Delhi, 16.2.2025
Page No. 11, Size:(18.75)cms X (12.34)cms.

भारत ने ऊर्जा क्षेत्र में अग्रणी के रूप में स्थिति मजबूत की

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी): भारत ऊर्जा सप्ताह 2025 के तीसरे संस्करण के समापन दिवस पर, पेट्रोलियम और प्राकृतिक गैस मंत्री हरदीप पुरी ने इस शोपीस ऊर्जा कार्यक्रम की सफलता के बारे में बात की, जिसमें प्रतिभागियों और प्रदर्शकों की अभूतपूर्व संख्या और तकनीकी पेपर प्रस्तुतियों पर प्रकाश डाला गया। दुनिया का दूसरा सबसे बड़ा ऊर्जा कार्यक्रम सफलतापूर्वक संपन्न हुआ, जिसमें चार दिनों में 70,000 से अधिक आगंतुकों, 600 से अधिक प्रदर्शकों और दस अंतर्राष्ट्रीय मंडपों ने भाग लिया। नौ समर्पित थीमों के साथ, इसने वैश्विक ऊर्जा परिदृश्य को आकार देने वाले प्रमुख नवाचारों, रणनीतिक सहयोगों और नीतिगत अंतर्दृष्टि को प्रदर्शित किया। केंद्रीय मंत्री ने कहा कि इस कार्यक्रम ने पेट्रोलियम, प्राकृतिक गैस, हरित ऊर्जा, जैव ईंधन और संपीड़ित बायोगैस सहित कई क्षेत्रों को शामिल करके उम्मीदों को पार कर लिया है, जिसमें उल्लेखनीय रूप से अभिनव विकास प्रदर्शित हुए हैं। पुरी ने इस बात पर जोर दिया कि तीन साल की छोटी सी अवधि में ही भारत ऊर्जा सप्ताह ने खुद को दुनिया के दूसरे सबसे बड़े ऊर्जा मंच के रूप में स्थापित कर लिया है।

मंत्री ने इस बात पर जोर दिया कि भारत ऊर्जा सप्ताह 2025 ने केवल नेटवर्किंग प्लेटफॉर्म के रूप में काम करने के बजाय वास्तविक व्यावसायिक लेनदेन को सुविधाजनक बनाकर खुद को अन्य वैश्विक ऊर्जा मंचों से अलग किया है। हरदीप पुरी ने विशेष रूप से व्यावहारिक नवाचारों पर प्रकाश डाला जैसे कि एचपीसीएल स्टॉल पर प्रदर्शित लागत प्रभावी रूपांतरण किट, जिसे दो और तीन पहिया वाहनों में जैव ईंधन के उपयोग को सक्षम करने के लिए डिजाइन किया गया है। इसके अतिरिक्त, मंत्री ने निवेशकों, निर्माताओं और उपभोक्ताओं के अभिसरण पर भी संतोष व्यक्त किया, जो विशेष रूप से फ्लेक्स फ्यूल वाहनों के प्रदर्शन में स्पष्ट है।

DAINIK BHASKAR, Delhi, 16.2.2025
Page No. 11, Size:(25.07)cms X (13.64)cms.

GIS 2025 के तहत उद्योगों, घरेलू उपभोक्ताओं और निवेशकों को मिलेगा बड़ा लाभ

मध्य प्रदेश की CGD नीति 2025 हर घर तक स्वच्छ और किफायती गैस

मध्य प्रदेश सरकार ऊर्जा क्षेत्र में क्रांतिकारी बदलाव लाने के लिए सिटी गैस डिस्ट्रीब्यूशन (CGD) नीति 2025 को लागू कर रही है। इस नीति के तहत, राज्य में प्राकृतिक गैस (PNG) और कंप्रेस्ड प्राकृतिक गैस (CNG) के वितरण नेटवर्क का विस्तार किया जाएगा, जिससे घर-घर स्वच्छ और सस्ता ईंधन उपलब्ध होगा। राज्य सरकार का लक्ष्य GIS 2025 के जरिए निवेशकों को आकर्षित करना और मध्य प्रदेश को भारत के अग्रणी ग्रीन एनर्जी हब के रूप में स्थापित करना है।

CGD नीति 2025: प्रमुख विशेषताएं -लाभ

- घरेलू उपयोग के लिए PNG एलपीजी सस्ती होगी
- महिलाओं के स्वास्थ्य पर सकारात्मक प्रभाव, धुएं रहित खाना पकाने का विकल्प
- घर-घर पाइप से आपूर्ति, सिलेंडर बुकिंग और डिलीवरी का झंझट खत्म

CNG से परिवहन क्षेत्र को मिलेगा बढ़ावा

- CNG वाहनों के लिए 1% मोटरयान कर में छूट
- CNG स्टेशन निर्माण के लिए आसान अनुमतियाँ और सरकारी सहायता

CGD नीति के तहत औद्योगिक-वाणिज्यिक लाभ

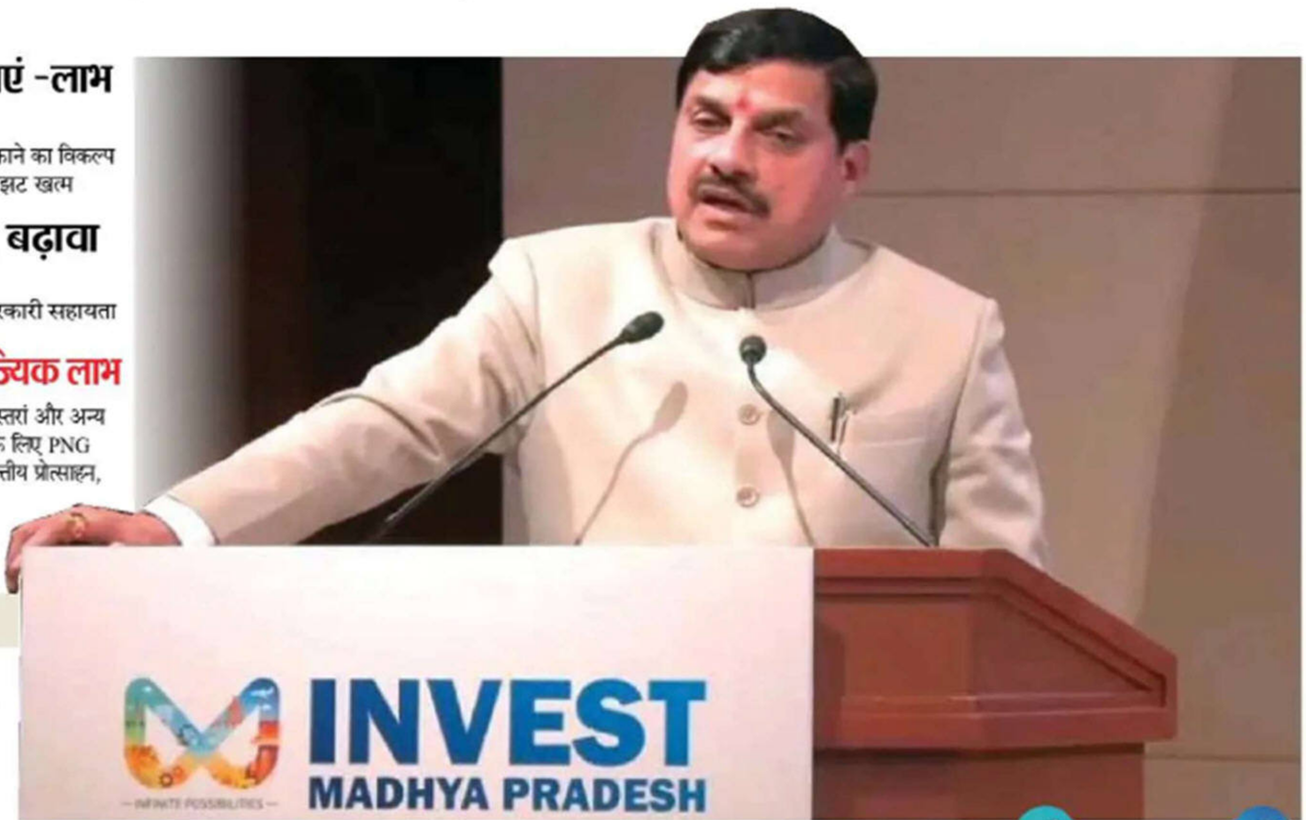
- औद्योगिक इकाइयों को सस्ती PNG आपूर्ति, जिससे उत्पादन लागत में कमी
- राज्य में CNG और PNG आधारित औद्योगिक क्लस्टर्स विकसित करने की योजना
- स्टील, सीमेंट, खाद्य प्रसंस्करण और टेक्सटाइल सेक्टर को विशेष लाभ
- होटल, रेस्तरां और अन्य व्यावसायिक प्रतिष्ठानों के लिए PNG की उपलब्धता विशेष वित्तीय प्रोत्साहन, जिससे नए उद्योगों को स्थापित करना होगा आसान

निवेशकों को क्या मिलेगा?

- सभी अनुमतियां 60 दिनों के भीतर, पाइपलाइन बिछाने की अनुमति 77 दिनों के भीतर
- स्टांप ड्यूटी पर 100% छूट, औद्योगिक इकाइयों के लिए प्राकृतिक गैस पर विशेष सब्सिडी

पर्यावरणीय प्रभाव

- CNG और PNG के उपयोग से कार्बन उत्सर्जन में कमी, राज्य के प्रमुख शहरों में वायु गुणवत्ता में सुधार
- डीजल और पेट्रोल की निर्भरता कम होगी, जिससे हरित ऊर्जा को बढ़ावा मिलेगा



आर्थिक प्रभाव

- नए प्रत्यक्ष और अप्रत्यक्ष रोजगार के अवसर
- घरेलू और औद्योगिक ऊर्जा लागत में कमी से MSME सेक्टर को बढ़ावा
- किफायती परिवहन विकल्प से आम नागरिकों की बचत में वृद्धि