ECONOMIC TIMES, Delhi, 7.9.2024
Page No. 7, Size:(10.76)cms X (8.86)cms.

Aim to Shift a third of Trucks to LNG in 5-7 Years: Oil Min

Sanjeev Choudhary

New Delhi: The government wants liquefied natural gas (LNG) to power a third of the country's long-haul heavy-duty vehicles (HDV) fleet in 5-7 years and is considering allocating domestic gas for the purpose, according to an oil ministry proposal.

"Ministry of petroleum and natural gas can play a vital and leading role in provisioning for the availability of LNG at stable/predictable prices; availability of sufficient HDVs/trucks; and availability of sufficient LNG dispensing stations," the ministry said in the draft scheme for promotion of LNG in transport.

Predictable LNG prices can be ensured "by allocating 0.5 million metric standard cubic meters a day (mmscmd) of domestic natural gas produced from new well or well intervention for an initial period of three years," it said.

The volume of 0.5 mmscmd of gas should be sufficient for 50,000 trucks over the next 2-3 years, it said. The draft has also proposed setting up small-scale liquefaction plants in off-grid areas to convert biogas into bio-LNG for use in transport.

The ministry has mandated state-run oil companies to set up 49 LNG dispensing stations. It may advise "oil marketing companies to incentivise fleet owners for conversion of diesel trucks to LNG fuel trucks".

The oil ministry may also consider developing the Delhi-Mumbai expressway as a pilot LNG highway and request the ministry of road transport and highways to exempt LNG-powered HDVs from toll tax on that route. "This, in turn, shall reduce the operating cost of LNG HDVs and propel faster adoption," the ministry said.

LNG has a 24% lower emission factor than diesel. Medium and HCVs consume 40% of all diesel in the country. As of March 31, 2020, there were about 5.8 million trucks and lorries and 1.6 million multi-axle articulated vehicles registered in India.

ECONOMIC TIMES, Delhi, 7.9.2024
Page No. 4, Size:(16.62)cms X (4.06)cms.

Expert Panel Formed to Review Long Tunnel Projects

New Delhi: The ministry of road transport and highways has constituted an expert panel to technically review all long tunnel projects before the proposal is submitted for approval, a move aimed at avoiding a repeat of Silkyara tunnel-like mishap.

As per a notification dated September 6, the panel will review proposals for all tunnels with length more than 1.5 km.

The enhanced scrutiny related provisions are being put in place as the ministry plans to build 74 new tunnels stretching 273 km at a cost of Rs 1 lakh crore over the next few years under its mega plan to strengthen India's highway network.

"It has been decided that henceforth proposals for long tunnel projects (length more than 1.5 km) on national highways must be submitted to the director general (road development) for technical review and obtaining expert advice from the advisory panel well before submitting the proposal for appraisal," the notification said.

The ministry has set up an advisory panel comprising experts from Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC), Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd (RVNL) and THIDCL for tendering expert advice during the appraisal of long tunnel projects, according to the notification.

—**Our Bureau**

BUSINESS LINE, Delhi, 7.9.2024
Page No. 11, Size:(15.95)cms X (10.37)cms.

Govt offers dedicated gas capacity to run LNG-powered trucks for 3 years

CLEANER VISION. Move to promote LNG in heavy haulers, reduce carbon emissions in transport sector

Rishi Ranjan Kala
New Delhi

Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas (MoPNG) has proposed a dedicated 0.5 million standard cubic meters per day (MSCMD) natural gas capacity for 3 years for liquefied natural gas (LNG)-powered heavy duty vehicles (HDVs) aiming to curb carbon emissions in the transport sector.

The ministry has proposed a scheme to create a road map for promoting LNG in long range HDVs—mainstay of mid-mile deliveries."Scheme is aimed at converting about one-third of existing long haul heavy duty trucks and getting about one-third of the upcoming HDVs to use LNG as fuel so that vehicular pollution reduces by one-third from present. This aim could be achieved over a period of 5-7 years," the ministry said.

The roadmap includes formulating strategies for making LNG available at stable prices across India. As of March 2020, around 58 lakh trucks and lorries and 16 lakh multi axle articulated vehicles are registered in India.

NEED OF THE HOUR. The Ministry pointed out that availability of LNG dispensing stations at regular distance will be necessary for development of LNG-based mobility

LNG ROADMAP

MoPNG pointed out that availability of LNG dispensing stations at regular distance and in closed loop systems (like mines) will be necessary for development of LNG-based mobility. Besides, OEMs need to be encouraged to manufacture substantial units of LNG based HDVs. To ensure predictability of LNG prices over the next three years, it proposed to allocate 0.5 MSCMD of domestic natural gas produced from new well or well intervention initially for three years. It estimates that this allocation can fuel about 50,000 trucks over the next 2-3 years.

Oil and gas marketing companies (OMCs) have been mandated to establish 49 LNG stations in the first phase, which would be expanded depending on availability, usage and deepening of the LNG market. The ministry is also considering advising OMCs to incentivise fleet owners for converting diesel trucks to LNG. Besides, plans are to develop the Delhi-Mumbai expressway as a pilot LNG Highway with exemption in toll tax for LNG HDVs.

EVOLVING MARKET

The market for LNG as a fuel for the transport sector is witnessing slow but steady growth. As per the Indian Gas Exchange (IGX), the demand for road-transported LNG is projected to increase to 5 MSCMD over the next five years. In April 2024, IGX launched contracts of small-scale liquefied natural gas (ssLNG). Transporting natural gas in liquefied form via trucks will allow larger volumes to be transported, potentially making it economically viable for buyers not connected to pipelines.

Companies offering LNG-fired HDV are also expected to benefit from the growth in LNG infrastructure across the country.

BUSINESS STANDARD, Delhi, 7.9.2024
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FAME-III may see vehicles sporting govt subsidy branding

Move aims to highlight Centre's electric mobility schemes and ensure greater transparency

NITIN KUMAR
New Delhi, 6 September

After fertilisers and Covid vaccine certificates, the Centre is now looking to promote itself through electric two and three-wheelers under its flagship electric mobility schemes.

The Centre is learnt to be drafting a plan under which any electric vehicle (EV) sold under its subsidy scheme will have a ministry logo and a certificate informing the customer about the ministry and the scheme. The government might mandate self-KYC wherein the customer would need to upload their selfie and do Aadhaar authentication on a government portal to get the vehicle registered.

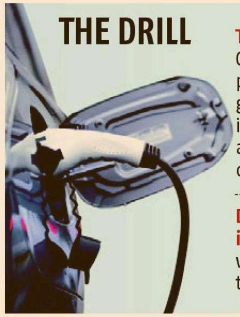
Senior officials told *Business Standard* that the initiative was aimed at informing the customer that "it's the government that is giving the subsidy, and not a company discount."

They said the move follows concerns that original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) were presenting government subsidies as company-offered discounts, leaving customers unaware of the government incentives. This initiative was recently discussed in a meeting chaired by the Prime Minister's Office. It was highlighted that customers purchasing electric two-wheelers (e2W), electric three-wheelers (e3W), and e-cars were unaware of the government subsidies, as OEMs were marketing vehicles at a reduced price without clarifying that the price cut was due to government incentives.

In contrast to e-buses, which bear FAME-II stickers, e2Ws and e3Ws do not have any government logo, further obscuring the source of the price reductions.

"So far, OEMs have been passing the incentives off as discounts offered by them, luring customers by first stating the actual market price of their vehicles and then providing what appeared to be special discounts. This move is aimed at ensuring greater transparency under the scheme," a senior official familiar with the development told *Business Standard*.

A query sent to the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) remained unanswered till press time.



THE DRILL

The trigger: OEMs were presenting government incentives as their own discounts

How to get vouchers: Complete Aadhaar-enabled registration on the ministry's website

Proof required: Customers must take a selfie with the voucher for vehicle registration

Disbursement of incentives: Funds will be sent directly to OEMs' accounts

OEMs' concern: Potential loss of branding if process is complicated and if mandatory stickers are introduced

To obtain the certificate, which will include details about the ministry and the scheme, customers will need to complete Aadhaar-enabled registration on either the ministry's website or a new portal that may be launched later.

The ministry plans to hold a meeting with OEMs to inform them about the initiative, and to request their assistance in helping dealers support customers with the registration and voucher process.

After receiving the certificate, customers would be required to take a selfie with it, which will then be uploaded to the ministry's portal as part of the registration process. This step is intended to serve as proof that the customer received the benefits and that the voucher registration was completed by or in the presence of the customer.

"The vehicle registration will be completed once the customer submits a selfie with the voucher. This measure ensures that the customer actually received the vehicle and that the voucher registration was carried out by them or in their presence," said another official, who requested anonymity. The incentive funds will be disbursed directly to the OEMs' accounts, accompanied by strict localisation requirements and other compliance guidelines. "The funds will be provided directly to the OEMs. If any defaults occur, like those observed under FAME-II, the government will take appropriate action," another official said.

OEMs acknowledge introducing vouchers is a positive step but express concerns over the potential complications if the process is made difficult or if the government requires subsidy vehicles to display stickers similar to those on the e-buses.

"The government's intention to promote its brand is understandable, but if the process becomes cumbersome and requires stickers on all subsidised vehicles, it could lead to branding challenges for us," said an executive from an EV manufacturer specialising in e2Ws and e3Ws. The FAME scheme, launched in 2015 with an initial outlay of approximately ₹900 crore, was followed by FAME-II, which had its outlay increased to ₹11,500 crore. These schemes have been a catalyst in driving sales of EVs from 7,000 units in FY15 to 1.5 million units in FY24, constituting 6.8 per cent of all automobile sales. However, with the conclusion of FAME II in March 2024, the industry experienced a slowdown. The government's efforts to promote electric vehicles also led to an increase in the number of players in the industry.

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Page No. 10, Size:(6.57)cms X (14.58)cms.

OPEC+ kicks the can down a very uphill road

OPEC+ IS LIKE a teabag — it only works in hot water. The late Robert Mabro, one of the savviest oil-market observers, liked to say the cartel only got the job done when it was under prolonged financial pain. To judge by its latest actions, OPEC+ has yet to realise it's inside a warming kettle.

Saudi Arabia, Russia, and other oil-producing nations have now agreed to delay by two months a planned output hike that was scheduled to start in October. The delay came after Brent, the petroleum benchmark, fell to one-year low below $75 a barrel.

In the short term, postponing the output hikes until December should support oil prices. By giving up an increase of 180,000 barrels a day in October and November, OPEC would keep the market roughly balanced next quarter, rather than creating a surplus. But looking at the projected balance of supply and demand, OPEC+ is simply kicking the can down a very uphill road.

In two months, the group will have to take another fateful decision. If it wants higher oil prices in 2025, it will have to do far more than delaying the almost 2 million barrels a day of extra production that it pencilled it by the end of next year. It will need to cut output outright. Without curbing production, further price drops loom. Brent for delivery next year sits now at little more than $71.50 a barrel, and the price curve is flattening, a sign that traders anticipate plentiful supply.

Saudi Arabia wants higher prices even at the cost of lower production; many others think that's leading to never-ending market share losses. Riyadh is unlikely to convince its allies of the need to cut output unless prices plunge. The kingdom is already struggling to rein in the United Arab Emirates, Iraq, and Kazakhstan, which are all cheating on their production quotas.

JAVIER BLAS
Bloomberg

Using Mabro's analogy, the water is tepid. And even this coffee-drinking Spaniard knows that's not enough for a good cup of tea.

By keeping oil prices artificially high, Riyadh has been subsidising higher-cost producers such as those in the US shale patch. Sacrificing market share works if one achieves higher prices — but Saudi Arabia is so far getting the worst possible outcome: low production and low prices. Adjusted by inflation, oil prices are about the same as they were 20 years ago. But Saudi Arabia is producing less than it did in 2004.

But in a few weeks, demand will start to drop, as it does every year. With production from non-OPEC countries increasing, the need for the cartel's oil will decline in the fourth quarter to about 27.2 million barrels a day — about the same as its current output. During the first half of 2025, OPEC would need to produce far less, around 26 million, to keep the market balanced, according to the International Energy Agency. If it doesn't, global crude stockpiles would increase, depressing prices.

Tactically, OPEC+ is also sending the worst possible message to the market. First, the deal speaks about the gymnastics the group is doing to preserve unity. In private, I'm told, Riyadh, Abu Dhabi, Baghdad, Kuwait City, Moscow, and Astana don't see eye to eye — no matter how much they deny it in public. Second, it's a belated admission the market doesn't need the oil the group had anticipated. The Saudis are reputed to have superior information about the market — this time, they failed. And third, it doesn't address the surplus of the first half of 2025, which would continue to stoke bearish bets.

The only positive for OPEC+ is that the delay would bridge a gap between now and the US election. Next time, the group at least would know who will be the next occupant of the White House, taking into consideration their potential policies.

For the next few weeks, the water temperature will slowly increase. By December, the kettle should be whistling. Then — and perhaps only then — OPEC+ may jump into serious action. But I remain unconvinced that the cartel would coalesce into defending the high price that Saudi Arabia wants.

FINANCIAL EXPRESS, Delhi, 7.9.2024
Page No. 2, Size:(5.68)cms X (16.27)cms.

Petroleum items' exports fall amid surplus supplies

ARUNIMA BHARADWAJ
New Delhi, September 6

INDIA'S EXPORTS OF petroleum products in the first five months of 2024-25 declined by 2% on year to 6.2 million barrels/day in April-August period of 2023-24, as per data from energy cargo tracking firm Vortexa.

In August, however, the total export of petroleum products increased by 5% to 1.30 million barrels per day compared with 1.24 million barrels per day registered in the previous month.

The country's top destinations for the exports in August were southeast Asia, northwest Europe, and West Asia.

Exports to Europe declined by 8% last month to 217,714 barrels per day and supplies to southeast Asia slumped by 32.4% to 182,744 barrels per day compared to the previous month. Exports to West Asia also decreased by 10% to 185,087 in August.

"India's refined product exports to southeast Asia (mainly Singapore and Malaysia) have declined amidst growing surplus in the region, and slowing demand from end destination markets. Indonesia's clean product imports have slowed in August, with its domestic refineries ramping up runs, dampening its import demand," said Serena Huang, head of Asia Pacific analysis at Vortexa.

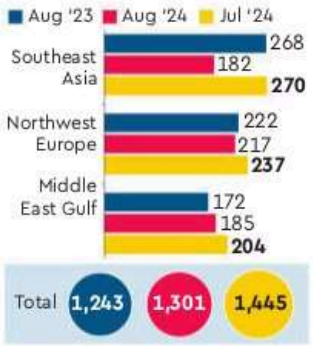
India primarily supplies petroleum products to countries in Europe and Asia. The country has emerged as a major fuel supplier to Europe in the past few months after European countries started boycotting Russian supplies post its invasion of Ukraine.

Indian refiners have instead exported more to northeast Asia, likely driven by higher import demand.

Asia's share in exports of Indian petroleum products decreased to 14% in August against 22% in July. Europe's share, also, decreased to 17% last month from 19% in the previous month. West Asia accounted for 14.2% of India's total export volume in August against 16.4% in July.

The country exports a variety of goods via the Red Sea, including petroleum products. However, the traffic diversion from the Red Sea and around the Cape of Good Hope on the back of escalating tensions has added ten days to Asia-Europe journeys while also increasing fuel costs, as per the Economic Survey released by the government.

India's refined product exports by destination shipping region (kbd)



Source: Vortexa

"Although global shipping costs returned to pre-pandemic levels by the middle of last year, container shipping rates have risen again," the survey noted. "Extended detours around the Cape of Good Hope have led to a significant surge in ocean freight rates, reaching up to $10,000 per 40-foot container. Moreover, the Suez Canal Authority has declared a 5-15% hike in transit fees for ships passing through the Panama Canal."

Meanwhile the domestic consumption of petroleum products during April to July increased to 80.9 million tonne against 77.2 million tonne in the same period in FY24, as per data from Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell. The growth is majorly driven by growth in demand for diesel, aviation turbine fuel, and liquified petroleum gas.

The country produced 94.5 million tonne of petroleum products during April to July, up from 92.2 million tonne in the same period of FY24.

The country's demand for petroleum products including jet fuel, diesel, LPG among others is likely to grow to 239 million tonnes in the financial year 2024-25, as per estimates by the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell.

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Page No. 2, Size:(9.31)cms X (10.40)cms.

EXPERTS PANEL FOR TECHNICAL REVIEW OF TUNNEL PROJECTS

THE MINISTRY OF Road Transport and Highways has constituted a panel of experts for the technical review of tunnel projects on National Highways. The panel comprises experts from ONGC, RVNL and THIDCL for tendering expert advice during the appraisal of long tunnel (length of more than 1.5 km) projects.

PIONEER (HINDI), Delhi, 7.9.2024
Page No. 2, Size:(21.76)cms X (12.49)cms.

कचरे से तैयार होगी 4000 किलो सीएनजी

● 5 छोटे मिथेनाइजेशन प्लांट लगाए जाएंगे, रोज 400 मीट्रिक टन कचरे का होगा निस्तारण

पायनियर समाचार सेवा। नोएडा

नोएडा के सेक्टर-145 डंपिंग ग्राउंड में एनटीपीसी और एवर एनवायरो दोनों अपना प्लांट लगा रही है। ये प्लांट करीब दो साल में एक्टिव होंगे। इसके बाद दोनों कंपनियां सीबीजी और टोरिफाइड चारकोल का बनाने लगेंगी। प्राधिकरण का प्लान है कि जब तक ये दोनों कंपनियां प्रोजेक्ट पर पूरी तरह से फंक्शन नहीं करती, तब तक यहां वेस्ट को रेमिडिएट करके सीएनजी, बायो गैस बनाई जाए।

इसके लिए यहां पांच छोटे प्लांट लगाए जाएंगे। अक्टूबर में इसके लिए टेंडर जारी होगा। नवंबर- दिसंबर में प्लांट लगा दिए जाएंगे। जीएम नोएडा प्राधिकरण एसपी सिंह ने बताया कि ये प्लांट एक दिन में करीब 400 मीट्रिक टन गीले कचरे से 4000 किलो सीएनजी और बायो गैस बनाएंगी। जिसका प्रयोग कॉमर्शियल रूप में किया जाएगा। ताकि प्लांट चला रही कंपनी अपना खर्चा निकाल सके। टेंडर दो साल के लिए हो सकता है। इसे बढ़ाया भी जा सकता है। वर्तमान में डंपिंग ग्राउंड से करीब 7.5 लाख मिट्रिक टन कचरा का निपटारा किया जा चुका है। रोजाना करीब 1000 मीट्रिक टन का निपटारा किया जाता है।

प्राधिकरण अधिकारियों ने बताया कि गीले कचरे को ही मिथेनाइज करके सीएनजी या कुकिंग गैस बनाई जाएगी। नोएडा में रोजाना करीब 400 मीट्रिक टन गीला कचरा निकलता है। मानक के अनुसार 1000 किलो गिले कचरे से करीब 10 प्रतिशत यानी 100 किलो गैस बनाई जा सकती है। ऐसे में 400 मीट्रिक टन से करीब 4000 किलो सीएनजी गैस बनाई जाएगी। ये प्रक्रिया दो साल तक होगी। ये प्रक्रिया पांच प्लांट करेंगे। दो साल बाद मेन प्लांट एक्टिव होने पर इनको बंद कर दिया जाएगा। नोएडा और ग्रेटरनोएडा से निकलने वाले म्यूनिसिपल सॉलिड वेस्ट की प्रोसेसिंग एवं सांटिफिक डिस्पोजल के लिए अस्तौली सेक्टर-145 में इंडो एनवायरो इंटीग्रेटेड सॉल्यूशन लिमिटेड / एवर एनवायरो रिर्सोसेस मैनेमेंट प्राइवेट लिमिटेड की ओर से 300 टीपीडी क्षमता का कंप्रैस बायो गैस (सीबीजी) प्लांट और एनटी पीसी विद्युत व्यापार निगम लिमिटेड 1100 टीपीडी इससे टोरिफाइड चारकोल बनाने का प्लांट लगा रहा है। टोरिफाइड चारकोल का प्रयोग विद्युत उत्पादन में किया जाएगा। दोनों कंपनियों को सिर्फ जमीन दी गई है।

दोनों कंपनियों ने अस्तौली में अपना प्लांट लगाना शुरू कर दिया है। ये प्लांट स्थायी तौर पर होगा इसलिए कंस्ट्रक्शन शुरू किया गया है। करीब दो साल में दोनों प्लांट पूरी तरह से फंक्शन करने लगेंगे। प्राधिकरण के अधिकारी ने बताया कि यदि हम 900 टीपीडी म्यूनिसिपल सॉलिड वेस्ट का इस पद्धति से निपटारा करते है तो उससे सालाना करीब 2 लाख 25 हजार कार्बन उत्सर्जन कम होगा। इसे कार्बन रेडिएशन भी कह सकते है। इस उत्सर्जन से बचाव के बाद ही हमे कार्बन क्रेडिट मिलेगा। यहां दोनों प्लांट में एनटी पीसी की क्षमता 1100 टीपीडी की है और एवर एनवायरों की क्षमता 300 टीपीडी की है। इसी के अनुसार दोनों ने नोएडा प्राधिकरण के साथ समझौता किया है।

सीबीजी प्लांट से रोजाना करीब 16 हजार किलो कंप्रेस्ड बायो गैस (सीबीजी) के साथ 100 टन जैविक खाद भी तैयार होगी। कंप्रैस बायोगैस (सीबीजी) कंप्रैस नेचुरल गैस (सीएनजी) का एडवांस रूप है, जिसका गैस संचालित वाहनों में इस्तेमाल किया जा सकेगा। वहीं एनटीपीसी विद्युत व्यापार निगम लिमिटेड है। कंपनी रोजाना 1100 टन मिक्स वेस्ट से टेरिफाइड कोयला बनाएगी। जिनमें से अधिकांश का प्रयोग एनटी पीसी स्वयं बिजली उत्पादन में करेगी।