



# Aramco sees 14% decline in March quarter income

**SAUDI ARABIAN STATE-OWNED** oil giant Aramco expects to pay \$31 billion in dividends to the Saudi government and its shareholders despite reporting lower earnings for the March quarter on Tuesday, hit by lower oil prices and volumes sold.

The Saudi government, which directly holds about 82.2% of Aramco, relies heavily on the company's payouts, which also include royalties and taxes.

The kingdom, the world's biggest oil exporter, is spending billions of dollars to diversify its economy away from crude.

Aramco reported a 14% decline in March-quarter net income to \$27.3 billion in the three months to March 31, in line with analyst estimates and down from \$31.9 billion a year earlier, according to a company earnings statement.

The company declared base dividend payouts for the first quarter totalling \$20.3 billion and a performance-linked dividend distribution of \$10.8 billion to be paid in the second quarter.

It said it expects total dividends of \$124.3 billion to be declared in 2024, of those \$43.1 billion in performance-linked dividends. —REUTERS



# BP maintains share buybacks as cash flow drops in Q1

**BP MAINTAINED THE** pace of its share buybacks even as March-quarter profit and cash flow fell by more than expected and net debt increased.

The result marks the end of a mixed set of Big Oil earnings which saw Shell, TotalEnergies and Chevron do better than expected, while Exxon Mobil profit fell short. All of the companies kept their focus on returning cash to shareholders, and BP pledged to repurchase \$3.5 billion of shares in the first half of the year, matching the pace of prior quarters.

For BP, the shareholder payouts are key to try and close the gap in its valuation with its

American competition.

"We're highly undervalued if we compare ourselves to some of our American peers," chief executive officer Murray Auchincloss said in an interview on Tuesday.

Auchincloss stressed the company isn't looking at moving BP's listing to the US, a measure that could be on the table for some of its European super-major peers.

Despite stronger earnings from oil and gas trading, BP reported weakness in some key financial underpinnings of those shareholder returns, even with Brent crude above \$80 a barrel. —BLOOMBERG



AS INTERNATIONAL PRICES DECLINE...

# Diesel, Petrol Export Revenues Dip 20% to \$33b

But combined FY24 export volumes little changed at 41.6 mt; refined products' import bill shrinks 13% YoY to \$23 b

**Sanjeev.Choudhary**  
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**New Delhi:** India's exports of diesel and petrol fell by a fifth year-on-year to \$33 billion in 2023-24 as international prices declined.

The combined export volumes of petrol and diesel, however, changed little in a year at 41.6 million metric tonnes in 2023-24, according to the oil ministry data.

Diesel generates the largest share of export revenues for Indian refiners. Diesel alone fetched \$22 billion of the \$48 billion earned by exports of refined fuels in 2023-24.

Diesel exports were down 24% ye-



ar-on-year in value terms though its export volumes shrank barely 1% in 2023-24. The volume of petrol exports increased 2.5% but its value fell 13% to \$11 billion in 2023-24.

Jet fuel, naphtha, fuel oil and other

products accounted for the balance \$15 billion of fuel exports in FY24.

Reliance Industries and Rosneft-backed Nayara Energy, the two private sector refiners in the country, mainly export diesel and petrol

from India.

The beginning of the war in Ukraine in early 2022 and the Western sanctions on Russia dislocated the energy market, sending fuel prices sky-high. Refiners reaped record-high margins on petrol and diesel in 2022-23. This also boosted export earnings for Indian refiners.

However, after the market stabilised in 2023-24, the earnings normalised. International rates of petrol and diesel were down about 15-20% on average in 2023-24 from a year earlier. India exports diesel and petrol to various countries in Europe, Africa and elsewhere.

Lower prices have helped India pay less for imports of petroleum pro-

ducts. India paid \$10.5 billion in 2023-24 for liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), 21% less than a year before. India imports 60% of the LPG it uses, primarily for cooking. LPG makes up about 45% of the price India pays for the import of all refined products.

The overall refined products' import bill shrank 13% on-year in 2023-24 to \$23 billion.

India's consumption of oil has been rising at a rapid rate. The consumption of petrol rose 6.4% in 2023-24 while that of diesel grew 4.4%. LPG sales also grew 4%. The expanding economy, increased sales of vehicles and growing access to fuel have all been contributing to the fuel demand in the country.

## QUICKLY.

### Fuel consumption rises 6.1% in April

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Fuel consumption rose by 6.1 per cent year-on-year in April, data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell of the Oil ministry showed on Tuesday. "The rise in total fuel consumption in April can be attributed to the increased activity in the run-up to elections across the country," said Prashant Vasisht, vice president and co-head, corporate ratings at ICRA. REUTERS

# Global biofuel alliance sets up three-pronged work plan

**SUBHAYAN CHAKRABORTY**

New Delhi, 7 May

While it remains without a charter, or a permanent secretariat, the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA) has adopted a work plan focused on assessing country landscapes, drafting policy frameworks, and conducting biofuel workshops, petroleum and natural gas ministry officials said.

These were adopted as immediate goals at a key meeting of the body held on the sidelines of the G20 deliberations in Brazil last month. And, the officials added that the GBA has decided to take stock of them in July.

“India has also suggested three potential workstreams to support biofuel trade, increase awareness in biofuels, and identify support mechanisms for enhanced adoption of biofuels,” an official said.

Launched on the sidelines of the 2023 G20 summit in New Delhi, the GBA aims to reshape the global landscape and expedite uptake of biofuels worldwide. It also hopes to set standards for biofuel, expand the size of formal biofuel markets and better map demand and supply.

The India-led initiative has seen 24 countries signing up so far, with special



**India contributes 2.7%, according to the IEA. Despite this, India remains the third-largest producer of ethanol**

interest generated among African nations. Apart from G20 member South Africa, non-G20 nations like Kenya and Uganda are on the list, while Tanzania is keen on joining, sources said.

However, officials could not clarify when or where a new secretariat for the GBA would be unveiled. Talks on creating a governance structure and charter would also take some time, they hinted.

India and Brazil are the main drivers at the GBA. “Beyond the initial interest evinced by all stakeholders since the GBA was formed, a major push to the initiative has been given by Brazil, as part of the current G20 chair. India's goals

with regard to biofuels align with Brazil's in the long term,” another official said.

The primary work plan was taken up at a key meeting on the sidelines of the Energy Transitions Working Group meet in Brazil.

## More global engagements

Building up the profile of the GBA, and placing its plans and objectives in front of a global audience has been prioritised, officials said.

Case in point, the GBA has engaged at the United Nations COP28 Summit in Dubai. It was also present at the annual meeting of the World Economic Forum in Davos, and the government's India Energy Week global summit in Goa, earlier this year.

In April, the GBA made presentations on the sidelines of the G7 energy minister's meeting in Italy. Among the G7 nations, Italy and the United States are part of the alliance.

New Delhi also hopes the GBA will position India as a climate & sustainability champion and further bolster the country as the voice of the Global South.

Key to this is India helping lower and middle income countries also start their biofuels programme.

## IGL Q4 net profit rises 16%

PTI / New Delhi

Indraprastha Gas Ltd, India's largest CNG retailer, on Tuesday reported a 16 per cent rise in March quarter net profit as it sold more gas.

The net profit of Rs 382.80 crore in the latest January-March quarter was compared to Rs 329.75 crore profit registered a year ago, the company said in a statement.

For the full 2023-24 fiscal (April 2023 to March 2024), net profit soared 21 per cent to Rs 1,748.08 crore as against Rs 1,445.02 crore in the previous year.

Turnover slipped marginally to Rs 3,949.17 crore in January-March from Rs 4,042.57 crore in the corresponding quarter of 2022-23.

The gross turnover during the financial year 2023-24 was Rs 15,403.13 crore as compared to Rs 15,543.67 crore in the preceding financial year 2022-23 primarily due to cooling off of international gas prices despite increase in sales volume.

"The sales volume in the quarter



increased from 8.25 million standard cubic metres per day in Q4 of 2022-23 to 8.73 mmcmd in Q4 of FY24, showing a volume growth of 7 per cent. While CNG registered sales volume growth of 5 per cent during the period, piped natural gas showed overall sales volume growth of 11 per cent during this quarter (January-March)," it said.

The average daily gas sale during the year 2023-24 was 8.43 mmcmd as compared to 8.09 mmcmd in FY23 (April 2022 to March 2023), showing an overall growth of 4 per cent.

While CNG volumes registered a growth of 4 per cent in the fiscal, piped gas sales volumes were up by 6 per cent in FY 2023-24 over the preceding fiscal.



# IGL Q4 net profit up 16% to ₹382.80 cr

## For full fiscal 2023-2024, net profit soared 21% to Rs 1,748.08 crore

**NEW DELHI:** Indraprastha Gas Ltd, India's largest CNG retailer, on Tuesday reported a 16 per cent rise in March quarter net profit as it sold more gas.

The net profit was Rs 382.80 crore in the latest January-March quarter, compared to Rs 329.75 crore profit registered a year ago, the company said in a statement.

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"The sales volume in the quarter increased from 8.25 million standard cubic metres per day in Q4 of 2022-23 to 8.73 mmscmd in Q4 of FY24, showing a volume growth of 7 per cent. While CNG registered sales volume growth of 5 per cent during the period, piped natural gas (PNG) showed over-

### Highlights

» 'Sales volume jumped from 8.25 mn standard cubic metres per day in Q4FY23 to 8.73 mmscmd in Q4 FY24'

» 'While CNG registered sales volume growth of 5% during the period, PNG showed overall sales volume growth of 11% during this quarter'

all sales volume growth of 11 per cent during this quarter (January-March)," it said.

The average daily gas sale during the year 2023-24 was 8.43 mmscmd as compared to 8.09 mmscmd in FY'23 (April 2022 to March 2023), showing an overall growth of 4 per cent.

While CNG volumes registered a growth of 4 per cent in the fiscal, piped gas sales volumes were up by 6 per cent in FY 2023-24 over the preceding fiscal. "IGL has remained focused not only on executing strategic priorities amidst a challenging operating environment but has also been committed to deliver long term value to its stake holders," the statement said, adding the company board

recommended a final dividend of 250 per cent for shareholders.

This dividend is in addition to 200 per cent interim dividend already paid during the financial year. After consolidating the financial results of two associate companies, CUGL and MNGL, the consolidated net profit after tax of IGL comes to Rs 1,983.40 crore in FY24 against a consolidated profit of Rs 1,639.65 crore in FY23, showing an increase of 21 per cent year on year.

IGL operates city gas distribution networks across 30 districts in 11 geographical areas across Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Rajasthan. P11



# IGL Q4 net up 9% at ₹433 cr on higher sales

**Our Bureau**  
New Delhi

State-run Indraprastha Gas (IGL) reported a 9 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) growth in its consolidated net profit at ₹433 crore in Q4 FY24, aided by higher sales.

However, the net profit of India's largest compressed natural gas (CNG) distributor fell 9 per cent on a sequential basis.

IGL's consolidated total income rose 2 per cent y-o-y to ₹4,044 crore in Q4 FY24. Sequentially, income fell 2 per cent. For FY24, the company's consolidated total income fell 6 per cent y-o-y to ₹9,814 crore. Its net profit was higher by 21 per cent y-o-y at ₹1,983 crore.

### Indraprastha Gas



### HIGHER SALES VOLUME

Its sales volume rose from 8.25 million standard cubic meters per day (MSCMD) in Q4 FY23 to 8.73 MSCMD in Q4 FY24 with a volume growth of 7 per cent. While CNG registered sales volume growth of 5 per cent y-o-y during the period, piped natural gas (PNG) showed overall sales volume growth of 11 per cent.

Average daily gas sales during FY24 stood at 8.43 MSCMD (8.09 MSCMD), which is an overall growth of 4 per cent.

“The board has recommended a final dividend of 250 per cent for consideration of the members in the Annual General Meeting in addition to the 200 per cent interim dividend already paid during the financial year,” the company said.



## India's fuel demand edges up 6.1% y-o-y in April

India's fuel consumption rose by 6.1% year-on-year in April, data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis



MINT

Cell of the oil ministry showed on Tuesday. "The rise in total fuel consumption can be attributed to the increased activity in the run up to elections across the country," said Prashant Vasisht, vice president and co-head, corporate ratings, Icra. **REUTERS**

# Iraq closes gap as Moscow's oil discounts shrink

Tighter US sanctions, Russia's crude output cut hurt discounts to India

**S DINAKAR**  
Amritsar, 7 May

The allure of cheap Russian crude oil to Indian refiners faded in the financial year 2023-2024 (FY24) after Russian discounts shrank and Iraq offered better rates to claw back into the Indian crude oil market, the Indian government data shows. The rising costs of sourcing Russian crude oil may contribute to lower gross refining margins of Indian state-run firms in the previous quarter, said industry officials.

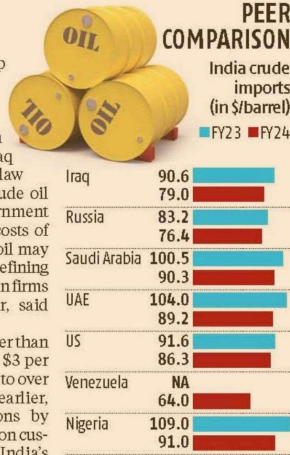
Russian oil was cheaper than Iraqi crude by less than \$3 per barrel in FY24 compared to over \$7 per barrel a year earlier, according to calculations by *Business Standard* based on customs data. Iraq was India's biggest crude supplier until two years back but the Russian invasion of Ukraine forced Moscow to redirect its European supplies to China and India at steep discounts, becoming India's biggest crude source in FY24.

Russian supplies averaged \$76.4 per barrel in FY24 on a landed basis in India compared to \$79 per barrel for Iraqi shipments. In FY23, Iraqi oil averaged \$90.6 per barrel compared to \$83.2 per barrel for Russian oil. Venezuelan crude was the cheapest in FY24 at \$64 per barrel because it is a poor quality, heavy, high sulphur grade, which can be processed only by advanced refineries like Reliance Industries' Jamnagar facility.

Iraqi grades have turned cheaper in calendar year 2024. Its benchmark Basrah oil was cheaper than Russian oil by \$2 per barrel in March, the latest month for which data is available. Iraqi oil averaged \$78.6 per barrel in March compared to \$80.6 per barrel for Russian oil, customs data showed. Indian refiners are buying heavier grades of Basrah crude on which Iraq is offering small discounts, said a Mumbai-based refiner. He did not give details. But there are limitations on how much crude Iraq can supply to India, the refining official said. This is compared to Russia, which supplied record volumes of over 2 million barrels per day in mid-2023, said the official.

Lower rates are reflected in higher volumes. Volumes from Iraq averaged 1.35 million barrels per day (bpd) in March compared to 1 million bpd for FY24, customs data shows. Russian supplies averaged 1.69 million bpd in March compared to \$1.67 million bpd for FY24. In FY23, Iraqi and Russian volumes were similar at 1.02 million bpd.

The resurgence of Iraqi oil can be attributed to two factors, said Indian refining sources. The tightening of US sanctions on Russian shipping coupled with reduced availability of Russian oil due to its participation in the Opec+ grouping's production cuts has hurt discounts. Also,



Source: Indian customs data

## Fuel demand up 6.1% in April

Fuel consumption in the country rose by 6.1% year-on-year in April, data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell of the oil ministry showed on Tuesday. Total consumption totalled 19.86 million tonnes (4.85 million barrels per day) in April, up from 18.71 million tons last year, data showed. Demand was down 5.8 per cent on a monthly basis from the 21.09 million tonnes consumed in March. **REUTERS**

Baghdad is offering oil at competitive rates to Indian refiners, a state-run refining official said.

The near halving of Russian discounts in FY24 is reflected in the shrinking gap between Iraqi and Russian oil rates, said industry sources. The discounts are calculated off European crude benchmark Brent on a delivered basis. Discounts offered on Russian oil to India have shrunk since late 2023 by 77 per cent compared to the fourth quarter of FY23, with rates staying in the \$3.50 per barrel levels since last October. Discounts averaged only \$5.8 per barrel in FY24 compared to \$10.5 per barrel in FY23, according to a state-run refining official.

Freight and insurance rates have also increased over the past few months on Russian shipments after nearly 10 per cent of the Russian fleet was affected by fresh US sanctions imposed since last October, an industry official said. Indian refiners purchase Russian oil on a delivered basis and any increase in freight or insurance is adjusted in discounts, said a Mumbai-based refining official.

"If the discounts on purchases of Russian crude persist at the prevailing low levels, India's net oil import bill may widen to \$101-104 billion in FY2025 from \$96.1 billion in FY2024, assuming an average crude oil price of \$85/bbl in the fiscal," said ICRA.

# Natural gas: Retain futures long; stop-loss at ₹175

**Akhil Nallamuthu**

bl. research bureau

Natural gas futures (May contract) on the Multi Commodity Exchange (MCX) have been on an upswing over the past few sessions. The chart hints at more rally, so participants can remain on the long side of the trade.

## COMMODITY CALL.

The contract closed above the resistance at ₹178 last Friday.

Currently hovering around ₹181, it is expected to appreciate towards the ₹197-200 price band in the near term. But it could retest ₹178 before rising again.

That said, if natural gas futures break below the support at ₹178, the outlook may turn weak, with the contract dropping to ₹170 or even ₹160. However, as it stands, the con-

### MCX Natural gas

Return 5.7% ₹ per MMBTU



tract displays bullish bias.

### TRADE STRATEGY

Last week, we recommended buying natural gas futures (May series) at ₹175. Retain this trade but raise the stop-loss to the entry price — that is, ₹175 — so that the position is protected. Going ahead, tighten the stop-loss further to ₹180 when the price touches ₹190. Book profits at ₹196.

Traders can also consider fresh buys with a stop-loss at ₹175. After initiating, follow the above modifications when the contract rallies.

**3 तैयारी | क्रॉसिंग रिपब्लिक सोसाइटी के पास प्लांट लगाने के लिए मंजूरी नहीं मिली, प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड ने अनापत्ति प्रमाणपत्र नहीं दिया**

# बायो-सीएनजी प्लांट के लिए निगम को जमीन की तलाश

गाजियाबाद, वरिष्ठ संवाददाता। क्रॉसिंग रिपब्लिक सोसाइटी के पास बायो-सीएनजी प्लांट लगाने के लिए मंजूरी नहीं मिली है। उत्तर प्रदेश प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड ने प्लांट लगाने के लिए अनापत्ति प्रमाण पत्र नहीं दिया है। प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड की तरफ से संबंधित कंपनी को जानकारी दी कि गई कि आबादी के पास प्लांट लगाने से समस्या हो सकती है। निगम सूत्रों ने बताया प्लांट को दूसरे स्थान पर लगाने की योजना है। इसके लिए जमीन तलाश की जा रही है।

शासन के आदेश पर शहर में गीला कूड़ा निस्तारण करने के लिए बायो-

सीएनजी प्लांट लगाया जाना था। यह प्लांट पीपीपी मॉडल पर बनाया जाना है। इसके लिए कंपनी का चयन हो गया था। नगर निगम ने क्रॉसिंग रिपब्लिक सोसाइटी के पास जमीन चिन्हित कर संबंधित कंपनी को दे दी थी। कंपनी ने प्लांट लगाने के लिए चारदीवारी का काम जैसे ही शुरू हुआ तो इसका विरोध होने लगा।

क्रॉसिंग रिपब्लिक सोसाइटी के लोगों ने कई दिन तक विरोध प्रदर्शन किया। लोगों ने प्लांट लगाने से होने वाले नुकसान के विषय में शासन और प्रशासन को ज्ञापन देकर अवगत कराया था। निर्माण करने वाली कंपनी

## रोजाना 1400 मीट्रिक टन कूड़ा निकल रहा

शहर से रोजाना 1400 मीट्रिक टन कूड़ा निकलता है। इसके निस्तारण में निगम को काफी परेशानी उठानी पड़ रही है। बायो-सीएनजी प्लांट में गीला कूड़ा जाता है। इसके बनने से सड़कों पर कूड़ा दिखाई नहीं देगा। निगम के वाहनों को सस्ते दाम पर सीएनजी मिलेगी। अब इसके लिए जमीन मिलने के बाद ही निर्माण कार्य शुरू होगा।

ने निगम और उत्तर प्रदेश प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड से अनापत्ति प्रमाण पत्र मांगा था। प्रदूषण नियंत्रण बोर्ड ने अनापत्ति प्रमाण पत्र जारी नहीं किया। इस कारण प्लांट का काम बंद है। बायो सीएनजी प्लांट नहीं लगने से स्थानीय लोगों ने राहत की सांस ली है।

क्रॉसिंग रिपब्लिक सोसाइटी निवासी शिवम गहलोत, संजय झा, विनीत चौधरी और संतोष त्यागी आदि ने बताया कि प्लांट लगने से क्षेत्र में बीमारी फैलने का खतरा था। प्लांट के निर्माण की तैयारी को लेकर लोगों में गुस्सा था। वहीं, निगम सूत्रों ने बताया

**66** आबादी के बीच इस प्लांट से लोगों को समस्या हो सकती है। इसीलिए अनुमति फिलहाल नहीं दी गई है।  
-विकास मिश्रा, क्षेत्रीय अधिकारी, यूपीपीसीबी।

लोगों के विरोध को देखते हुए प्लांट को दूसरे स्थान पर लगाने की योजना है। जमीन तलाश की जा रही है। संपत्ति विभाग के अधिकारियों ने कुछ जगह पर जमीन की तलाश की है, लेकिन जमीन आबादी के पास मिल रही है।